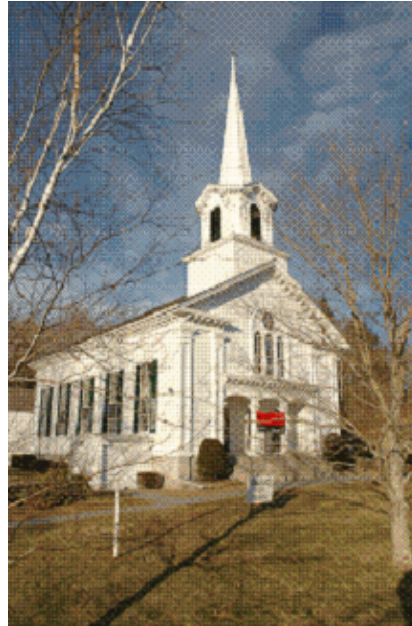


First Church of Christ in Mansfield, UCC: A Holistic Vision of Creation Care

The First Church of Christ in Mansfield, CT, a congregation of the United Church of Christ, became a Green Church because members saw creation care as a holistic issue. The church formed a conservation task force in 2004 to help the congregation incorporate stewardship principles into all areas of church life; Christian education, worship, fellowship, investment, and maintenance. They completed an energy audit, and asked members to participate in a congregation wide survey regarding conservation practices at home. Ideas generated from these sources were put into practice. Green tips are now featured in monthly news letters and weekly bulletins to keep the congregation informed and involved.



First Church of Christ purchased electricity generated by wind power and gave members the opportunity to do the same in their homes. They changed their investment portfolio to include environmentally friendly companies, began cleaning with non-toxic, biodegradable products and made the environment and creation care a regular theme for worship and Christian education classes. They “greened” times of fellowship by getting rid of paper cups and using ceramic mugs to serve fair trade coffee. First Church of Christ has also found creation care to be an opportunity for community outreach. They opened their fellowship hall to the community for a showing of *An Inconvenient Truth*, and encourage members to publicly advocate on environmental issues.

First Church of Christ now has a Green Church Mission Statement. *We are a Green Church. We recognize that one of the most significant challenges facing humanity is the achievement of a sustainable earth. As a Green Church, we welcome this responsibility. Being faith-filled and responsive stewards of God's creation, we are committed, through education and action, to the environmental well-being of our planet. Imagining a brighter future, we are committed to treading more lightly, leaving a smaller footprint, and living more simply than others may simply live.*

To learn more about First Church of Christ in Mansfield, see:

<http://pages.cthome.net/FCCMansfield/index.html>

To read an article by their pastor from the UCC's Website, see:

http://www.ucc.org/earthcare/pdfs/growing_green_one.pdf