

The Rock UMC, Cedar Park, TX: Going Out into All the World

“Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole Creation.” These words from the Gospel of Mark 16:15 form the foundation of The Rock United Methodist Church’s mission; a mission that the church strives to live out by accepting, loving and listening.



The Rock, founded in 1999 in Cedar Park Texas, a suburb of Austin, decided to be a green congregation from the very beginning, and is working to make their first building as green as possible. During construction, they used recovered materials wherever they could. A rainwater collection system was designed so the church can store and use rain water. Currently, they are working to secure tanks for this project. They have also installed low flow toilets and used paints with low VOCs. The church grounds were kept as natural as possible. Landscaping was done to maximize water flow; tree cutting was done selectively, and kept to a minimum while native plants were retained.

Members of the Rock UMC strive to incorporate creation care into the everyday operations of the church. Washcloths that are laundered weekly are used in bathrooms instead of paper towels. They use ceramic mugs rather than disposable cups during coffee hour and serve organic fair-trade coffee. The church website offers green living tips.

For the Rock UMC, community is an important aspect of being a green church. According to the pastor, Rev. Dr. Kristina Carter, they designed their building so that it could be used by the entire community. They host a children’s day out preschool enrichment program, an after school program, and a summer camp. They plan to develop a community garden and compost center where they will teach composting, give out worm bins, and harvest produce from raised bed gardens. Pastor Carter who holds bachelor's degree in Engineering Chemistry and a Ph.D. in Applied Chemistry proclaims the good news to the whole Creation by going out to other churches and helping them to start the process.