



Photo by Sharon Tillman

Caring for creation

A new mission for St. James Church in Parkton

St. James' Episcopal Church, Parkton has an exciting new mission! Our parish is working towards a renewable energy demonstration site on our campus so that we can inform our community about the possibilities of wind, solar, and geothermal resources for use at home, school, or office.

St. James' is fortunate to have a strong Environmental Committee led by Doug Harbit—a conservationist who has inspired us with his energy, imagination, and expertise. Under his leadership, we launched our first open house to the community this past October. About 70 people gathered in our parish hall to hear Donald Linebaugh, one of the professors at the Center for the Use of Sustainability, University of Maryland, Andrew Gohn, clean energy manager of the Maryland Energy Administration, and Baltimore County Councilman, Bryan McIntire. The discussion that followed focused on renewable energy—especially the use of

wind turbines in our area. We were delighted that so many people who are engaged with these issues attended the forum and showed their energy and enthusiasm. Indeed, a number of them expressed their desire for more information. And to honor their requests, the Environmental Committee plans to offer another open house at St. James' in the spring. For this event, we will invite speakers to address renewable energy possibilities from a practical and local perspective; vendors will participate as well.

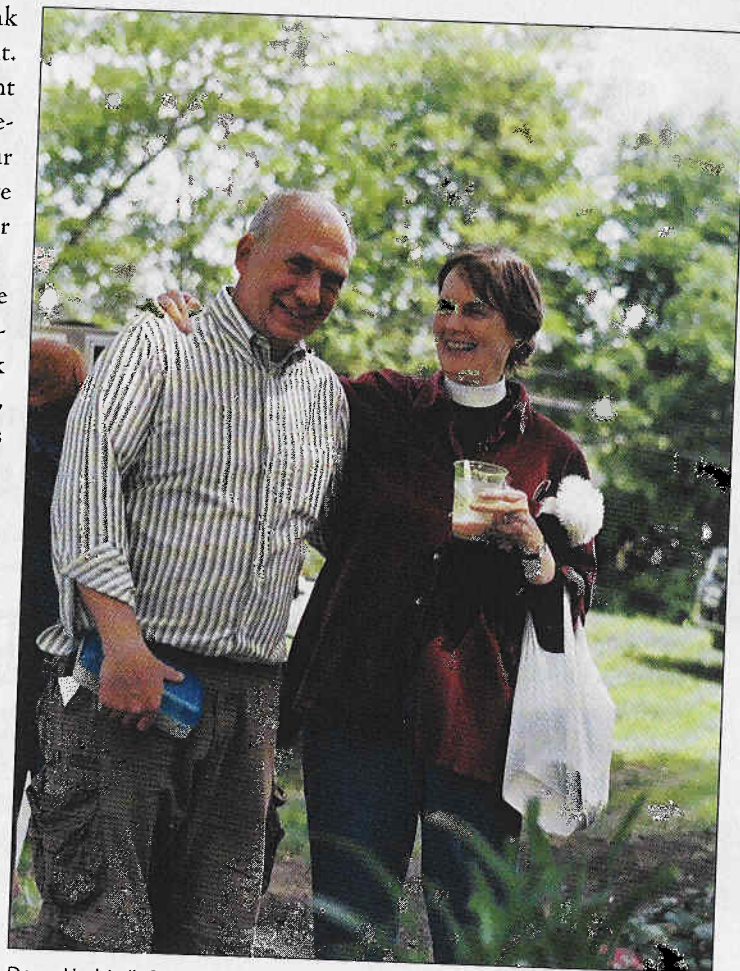
Renewable energy is only one component of St. James' environmental mission. We sponsored a "green fair" at our SpringFest community fair last May (which a number of environmental organizations and local vendors attended). One member of the Environmental Committee, Richard Williams, fashioned an enormous six-foot footprint (all black) to demonstrate, in pounds, our church's own carbon footprint. It sits outside our parish hall

so that people walking or driving by can take a moment to think about ways our community might reduce its own carbon footprint. Another parishioner, Kaitlin Phillip—a talented artist and recent graduate of Alfred University—is currently creating a tall, three-dimensional paper-mache tree that will illustrate, leaf by leaf, our individual conservation efforts. Our “Eden Tree” will be a creative teaching tool for Preschool chapels, SpringFest events, and our next open forum.

St. James’ also seeks to develop practical ways that we can be better stewards of our own land and property. One of our parishioners, Dr. Marissa Slade, a veterinarian, has put together a book of suggestions to help us make better decisions about our campus, i.e., cleaning our facilities with natural ingredients. Williams has retrofitted our outdoor lights so that we now use bulbs with 23 watts instead of 120. Our Environmental Committee is currently considering new insulation ideas and more imaginative ways to save on our electricity. As with any project this size, it will take patience, ingenuity, and careful planning to make these innovative energy-saving plans a reality, especially on a limited budget. Still, as a local parish, willing to meet these challenges, we wish to share our successes with the larger community.

At St. James’, we take this mandate to be good stewards of the earth seriously. Our mission is rooted in the belief that God has placed us on this earth to protect and preserve the natural world around us. It’s an idea as old as Genesis itself: “The Lord God took the man (adam) and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.” (Genesis 1:15) These underlined words could also be translated as serve and preserve. As people blessed with the beauty of land and forest in the Hereford Zone, we need to be attentive to serving and preserving what we laud and honor every day of our lives. The challenge is ours—to enjoy this land and at the same time to learn together how we can better conserve what has been given us.

Reverend Elizabeth Orens

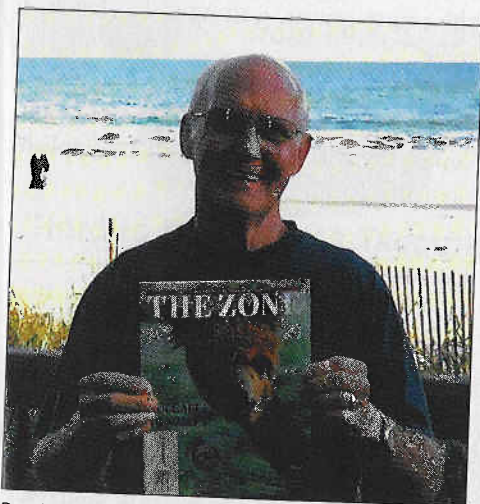


Doug Harbit (left) and the Rev. Elizabeth Orens, rector of St. James’ Episcopal Church, Parkton, at the church’s annual spring fair.
Photo by Jenny Hellert

To learn more about St. James’ Episcopal Church in Parkton and their green efforts, please visit www.stjamesparkton.org or call 410-357-4473.

WHERE’S THE ZONE?

we may be local, but like you...we get around



Ron Levis of Bel Air in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.



Here I am outside of my daughters house with *The Zone* in Kodiak, Alaska. I was in Kodiak one month for the birth of my 5th grandchild, a little girl ... Delaney. Gail Matteson, Jarrettsville

THE FRONT PORCH TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Going on a trip? If you’re taking *The Zone* magazine along for reading, snap a photo of yourself holding *The Zone* at your travel destination. Then e-mail it to us at editor@thezonemag.com. We’ll print some in our magazine each month and the rest will be posted at www.thezonemag.com. Be sure to include your name, city of residence and where in the world you took *The Zone*.