



Green Sanctuary
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
Boston, MA 02108

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Revised Application for Green Sanctuary Re-Accreditation Candidacy

Congregation Information

Date:	August , 2016
Congregation Name	First Parish Concord
Address	25 Lexington Road, Concord, Massachusetts 01742
Web site	http://www.firstparish.org/cms/
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Minister or Congregation Leader	Reverend Howard Dana

Congregation Profile

(First Parish history and profile adapted from an article by Leslie Perrin Wilson, Concord Free Library Curator and from the First Parish Annual Report.)

First Parish in Concord was first gathered in 1636. In the late 1700's to early 1800's First Parish shifted from it's original Congregational Calvinism towards Unitarianism. The current meetinghouse was built in 1900.

First Parish is a congregation steeped in tradition; Ralph Waldo Emerson was a member and the first president of the UUA was a minister of First Parish. In 772 members with an average weekly attendance of 281. RE enrollment is 276. There are 4 ministers and 16 staff members. Most parishioners are from Concord (75%) but there are members from Acton (8%), Carlisle (3%), Sudbury (2%), Maynard (2%), Lincoln (2%), Boxborough (1%), Bedford (1%), Arlington (1%), Lexington, Harvard, Wayland, Belmont, Groton, Athol, Littleton, Clinton, Lancaster, West Boylston, Princeton, Stow, Chelmsford, Waltham and Wellesley.

In 2010, First Parish completed its renovation/expansion project of the RE wing of the meetinghouse. This project made us ADA compliant and gave us more space for our RE programs.

First Parish conducts a broad array of vibrant programs some of which have even become models for other UUA parishes.

There are strong educational programs for adults as well as children. The Wright Tavern Center for Spiritual Renewal closed for classes in 2015 as reprogramming of the facility is under review. Sunday morning forums cover a broad array of topics related to social justice, the environment, and ethical/moral issues.

Social Action is a strong and vital part of church life at First Parish, and is considered by many members to be an extremely important part of their spiritual expression. Our Social Action Board oversees existing social action programs and creates new ones.

There is a part time Social Action Coordinator, who acts as staff to the Board and programs. The church has committed 7.5% of its total operating budget to social action, most of which funds social action grants, although with the departure of Bethany Lowe in 2016, the part time Social Action Coordinator, this is being rethought.

The Social Action Committee distributed approximately \$60,000 in grants this year, ran the Open Table meal and pantry program, held a Crop Walk, supported our community conversation around Black Lives Matter, and organized significant donations of fuel assistance, clothing and linens to homeless families in Lowell.

First Parish started the Jericho Road program that helps train organizations that serve the disadvantaged in Lowell MA and was replicated in places throughout the country.

There were youth trips to El Salvador to help with school building and a pilgrimage to Transylvania to visit our sister church in Szeky Keresteur. The music program is astonishing with the bell choir, children's choir, gospel choir and an array of musicians (guests and parishioners) contributing music in an assortment of styles. There are several services where the choir takes a day off and the youth choose and perform the music.

There are 16 affinity groups ranging from bridge and italian to Jewish awareness and photography.

Update Original Assessments

Question: What has the congregation learned about the nature of oppression and hardship that they did not know before? How did this happen?

Answer: Educational efforts are our major tool for getting our congregation on board around issues of climate and environmental justice. Bringing in a speaker from Pennsylvania to discuss his work to stop fracking truly opened eyes within the community and the congregation. It and similar educational efforts around divestment from fossil fuels led to successful congregational votes on this issue.

Question: What does the congregation know about power that they didn't know before?

Answer: They learned a lot about divestment and shareholder activism in addressing corporate power during our divestment dialogs.

Question: Has the congregation's capacity to work in coalition improved? If so, how and why? How can they tell?

Answer: Yes. We pulled together the Interfaith Sustainability Potluck group that produced the *Shout Heard Round the World* event in 2015 and are now considering working with other UUA congregations around climate justice issues.

Question: Have the environmental justice (E.J.) projects affected the emotional and spiritual lives of anyone in the congregation or the congregation as a whole? If so, how and why? How can they tell? Are

there any other impacts that the E.J. action project has had on the life of the congregation, if any? How can they tell?

Answer: RE and ELT's work with the Household Good Recycling Ministry has led many congregants to donate their used furniture and household goods to HRGM. Peter Lowitt helped arrange for mattresses from a hotel at work to be donated to HRGM after learning about the group through FPC. A number of participants in RE's Community Garden program, which provides fresh vegetables to Open Table (food pantry), spoke about the impact of their participation in this program during their Coming of Age talks. Environmental Justice issues mesh closely with our Black Lives Matters discussion and help broaden our approach to climate justice issues.

Question: Have the E.J. projects affected the emotional and spiritual lives of anyone or any group in the community? If so, how and why?

Answer: Yes. Participants in Open Table have thanked the congregation for our support and testified to how much it has meant to them.

Question: Have the E.J. action projects affected economic conditions, environmental health, or other major aspects of well-being in the community or any specific group in the community? If so, how and why? How can they tell? Is this likely to be long lasting?

Answer: We know that installing solar panels on the church served as a positive influence on congregation members' decisions to install panels on their homes as well as on local churches and businesses. Getting the Historic Commission's OK was a precedent-setting event for the community. By inference we hope that the recipients of wholesome and healthy garden grown foods benefit from their consumption and that having household furniture and other necessities of modern living through HRGM improve the quality of life of the participants. But we don't know the full extent of our actions for certain since these dimensions are difficult for us to measure.

Accomplishment of Program Goals

1. AN INVENTORY OF FIRST PARISH CONCORD'S GREEN SANCTUARY PROGRAM 2009-2015

2009

The FPC's initial Green Sanctuary application outlined opportunities to incorporate sustainability into the facility and grounds that were made possible by recent renovations at First Parish. To help frame this for the congregation, the Church's *Green Sanctuary Committee* (now known as the *Environmental Leadership Team (ELT)*) organized a workshop with Sarah James, co-author of *The Natural Step for Communities: How Cities and Towns Can Change to Sustainable Practices*. She helped interested members of the congregation think through how best to apply the sustainability goals adopted by the Town of Concord:

- a. Reduce dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals, and minerals.
- b. Reduce dependence upon synthetic chemicals and other unnatural substances.
- c. Reduce encroachment upon nature.
- d. Meet human needs fairly & efficiently

Sarah helped us brainstorm specific ways to implement our Green Sanctuary goals as well as the Town's.

2010

The *Green Sanctuary Committee*, working closely with the *Social Action Council*, transitioned into the *Environmental Leadership Team* through a series of visioning and brainstorming sessions ably assisted by Social Action Director Faith Bade, along with Associate Minister Jenny Rankin. Their interest and participation in the Committee's work provided evidence the strong First Parish commitment to address environmental issues. The ELT worked on a mission statement and the following goals for the year:

- **Worship and Celebration:** The church's annual Earth Day service was planned to include an environmental sermon by Jenny, the use of a special candle, and a selection of Earth-friendly foods at coffee hour. Another worship service featured a performance of the *Gaia Concert* led by our choir director, Beth Norton.
- **Religious Education:** RE Director Pam Howell worked with her team to create a community garden, gather gently used furniture and household goods for Household Goods Recycling Ministry (HGRM), and ensured that RE had a strong environmental curricula and children's messages to reinforce it.
- **Environmental Justice:** The produce from our community garden went to Open Table (a local food pantry which provides a weekly meal for those in need). The ELT supported a Household Good Recycling Ministry event and established our carpooling-to-church program.
- **Sustainable living:** We launched a program using social media in which people were encouraged to car pool, walk, or bike to church.

2011

- **Worship and Celebration:** The ELT continued its Earth Day and World Water Day services, SAC candle lightings and integration of appropriate music into the services. In addition, ELT members met with Jenny Rankin, our Interim Minister that year, to brief her on our goals and mission, provided training around implementation of Green-Sanctuary goals to FPC leadership and staff, and met with the Standing Committee to discuss policy changes.
- **Religious Education:** We continued our work with the community garden, held another HGRM event, and supported environmentally themed children's messages and curricula.
- **Environmental Justice:** We continued supporting Open Table and HGRM and arranged home-energy audits for the needy.
- **Sustainable Living:** Accomplishments included promoting home-energy audits to parishioners and other community members; establishing carpools for FPC events; and advocating for ethical eating issues. We also provided training and advice to the *Springing Forward* retreat weekend on how to "green" their event and make it a zero-waste retreat. In addition, the ELT participated in numerous events and services, co-sponsoring a number of them.

2012

In this second year of interim ministry with the Reverend Elaine Peresluna, the ELT focused on working within the parish and community. Our Green Sanctuary focus areas provided direction to our efforts:

- **Worship and Celebration:** We continued our Earth Day sermon and World Water Day events.
- **Religious Education:** We supported the visionary work of RE Director Pam Howell and her team of dedicated teachers. Their programs raised children's awareness of environmental issues and concerns. For example, they coordinated Household Goods Recycling Day and continued their commitment to planting, watering, and harvesting the church's community garden.
- **Environmental Justice:** The ELT educated our congregation and the community about complex environmental issues, such as fracking. For example, we hosted a guest speaker and held panels. Our community garden plot fed people attending FPC's Open Table. Also we supported a

Household Good Recycling event held at FPC that delivered truckloads of gently used goods to the HGRM facility in neighboring Acton, MA.

- **Sustainable living:** We focused on our facilities and grounds this year, including our parking lot plowing and upkeep, transportation (encouraging biking and installing a bike rack), facilities, kitchen, food (encouraging ethical eating and eating lower on the food chain), supporting recycling/reusables, greening our office and cleaning supplies, reducing our energy use, examining our investment policies, and educating congregation committees about how they can use the ELT as an in-house sustainability consultant. We produced handouts on how to “green” events, and they are posted on our website and included in this packet.
- **Solar Panels:** We installed solar panels on FPC’s roof. Our process is detailed in Appendix 4.

2013

With a new Senior Minister Reverend Howard Dana installed, FPC entered a new chapter of its story.

- **Solar Panels:** The ELT’s major accomplishment was the successful campaign to permit, install, and fund solar photovoltaic panels at FPC.
- **Worship and Celebration:** The major focus of the congregation was on welcoming our new Senior Minister and voting to install solar photovoltaic panels on the church. Our Earth Day and Water Day celebrations and services supported these efforts.
- **Religious Education:** The ELT worked with RE to support children’s messages, an environmental curricula, and its community garden efforts, which provided food to Open Table.
- **Environmental Justice:** A number of FPC groups began to focus on divestment of FPC’s fossil fuel holdings. In October and November of 2013, the ELT in collaboration with ConcordCAN! (Climate Action Network) and others sponsored a talk on climate solutions at FPC by Craig Altemose, Executive Director of Boston’s The Better Future Project (10/25/13). The evening was followed the next month by a panel discussion with Craig, Rev. Fred Small, and others who discussed divestment and/or shareholder activism. A FPC November Forum with Tim Brennan, who had served as the UUA’s Chief Financial Officer, also moved the discussion forward.
- **Sustainable Living:** The ELT suggested and advocated for an addition to the performance review criteria, asking staff what they had done to help the church maintain its Green Sanctuary certification. The ELT continued to support environmental initiatives in the FPC and greater Concord communities. For example, it collaborated with Concord CAN and hosted movies, lectures, and discussions around environmental topics and sustainability. The ELT took advantage of a new, longer format for FPC’s Sunday Forum talks, producing several well-received talks on such topics as Green Chemistry, Eco-Industrial Parks, and Divestment.

2014

The ELT continued its work to support a broad discussion of divestment from fossil fuels and began discussions about recertification of our Green Sanctuary status. This culminated in a successful vote to divest at our Annual Meeting.

- **Worship and Celebration:** We continued our work with the Earth Day services, SAC candle lightings, and promoting dialog around environmental issues throughout the year. In addition, the ELT briefed FPC’s delegates to UUA General Assembly in Providence, where the UUA voted in support of Divestment. The flexible UUA resolution was powerful because it called for divestment where it made sense and shareholder activism where it would be a better strategy toward achieving “environmental justice or transition to clean and renewable energy.” Understanding that both approaches are legitimate strategies, the ELT avoided taking a position on which course was a better strategy. After meeting with the Standing Committee and Trustees

of FPC to discuss implementation of GA's vote, the ELT ramped up its educational efforts and helped bring about a decisive vote to divest at our 2014 Annual Meeting.

- **Religious Education:** With the midyear departure of our RE Director, our community garden work stopped. The environmental curricula remained firmly in place as did the integration of environmental issues into children's messages.
- **Environmental Justice:** Divestment remained the focus of our environmental-justice efforts throughout the church year, resulting in our successful vote at Annual Meeting.
- **Sustainable Living:** FPC's Facilities Committee asked the ELT's help identify firms to do an energy audit of FP. We helped select Interfaith Power & Light and provided \$250 to cover the audit cost. We used their audit report to make the case for funding an engineering study and to support a future facilities capital campaign. We maintained our successful coffee composting program and continued conferring with other members of the local faith community how we might collaborate to create an Interfaith Composting Program. We continued our education and outreach efforts: Food and Farming (October Forum), Divestment (November Forum), John Carroll's talk on Climate and Agriculture, and the follow-on panel discussion with our Concord CAN partners. We also populated our hallway bulletin board with information and collaborated with the SAC on connecting FPC to UUSC's Social Justice projects.

2015

- **Worship and Celebration:** We continued Earth and Water Day services and SAC candle lightings, actively participating in UUA's Climate Justice Month.
- **Religious Education:** The environmental curricula and programming continued. But most importantly, the ELT was instrumental in an interfaith climate-action-education initiative, the *Shout Heard 'Round the World*. The idea was launched at an interfaith potluck and evolved over the course of months. Taking place on the Sunday before Patriots Day in April, it was a biking and walking event where people followed Paul Revere's route from Charlestown to Concord to raise awareness about climate change. Another part was having people sign ribbons with wishes for a sustainable future. Several ELT members worked with people from other congregations to plan the event. FP was a focal point, with a picnic on our lawn and the walk to the North Bridge rally starting here. Work included making a website, planning, organizing a picnic, arranging speakers (Fred Small, Rebecca Rule, Shoshanna Freeman), finding partners, etc.
- **Environmental Justice:** We supported FPC's HGRM work and other SAC initiatives.
- **Sustainable Living:** The ELT contributed \$250 as one of six community groups running climate-change films and speaker series. We cosponsored or ran a film series (3 films), a speaker series (4 speakers), and 7 Forums (3 on divestment). In addition, co-chair Peter Lowitt presented to the Concord Humanists, and Brad Hubbard-Nelson ran an Earth Science and Climate course at the local high school. The ELT continued its Composting Program with great success, composting items from the Sunday Coffees by sending them home to parishioners' compost bins. We sent the food waste (e.g., food scraps, pizza boxes, coffee grounds) home because on-site storage was an issue and we only generated one 5-gallon bucket each week. The ELT researched how to expand the program, piggybacking on Open Table, which sends its scraps to a pig farm, and doing a combined program with local restaurants, which would let us add to their volume.

Living Out the Commitment

- **What congregational culture changes have been observed as a result of your Green Sanctuary accreditation?** *Answer:* The institutionalization of support for Green Sanctuary and our work within the congregation and its component units to help them green their operations, (see the above inventory and Appendix 1) testify to shifting the congregation toward a greener position.
- **What discernable examples of living out your Green Sanctuary commitment are apparent?** *Answer:* The most obvious is the Solar Photovoltaic Panels on our building supplying 25% of our electric needs. Additional examples include our on-going education initiatives and interfaith work.
- **What are some examples from out in the community?** *Answer:* Our Interfaith “Sustainability” potluck dinners (which produced the *Shout Heard ‘Round the World* event), our sponsorship of the *Climate Solutions Speakers Series*, and our membership in the *Concord (CAN) Climate Action Network* are some examples from our community work.
- **What are some examples from your congregation?** *Answer:* The use of china and our dishwasher at church functions instead of disposable plasticware and paper goods and the “Sustainability Ideas” tip sheet are examples. In addition, we have “greened” our office and cleaning supplies, and added a Green Sanctuary component to annual staff reviews. Our Coffee Composting program is another good example.
- **What specific plans do you have to continue your Green Sanctuary commitments?** *Answer:* See our reaccreditation action plan for details, but a shift toward Climate Justice and an Action Resolution is on our agenda for the near term.
- **What on-going role do you expect your congregation will take in the wider community relative to environmental issues?** *Answer:* We expect to reinvigorate our Interfaith Sustainability Potluck program, take positions on Climate Justice issues, continue our support of and participation in Concord CAN and the Climate Solutions Speaker series, continue to sponsor Forums at Church, inviting in community members.
- **How do you feel recognition as a Green Sanctuary affects your position in the community (both the local community, interfaith community, and the UU community-at-large)? Please list specific examples.** *Answer:* Being a Green Sanctuary helps FPC maintain a leadership position around environmental issues in Concord. Walking the walk through divestment and the funding and installation of solar photovoltaic panels on our facility has us viewed as a leader among communities of faith in Concord.

Action Plan

Vision: To celebrate our successes, to share knowledge and to recommit to creating a path forward to a cleaner, greener, more sustainable future for our church community. This path forward supports innovation, inclusiveness, transparency and leads us toward carbon neutrality for First Parish in Concord. By making more efficient use of our resources, by integrating natural processes into the built environment and encouraging the innovation and resourcefulness of our congregation we propose to accomplish the following projects as part of our Green Sanctuary program.

Based on our assessment of our current programs and congregational input, we propose the following five projects:

- **Sustainable Living 1:** ELT will work to reinvigorate the Interfaith Sustainable Potluck programs and develop options for parishioners to offset their carbon footprints.

Lead: ELT Brad Hubbard-Nelson and the Climate Action subcommittee on Household Sustainability and our Environmental Footprint.

- **Sustainable Living 2:** Support facilities equipment and efficiency upgrades at FPC, based on the energy audits conducted by Interfaith Power and Light and the follow-on audits conducted by the Facilities Committee at FPC.

Lead: Brad Hubbard Nelson and ELT

- **Worship and Celebration:** Continue Earth Day and World Water Day worship programs, and participate in Climate Justice Month. All Social Action Candle lightings during this period are to be conducted by ELT and SAC members with a climate justice theme.

Lead: Reverend Howard Dana

- **Religious Education:** Incorporate environmental education and social justice programming in the Children's Message and Religious Education curriculum. ELT will continue to collaborate with RE where appropriate. The ELT will continue its support and sponsorship of the Concord CAN Climate Solutions speaker series, support education programming for the congregation and community around environmental issues.

Lead: Rev. Amy Freedman, Minister of Religious Education and Bob Andrews, ELT

- **Environmental Justice:** Our major effort for the coming year will be to work with the congregation to craft and adopt a Climate Action Resolution similar to that adopted by our co-congregants at First Parish in Bedford. ELT has formed a committee to move this issue forward. Plans include financial support for a share Climate Justice Coordinator amongst a number of congregations in the area. We will concurrently explore working with Environmental Justice communities to strengthen our ties with them through supporting projects such as Jericho Road and by providing opportunities for our congregation to take personal action as we are doing with our Black Lives Matter work.

Leads: Peter Lowitt, Kate Crosby, and Brad Hubbard Nelson.

5. APPENDICES:

APPENDIX A: Chart of ELT Sponsored Projects 2010-2015

APPENDIX B: Sustainability Ideas for the First Parish Community

APPENDIX C: The process the ELT Followed to Install Solar Panels on the Roof of First Parish

APPENDIX D: Green Sanctuary Recertification Power Point Presentation from January 24, 2016 Forum at FPC.

APPENDIX E: ELT Green Sanctuary Annual Reports 2010-2015

APPENDIX A: Chart of ELT Sponsored Projects 2010-2015

Project	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
# of services with Environmental themes	2	2	3	2	2
# of ELT led Forums/attendance	4 (90)	4 (110)	2 (50)	3	2
# of events sponsored by ELT					
# of partnerships built	4	6	6	7	
FPC policies and guidelines vision			x	x	x
Installation of Solar PV/ KWH saved				x	u
# of weeks coffee grounds composted			13-Apr	x	x
# ELT interactions w/congregation		40	40	30	
Green Notes in Meeting House News	20	20			
Support divestment efforts				x	x
ethical eating	x	x	x	x	x
carpooling	x	x			
HHW disposal for FPC			x		
Support annual Drop off Swap Off				x	x
films	1	2		2	
Earth Science and Climate course					x
Hallway bulletin board	x	x	x	x	x
Solar PV committee, installation, funding			x	x	x
Climate Solutions speakers				x	x
Fracking event and forum			150 +30 attend		

Green Sanctuary flyer														
Interfaith Potlucks held								X			X			
Making FPC Retreat "Springing Forward" sustainable	X													
Making Howard's installation sustainable									X					
Developing guidance documents for events	X		X				X				X			
Made maintaining GS part of job description				X			X				X			
Policy for all committees to support GS	X		X				X				X			
Social justice events														
RE Community Garden link to open table	X	X	X				X							
HGRM annual recycling event w RE	1					1								
Sharing the Bounty of the Harvest Service							X							
Support energy audits for congregation	X	X												
Earth Day Sermon	1	1				1					1			1
Gaia Concert(s)	1					1								
Environmental music events	2	1				2					1			1
co-sponsored Reverance for Life Potlucks														X
Green Visioning for FPC w/ Sarah James									X					
ELT web site	X		X		X				X					X
Staff training			X		X									
Support Concord tap water initiative			X		X									
ELT attend GA							X							X
Your Hamburger and Climate Change forum											X			
Forum: Concord Food Assessment Report							X							
Forum: Concord Food Council: Roots and Wings														X
Farm and Garden Fair 2013, 2014, 2015							X				X			X

Legend yellow = Sustainable Living, blue RE, Red Environmental Justice, white Worship & celebration

APPENDIX B: Comments from Tables at Coffee hour February 2016

ELT Public Participation Process

- Replace missing storm windows *Patrick Everett*
- Install LED or Fluorescent lights in the church
- Plant based creamer for coffee (e.g. soymilk)
- Calculate carbon footprint of FPC with RE involvement then set goals to reduce it *Gib Metcalf*
- Perhaps dedicate a portion of grounds for “Meadowscaping” between Old Mill Brook and the easterly end of the driveway (herb garden end) between driveway and brook? *(After investigation it was decided there was not enough useable space for this idea to proceed)*
- Explore water collection techniques to incorporate into “meadowscaping” idea above. MIT has a great implementation.
- Join with other congregations in the area to support state and national legislation for climate change.
- Consider geothermal heat pump when its time to replace the heating system
- Consider electric vehicle charging station on front circle.
- Why not put recycling containers in every office so no paper goes to waste
- Terracycle has great programs (e.g. old pens recycled so they never enter waste stream)
- Consider lighting changes (e.g. having lights go on/off automatically)
- Support FP Bedford and regional UU Congregations in organized political pressure on legislators and about pipeline construction.

APPENDIX C: The process the ELT Followed to Install Solar Panels on the Roof of First Parish

- First Parish in Concord is a certified Green Sanctuary through the UUA and the ELT had been thinking about how to reduce our carbon footprint for some time.
- In the winter of 2012-2013, the ELT put out a call to interested parishioners to form a Solar Task Force to investigate putting solar on our roof. The Solar Task Force conducted meetings, held a forum, put out information on the Church and SAC websites, and published information in our newsletters and in the Annual Report (in the ELT section).
- In the fall of 2013 we learned that three important incentives were set to expire or change on December 31, 2013. To take advantage of the current generous Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs) reimbursement rate, we would need to connect our solar project to the grid by December 31. The Concord Municipal Light Plant's incentive program was also set to expire on December 31. Thirdly, a "Solarize Concord" program that offered a reduced installation price would not be available in 2014.
- Representatives from ELT met with Reverend Dana and learned that a congregational vote would be required.
- ELT got permission from the Standing Committee to file an application with the Town of Concord Historic District Commission, and it was filed in early September. A continuation of the October 3 public hearing was requested until October 17 in order to better vet the project with the Solar Task Force and the Standing Committee.
- Sunday, October 6 the Standing Committee met with representatives of the Solar Task Force. The Solar Task Force asked that the Standing Committee request a loan from the Trustees of First Parish. It would be paid back with interest over the ten-year life of the Solar Renewable Energy Credits. The ELT also asked the Standing Committee to proceed with our Historic District Commission process, to bring the solar project before the congregation for a vote on November 10, and to sign a contract with the "Solarize Concord" vendor-of-choice Astrum Solar. The contract could be negated and the deposit refunded if the congregation voted not to proceed.
- The Solar Task Force crafted a proposal that balanced maximizing economic gain for FPC with public safety concerns, operational issues, and aesthetic concerns. The Congregation, after hearing project details through various media and forums (e.g., Mr. Randall singing "Here Comes the Sun" during coffee hours and Ms. Crosby and Ms. Jenkins displaying a solar panel at numerous events), voted unanimously to pursue the installation of solar on First Parish.

- A fundraising campaign, which ran from late November through mid-January, saw parishioners, staff, families, and friends of FPC raise over half of the \$60,000 required for the project. This fundraising significantly reduced the loan payback period and increased the church's savings.
- In early April, the panels began producing electricity.

We expect to cover 25% of the church's electricity costs through this project.

APPENDIX D:

ANNUAL REPORTS

D1:	2010-2011
D2:	2011-2012
D3:	2012-2013
D4:	2013-2014
D5:	2014-2015
D6:	2015-2016

Appendix D1:

2010 Annual Report for FPC

Green Sanctuary Committee/Environmental Leadership Group Annual Report 2010

First Parish Concord

The Green Sanctuary Committee, working closely with the Social Action Committee, transitioned into the Environmental Leadership Group through a series of visioning and brainstorming sessions ably assisted by Faith Bade.

The involvement of Jenny Rankin and Faith Bade in the committee's work provides evidence of the strong First Parish commitment to address environmental issues. Once formed, the group worked on a mission statement and goals for the year. The church's annual Earth Day service was planned to include an environmental sermon by Jenny, the use of a special candle, and a selection of Earth-friendly foods at coffee hour. We also launched a program in which people are encouraged to car pool, walk, or bike to church.

Appendix D: 2

First Parish Church, 20 Lexington Road, Concord, MA 01742

RE: Green Sanctuary Annual Report 2011-2012

To whom it may concern:

- **Update contact information:** Chris Randall and Peter Lowitt along with FPC staff person Faith Bade remain the points of contact within FPC, Concord. Peter.lowitt@verizon.net, chris_randall@wgbh.org are the co-chairs. Faith Bade served as staff liaison to the committee until she resigned in June, 2012.

Report on goals and accomplishments to implement the Green Sanctuary Program at First Parish

- a) Worship and celebration**
- b) Religious education**
- c) Environmental justice**
- d) Sustainable living**

I. Our Facility:

II. Congregational and Community Involvement:

The ELT reviewed our 2011 accomplishments (working on community energy audits, establishing carpools for FPC events, and advocating for ethical eating issues); we met with our interim minister, provided training and advice to the Springing Forward retreat weekend on how to green their event,

provided training around implementation of green sanctuary goals to FPC leadership and staff, met with the standing committee to discuss policy changes, participated in numerous events and services (also co-sponsoring a number as well) and developed the following mission and vision:

First Parish in Concord Environmental Visioning Materials

Environmental Leadership Team – February 26, 2012

A. ELT mission statement:

The Seventh Principle of our UU faith affirms our “respect for the interdependent web of existence, of which we are a part.” The Environmental Leadership Team is committed to providing leadership for this congregation in translating this principle into individual and community action. We ‘honor all beings” and work for a greater understanding and appreciation of how we are interconnected with the natural world. We believe that how and where we live, work, play, and pray impact that world and all of its inhabitants, now and for future generations of all beings.

B. ELT Policy Overview Statement:

In order to carry out the mission described above, the Environmental Leadership Team (ELT) has developed four areas of engagement that we believe will strengthen First Parish of Concord’s ability to fulfill the congregational pledge to be a UUA Green Sanctuary. These include: (1) the adoption of an environmental vision that reflects the seventh principle and the ‘honor all beings’ component of our benediction, but also one that reflects concepts of sustainability that are recognized by environmental leaders worldwide; (2) the development of an approach to help support and advise the congregation on how to maintain Green Sanctuary certification based upon the same sustainability framework adopted by the Town of Concord; (3) to supplement our existing church policies with essential elements of sustainability principles and to identify new policies that will ensure that the church can be successful in honoring its Green Sanctuary pledge; and (4) to identify an appropriate and effective committee structure that will ensure an appropriate relationship to the Standing Committee and the Executive Team at First Parish. Additional detail is provided on each of these areas below.

C. Detail on Environmental Engagement Areas:

1. Environmental Vision

The Seventh Principle of our UU faith affirms our “respect for the interdependent web of existence, of which we are a part.” The Environmental Leadership Group is committed to providing leadership for this congregation in translating this principle into individual and community action. We ‘honor all beings” and work for a greater understanding and appreciation of how we are interconnected with the natural world. We believe that how and where we live, work, play, and pray impact that world and all of its inhabitants, now and for future generations of all beings.

Sustainable use of the Earth’s natural resources will contribute importantly, we believe, to our own spiritual fulfillment and help to ensure social justice for all. On our small planet engaging in a sustainable lifestyle ultimately may be requisite to our species’ continued survival.

We invite all First Parish members to move with us towards enlightened and mindful living; celebrate our natural world; recognize our interconnectedness, and fully appreciate the impact our actions have as we deepen our spiritual connection to all beings.

Many communities use *the precautionary principle* to organize their efforts towards mindful living.

When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically. In this context the proponent of an activity, rather than the public, should bear the burden of proof.

The process of applying the Precautionary Principle must be open, informed and democratic and must include potentially affected parties. It must also involve an examination of the full range of alternatives, including no action.

—1998 *Wingspread Statement on the Precautionary Principle*

We could consider our sanctuary truly green if every decision made at FP considered the full range of alternatives regarding resource use or waste production. A successful process would celebrate successes small and large that accumulate into a midset consistently applied throughout the church.

2. Approach for Environmental Support and Advice

How can the ELT assist FP consider the full range of alternatives regarding resource use or waste production? The ELT proposes to work with FPC staff, volunteers and committees to provide guidance on how to make their decisions more sustainable. This involves working with these individuals and groups to ask the following four questions about their procedures and processes in order to assist them in making thoughtful decisions as they implement their ongoing FPC business.

How will our (committee's) work impact FPC's sustainability objectives to:

- **Reduce wasteful dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals and minerals.**
- **Reduce wasteful dependence upon chemicals and unnatural substances.**
- **Reduce encroachment upon nature.**
- **Meet human needs fairly and efficiently.**

These four questions are the same questions which are at the heart of the American Planning Association's Sustainable Development Policy objectives, the Town of Concord's Sustainability Policy and The Natural Step process. They have a proven track record of effective use and allow users the flexibility to determine their own goals and implementation paths.

Brainstorming around these four points whenever a decision needs to be made can spur creativity, allow for individual choice and comport with our overarching goal of being a certified green sanctuary.

3. Recommended Modifications of First Parish Policies to reflect Environmental Mission/Vision

a. Proposed changes to end statements in existing Governance Policy

The First Parish in Concord (also known as First Parish, or the Church) shall provide a community for its members, guests, friends, and staff in which we deepen in our individual spirituality, deepen in connection to one another and to the natural world, inspire our younger generation to carry the torch

of our faith forward, and give priority in all church planning and decision-making to sustainability principles.

The First Parish in Concord shall serve as a beacon and model to those in our town and neighboring communities who wish to explore our Unitarian Universalist principles. We shall make others in our town and neighboring communities aware of our existence and help them to better understand our Unitarian Universalist faith.

The First Parish in Concord shall bring its Unitarian Universalist principles to bear upon the world outside our congregational walls in order to empower the disenfranchised, address social and environmental injustice and inequality, and promote peace, good will, and respect between and among citizens of our community, the Commonwealth, and beyond.

- b. **New Green Sanctuary policy statement (to be inserted somewhere in the Policy Governance Document)**

On June 14, 2009 the congregation of this church formally voted to act as a UUA Green Sanctuary and adopted the following statement:

“First Parish in Concord pledges our personal and congregational commitment to live and act as a Green Sanctuary: 1) to incorporate the Seventh Principle values and practices into our worship services, celebrations, religious education programs, church operations, and personal lives; 2) to live lightly on the Earth and strive to continually improve our environmental impact; 3) to affirm and promote programs to raise awareness of human behaviors that affect the health and sustainability of the living Earth.”

Because of this congregational vote, and because First Parish was subsequently accredited by the UUA as a Green Sanctuary, the Standing Committee declares that it is the policy of this church that all church programs and activities will be planned and implemented in such a way that they reflect Green Sanctuary values and practices. It is expected that priority consideration will be given in day-to-day decision making to preserving and protecting the health and sustainability of the planet, for the sake of future generations and all living things.

It will be the responsibility of the Executive Team and church staff, in consultation with the church's Environmental Leadership Team, to make sure that this policy is consistently carried out in such a way as to maintain the church's Green Sanctuary accreditation and to make First Parish Concord a model of sustainable living, worship, and operations. The Standing Committee will expect an annual report from the Executive Team of how this policy is carried out and will publish this report to the congregation as well as incorporate it into any annual reports or reaccreditation applications that are required by the UUA.

4. Proposed Committee Structure

III Summarize ongoing and emerging issues and challenges: FPC in Concord is conducting a ministerial search. The Environmental Leadership Team (the renamed Green Sanctuary Committee) and the Sustainability Working Group that emerged through our Springing Forward group processes ('the Retreat') have helped inform the search process and clarified the importance of strong environmental leadership as a component of the FPC minister's job description.

The Environmental Leadership Team intends to seek recertification through the Green Sanctuary Program through its work over the balance of 2012 and 2013.

The goals listed below represent the ELT's initial suggestions of actions we think will make a meaningful difference in reducing First Parish's environmental impact. To help make each goal concrete, we also have proposed a metric by which to gauge progress.

NOTE: The Four Sustainability Objectives of the American Planning Association whose "Policy on Sustainability" Ms. James helped author and will address on the 19th are:

1. Reduce dependence on fossil fuels, scarce metals, and minerals that accumulate in nature.
2. Reduce dependence on chemicals and synthetic substances that accumulate in nature
3. Reduce encroachment upon nature.
4. Meet human needs fairly and efficiently.

Making a Difference By Using Energy Efficiently

Reduce First Parish's Energy Usage (and, by extension, its carbon footprint)

- **Electricity goal: Reduce electricity use by XX% by (date TBD).**

Determine electricity use at the church and in the congregations' homes through Concord Light bills. Strive to reduce usage (and thus GHG emissions) with actions like purchasing green electricity from Concord Light, installing systems that use renewable energy, and purchasing energy-efficient electric appliances.

- **Fuel goal: Reduce oil/natural gas use by XX% by (date TBD).**

Use energy audits to determine the amount of fuel used to heat, cook, launder, etc. at the church and in the congregation's homes. Strive to reduce usage (and thus GHG emissions) with actions like carpooling, adjusting the thermostat and installing hot water heater blankets, insulation, efficient windows, programmable thermostats, etc.

- **Introduce people to easy ways to monitor progress**

Use a carbon calculator to establish a baseline of the church's/congregation's carbon emissions and to monitor progress. Concord Conserves (run by church member Harry Bartlett) has a good one. They are encouraging people to use it and reduce their carbon footprint by offering a prize. Find it at: concordconserves.org/carbon/carbon2011.

Making a Difference Through Purchasing and Disposal Practices

Become a Zero Waste Facility

- **Compost organic materials from church events, and use it on our community garden.**
- **Promote recycling and reuse of materials, including events such as the HGRM day, etc.**

Promote the Use of Environmentally and Socially Responsible Goods By XX% by XX, 2012

- **Recommend that the church (the Building & Grounds Dept., Doug Baker, and the Office Manager) and congregation members purchase items that receive high sustainability ratings from guides, such as "The Better World Shopping Guide," one published by the Natural Resources Defense Council, or GoodGuide.com (which also has an app).**
- **Order copies of rating guides for display and purchase at the event and at coffee hour.**

- Ask people to commit to a goal (e.g., 10%, 30%, 50% purchases with A or B ratings).
- Ask the Standing Committee to support this goal and recommend it to all church groups.

Making a Difference Through Dietary Choices

Reduce Environmental Impact and Greenhouse Gas Emissions By Eating Less Meat

- Eat at least one totally plant based meal daily (e.g., a bagel, jam, and fruit for breakfast; or spaghetti and salad for supper). Post easy, tasty, family-friendly recipes on the ELT website.
- Replace one animal-based product with a plant-based one (e.g., Earth Balance spread for Butter, almond milk for cow's milk, Tofutti instead of cream cheese). Post a list on the ELT website.
- Try alternative milk/creamer products in coffee and in baking (e.g., almond, soy, coconut). Post a list on the ELT website.
- Try a new plant-based recipe from www.vegetariantimes.com or from the ELT website. Provide appealing recipes on the ELT website.
- Commit to eating five vegetables and three fruits every day.
- Broaden your food choices by trying a variety of veggie burgers or alternative meat products (e.g., Garden Crispy Tenders, Field Roast Apple sage sausages) to see if you might make them a regular part of your diet. Post a list on the ELT website.
- Help people learn about alternatives to meat that are delicious and beneficial to all life on the planet. Hold a “tasting night” at First Parish where people pay a small fee to taste a variety of delicious plant-based products.
- Ask people to commit to eating a certain (small!) amount of meat per week. Suggest helpful strategies, such as: “I will only eat animal products after 5pm every day” or “I will only eat eggs on Sundays” or “I will only use cow's milk in my coffee.

Making a Difference Through Education and Advocacy

Promote an Appreciation of Our Place in the Natural World

- Each week, devote at least 30 minutes to being mindful of one’s place in the natural world by noticing/appreciating things like the connections between living things, the splendor of nature, natural beauty, and the rhythms beyond humans’ lives.

Advocate For Policies Promoting “Green” Energy and Sustainability

- **Write to local and national representatives to push for legislation that supports sustainability. Letters are better than emails. Phone calls are important as well.**
- **Meet regularly as a group. This helps define a time for the writing and to make it easier to learn about the issues and who to contact. A measurable goal would be to contact X number of office-holders in a given time period.**
- **On the ELT website, provide contact info, categories of legislation related to various issues, and "position briefs" on various issues written by ELT members, church members, or other advocacy groups.**

Sustainability Ideas for First Parish

Office

- **Use double sided printing x% of time,**
- **Use recycled paper x% of time,**
- **Only do worship inserts with information on both sides OR use half size paper,**

Worship

- **Try a worship without paper**

- Consider reduced lighting
- Offer car pool benefits (e.g., parking spot, reserved pews, etc.)
- Offer congregation some benefits for coming forward with doable carbon footprint-reducing activities (e.g., bonus? special parking? coffee hour announcements, etc.)

Coffee hour

- Reduce paper usage by xxx%.
- Handouts must be double sided
- Vegetarian options always
- Purchase locally
- Use recycled paper products
- Use environmentally friendly cleaning products
- Reduce lighting

Committee Meetings

- Carpool
- Send documents/agendas, etc via email prior to meetings
- Have each committee take time to discuss and identify sustainable actions they can do

Events

- Carpool
- Limit the use of paper goods (or use paper goods if there will be a lot of wash up)
- Offer vegetarian or vegan options

Staff

- Reduce paper output
- Have all emails say at bottom "only print this if necessary"
- Ask at meetings how can we make FP more environmentally friendly
- Include benchmarks for "Green" activities within staff and program evaluations.

Operations

- Reduce paper printing
- Purchase supplies eco friendly - cleaners, paper goods, t paper, etc.
- Track electricity and heating usage and devise ways to reduce it and be accountable for these reductions (actually have a monetary rewards such as a bonus for ideas for reducing out carbon foot print or our costs associated with power usage)
- Look into purchasing cooperative with other faith communities

ELT provided training to FPC staff on how to use tools such as thegoodguide.com to develop an FPC screen to review purchasing decisions and help to inform decision making around purchasing of goods.

The Sustainability Working Group Recommendations from the FPC Springing Forward Event:

Vision: FPC is a leader in sustainability for its Parishioners and in the world. We remain concerned with the inter-connected web of life and what is our fair share. We challenge ourselves to be aware of the long term consequences of our every day actions and lifestyles. We make every effort to reduce our footprint and we celebrate living in harmony with the earth.

- Environmentalism, sustainability and mindful living are cross-cutting issues for FP, from food and health to RE to church operations and sermons from the pulpit.
- Consciousness raising about long term consequences of everyday actions. Educate about our decisions-encourage-suggest-quantitative analysis-facts.
- Collaborate with other FP groups such as Reverence for Life. Interconnectedness of FP.

- Importance of ministerial support for sustainable living. Stress this importance in the ministerial search.
- “Celebrate living in harmony with the earth.” As an important message/component of our communications strategy so that its something folks want to commit to and be part of.

Members: Bozena Smith, Brad Hubbard-Nelson, Bill Sabine, Peter Lowitt, Bob Andrews, Debbie Dunnington, Lyell Slade, Jim Pazaris, Bob Van Dyck.

Our Project: Sharing and Celebrating the bounty of the earth this September. We encourage and invite parishioners to bring the bounty of their gardens to a Sunday service and share it with their neighbors. We encourage organic/sustainable gardening for those participating in the event, though it is not required. We will use the event to educate folks about gardening and our connections to the land.

By June 1 we will meet to plan the fall sharing the bounty of the earth event.

By September 1 we will finalize the details of the event and worked with staff and the minister to make it part of the day’s service.

We will hold the event in late September after having notified parishioners using all communications strategies available to us.

Our next meeting will be the 2nd Sunday in May (6th) at 7PM-9PM concurrent with the ELT meeting (changed from 13th)

FPC leads the way with its Green Sanctuary efforts. January 2012

In past years, the First Parish Household Goods Recycling Ministry (HGRM) event has been a huge win-win for both HGRM and for parishioners looking to find a new home for serviceable household items. HGRM, a non-profit organization based in Acton, provides household goods, free of charge, to people in need. They accept donations of gently used household items to help individuals and families from over 40 communities in eastern Massachusetts make a home . The Environmental Leadership Team will be handling the recycling for the Household Goods Recycling Drop Off Event at FPC on Saturday February 11, 2012. We encourage you to divest yourself of extraneous goods and products while helping those in need.

FPC is a certified UUA Green Sanctuary church by vote of the congregation.

So what does that mean? On the UUA web site they describe Green Sanctuary as “a path for study and reflection and a call to individual and collective action in response to environmental challenges through:

- Building awareness of the significant complexity of environmental issues
- Encouraging personal lifestyle changes
- Strengthening the connection between spiritual practice and earth consciousness
- Working to heal environmental injustices”

First Parish Church has been working to integrate green sanctuary goals into church operations as required by UUA in order for us to maintain our status as a certified Green Sanctuary. FPC members developed an action plan to achieve certification which includes working in the following four (4) areas:

- Worship and Celebration – including our annual earth day sermons and events such as the wonderful Gaia concert that Beth Norton and the choir presented so wonderfully a few years ago.
- Religious Education – building on the wonderful efforts of Pam Howell and her team of dedicated teachers working with our children to make them aware of environmental issues and concerns through programs in RE and our commitment to a community garden.
- Environmental Justice- another area where FPC has taken a stance to make members aware of the complex issues and trade offs inherent in environmental issues.
- Sustainable living – grounds, parking lot, transportation, facilities, kitchen, food, recycling/reusables, office and cleaning supplies, energy use, investment policies, congregation committees

FPC’s green sanctuary committee evolved into the Environmental Leadership Team with staff support provided by Faith Bade. The ELT committee, which falls under the SAC has been working to update our plan and document our efforts to maintain certification.

FPC has done a great job to date:

- Many green building aspects have been integrated into our renovations; including native grasses for our lawn.
- Operationally FPC through the Environmental Leadership Team has developed programs to support carpooling, conducting home energy audits for congregants, and support the use of healthier foods and snacks for congregation events.
- The ELT has conducted its own listening sessions with the congregation over the past two years and has hosted Sarah James, noted sustainability author and leader of the eco-municipality movement in the United States (which Concord joined last year), to speak about to use the natural step process to help towns, citizens , even churches make more thoughtful decisions about their interactions with the environment. The process asks us to minimize the use of products that come out of the earth and accumulate in our bodies, and synthetic materials that do the same thing, to reduce our impact on the land and to treat all beings with compassion and fairness. Sounds pretty Unitarian to me.
- Januarys' Women's Parish Association luncheon served a vegetarian meal served on china rather than disposable paper plates and plastic water bottles have disappeared from other FPC events as well.

As you can see FPC has made great progress to date, let's think of how much more we can accomplish in the new year. We are part of a church community. FPC has a proud history of its congregation living its ideals and taking a stand based on them. If we can't address the impacts of climate change here within our church community – we won't be able to address it anywhere.

Appendix:

Agenda for our meeting with Elaine

1. Welcome
2. Review ELT's vision and process:
 - Vision: To work in an advisory capacity to help First Parish realize its full potential as a Green Sanctuary.
 - Process

- **Messenger:** The ELT meets with the Steering Committee, ET, departments, and committees to educate them about the responsibilities related to being a Green Sanctuary.
- **Consultant:** We work with the First Parish groups to help them find ways to align their work with Green Sanctuary principles. *(See page 2.)*
- **Related question:** We see the ELT as advisory, as compared to a policy or implementation group.
 - What is realistic to expect in how far the ELT's influence can go?
 - Who do we advise?
 - What is our charge?
 - Who do we report to?

3. Present ELT's dilemma: No formal charge or mandate

- We would like the Standing Committee to give us a formal charge. Can they do this?

4. Ask a selection of the questions below to get Elaine's ideas about integrating the ELT into First Parish's culture.

- Why was she so surprised to learn that First Parish is a Green Sanctuary?
- How do we get First Parish to "own" the fact that it is a Green Sanctuary?
- How might we get the church to consider environmental issues in all its operations?
- What ways can she suggest for the ELT to work in concert with the First Parish leadership (ministers, ET departments, Standing Committee, ...)?
- What kinds "teeth" are there to help make sure the congregation, departments, committees, etc. take Green Sanctuary principles seriously?
 - How do we most effectively institute an Earth Ministry at First Parish, based on Green Sanctuary principles and the Town of Concord Sustainability principles? *(See page 2 for ELT's proposal.)*
 - What ideas can you offer in how to work effectively with other First Parish groups?
 - What opportunities does she know about to work with groups outside First Parish?

- **What does the “Earth Ministry” mentioned in the Green Sanctuary guidelines mean to you?**
- **Where do you rank the issue of sustainability among all the social action efforts FP is engaged with?**

5. Develop a list of next steps/action items.

APPENDIX D 3:

2012-2013 Annual Report

Environmental Leadership Team

Green Sanctuary

Annual Report

2012-2013

First Parish Environmental Leadership Team Members: Chris Randall and Peter Lowitt (Co-Chairs), Robert Andrews, Berni Jenkins, Mike Jacobs, Gary Kleinman, Debbie Barr, Bob Van Dyck, Topher Buck, Enid Boasberg, Laura Bremer Benedict.

Bethany Lowe staff

Point of Contact: Peter Lowitt peter.lowitt@verizon.net and Chris Randall chrisrandallchrisrandall@gmail.com

EVENTS:

- **Sharing the Bounty of the Earth – First Parish’ October 14, 2012 Abundance Service and Coffee Hour. .” The service included a children’s message from Chris Randall, Environmental Leadership Team Co-Chair and chef extraordinaire; a SAC Candle lighting related to the theme of the day; and wonderful music, with excerpts from the Gia music of Paul Winter, performed by the FPC Choir and Jefferson Parish Choir of Golden, Colorado. Coffee hour featured Chef Randall’s Harvest Stew and numerous agricultural related groups set up at tables around the periphery of the room and serving nutritious snacks.**
- **Stephen Cleghorn February 1, 2013 Fracking lecture held in the Sanctuary. 150 people from the community and beyond attended his Friday talk.**
- **Forum with Stephen Cleghorn February 3, 2013. 30 people attended his Sunday Forum.**
- **Forum May, 19 with Mike Jacobs speaking on Solar Panels at First Parish Church and in Concord. Mike initiated this great idea and with the help of ELT has created a committee and done the necessary ground work to move this project of placing solar pv panels on the R. E. Wing of FPC forward.**
- **March 6, 2013 Doug Baker and Peter Lowitt recycled the Household Hazardous Waste from the basement at the Devens Household Hazardous Waste Recycling Center.; much of it left over from the expansion project completed four years ago.**

- **April 21, 2013 Earth Day Sermon at FPC. ELT provided ideas and volunteers for the event.**
- **Composting Coffee Grounds began April, 2013 thanks to Ms. Jenkins efforts and coordination with Mr. Baker.**
- **World Water Day Service March 22, 2013. ELT participated.**
- **Institutionalizing Sustainability at FPC. ELT provided input at the request of Reverend Peresluna into the job descriptions for staff. Language regarding implementing FPC's Green Sanctuary goals and objectives and staff's efforts to assist in their implementation are now part of the job descriptions.**
- **Green Sanctuary re-certification will begin 2014-2015. An annual report to UUA will be filed by the ELT in June.**

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Environmental Leadership Team at First Parish Concord,

Peter Lowitt

APPENCIX D 3:

Environmental Leadership Team Annual Report

2013-2014

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBERS

ELT Members: Bob Andrews, Debbie Barr, Bruce Blumberg B, Laura Bremner-Benedict, Brad Hubbard-Nelson Mike Jacobs, Berni Jenkins, Peter Lowitt (co-chair), Chris Randall (co-chair), and Bob Van Dyck

Standing Committee Liaison: Kate Crosby

Staff Support: Bethany Lowe, Director of Social Action

2013–2014 ACHIEVEMENTS

Spearheaded and managed process to install and fund 70 solar panels at First Parish

The major “green” accomplishment of First Parish for this year was the successful completion of ELT’s two-year solar-energy initiative. Seventy solar panels were installed on the south-facing roof of the church. They went “live” in April, 2014, significantly reducing FP’s electricity costs as well as its institutional carbon footprint. It is anticipated that the project will reduce FP electricity costs by around 25%.

Some of the highlights of the project are:

- The process for moving the project forward was very open to, and inclusive of, interested church members, as well as all levels of church leadership, including the Senior Minister and Standing Committee. Mike Jacobs, an ELT member who is also a professional expert on alternative energy, shepherded the project through to completion, working with a Task Force of interested and well informed parishioners and reaching out to all the stakeholders in this large and complex church community.
- The Solar Task Force crafted a proposal which balanced maximizing economic gain for the congregation with public safety concerns, and operational issues with aesthetic concerns. Working with ELT, they conducted meetings, held a forum, and were a frequent presence at Sunday coffee hours. They put out information on the church website as well as in newsletters, emails, and the church’s Annual Report.
- The proposal included a plan for a \$70,000 loan to the Operating Budget of the church by the Trustees of donations to cover the startup costs for the project. The loan was to be repaid over a period of ten years, using the saving in electricity costs due to the new energy source.
- This very historic Concord church, located in a central historic district, won unanimous support from the Town of Concord’s Historic District Commission before coming to a special meeting of the congregation in November, 2013.

- The proposal was unanimously approved by a vote of the whole FP congregation at that special congregational meeting.
- With all of the momentum that was created among church members by the solar project, it was decided that a special fundraising campaign should be initiated to pay back the loan from the Trustees at a more rapid rate and increase the church's savings. This campaign, co-led by ELT member, Berni Jenkins, and the Standing Committee Liaison to the committee, Kate Crosby, ran from late November through mid-January and offered parishioners and their families and friends, as well as church committees, an opportunity to "Adopt a Solar Panel"
- The "Adopt a Solar Panel" campaign was hugely successful, bringing in more than \$60,000 of the \$70,000 loaned to the operating budget for startup costs.

At least as exciting and impressive as the solar panels installed and the money and electricity saved, was the growing good will and energy of the congregation. Carrying through this project from beginning to end was an exercise in community-building for the church as well as a strong expression of our commitment to Green Sanctuary principles.

Institutional Change

- New item added to criteria for staff performance reviews, focused on how staff are working to help the church maintain its Green Sanctuary certification. Being "green" is no longer the responsibility of an isolated committee; it is increasingly seen as central to our identity as a spiritual community.
- Various church groups planned and hosted "green" events this year, often using guidelines developed by ELT in previous years. Direct consultation with team members was sought out when needed; One large and important event planned and carried out as a "green" event was the reception at the installation of Rev Howard Dana as FP's new Senior Minister.

- Earth Day was recently celebrated with an excellent sermon by Rev. Howard Dana laying out clearly the threat posed to Mother Earth by global climate change and the importance of modifying our life styles to reflect our concern about what is happening to the planet.
- Environmental themes were frequently a part of RE classes and children’s messages on Sunday mornings.
- When the Social Action Board was reorganized early in the church year, two members of that Board were specially assigned to pursue sustainability objectives. The church has always been strongly involved in social action, there is an increasing recognition that environmental activism is an integral part of that, and is often linked to social justice.
- Responding to an outreach initiated by an ELT member, fifteen or more church members got involved in taking away and composting coffee grounds generated at church coffee hours and other events. This project required collaboration with the sextons and active recruitment of a corps of volunteers.
- A vegan group, called “Reverence for Life,” and ELT joined together this year in co-sponsoring vegan potluck dinners, where attendees are always educated about the ways that how we eat benefits the environment and all living beings.
- Education of the adult membership about environmental issues continued to be a focal point of ELT efforts and the church’s Sunday Morning Forum Committee. Well informed and inspiring outside speakers were repeatedly found to speak on “green” topics at the forums, including climate change, Green Chemistry, Eco-Industrial Parks, and Divestment from Fossil Fuels.

Going Out Into the World

Co-Sponsorship of “Climate Solutions” Speaker Series

Consistent with the First Parish commitment to “go out into the world in peace,” ELT and the FP Social Action Community have continued to support environmental initiatives within the greater Concord Community.

- Joining with five other local groups, including two other churches, the First Parish Social Action Community co-sponsored a “Climate Solutions” Speaker Series. The broad goal of this series is to inspire people to get involved in effective climate action. Major speakers to date have included Craig Altemose, the activist Executive Director of “The Better Future Project” and Frances Moore Lappe, renowned author of “Diet for a Small Planet.” A program hosted by FP featured a panel of activists talking about specific climate action campaigns that can be “Pathways to Action” for new volunteer activists. First Parish’s ELT contributed funds to support the program and hosted the first two events, which then transferred to another local church.

Supporting Local, Sustainable Food and Farming Event

Debbie Barr, and ELT member, is very actively involved in promoting and planning for a thriving, sustainable local food and agriculture system in the Concord community. ELT, at her request, advocated for allocation of First Parish SAC Grant funds for the support of a large, community-building Farm and Garden Fair in September, 2014. This was the second year for this event; and church funding was secured in both instances.

Initiating Interfaith Potlucks

First Parish’s Social Action Director, Bethany Lowe, and ELT member Laura Bremner-Benedict reached out actively this year to communities of faith within Concord, suggesting an interfaith sustainability potluck. The guiding idea was that all faith communities committed to greening their sanctuaries could benefit from ongoing communication and collaboration.

Responses to our outreach were very positive. Two potluck dinners were held in the Spring of 2014, with a third now scheduled for early June. Participants to date have included, in addition to First Parish, Trinitarian Congregational Church, Trinity Episcopal Church, and Synagogue Kerem Shalom. The involved faith communities take turns hosting the events.

At the initial potluck event, attendees shared information about efforts to make their institutions more environmentally conscious; and several specific topics of interest to the participants were identified. These included how “green committees” are put together and made effective; divestment from fossil fuels, and composting of organic wastes. A collaboration around shared composting from the various faith communities is now being explored. People from other local churches have expressed an interest; and we hope that the group will grow in the year ahead.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Several of the initiatives described above will undoubtedly continue in the year ahead. As was true this year, ELT will continue to be available to all church groups for consultation around planning events, finding and using “green” products, recycling and re-use, etc. etc.

Interfaith Potluck events are a relatively new venture that will continue as long as a common interest exists in their continuation among local faith institutions. We are at a point where although we want and need to continue to promote Green Sanctuary values and practices within our own congregation, we feel that we have learned much that can provide models for other faith institutions to follow. We can also learn what others have done that could enhance our own Green Sanctuary efforts.

As of now, ELT has chosen to focus on divestment of fossil fuel holdings as its next major issue. This is not a new discussion at First Parish. We have been involved for over a year in consciousness-raising events where it has been explored. Recently, many FP members were supporters of a divestment article brought to the Concord Town Meeting.

In approaching institutional divestment, we are aware of the Business Resolution on fossil fuel divestment that will come before the UUA General Assembly this June. We want to be part of the emerging nationwide denominational focus on divestment as a way to address global climate change. FP Delegates to the General Assembly will be briefed about the resolution by ELT before they leave for Providence. There have already been discussions with members of the Standing Committee and Trustees of Donations about how best to approach the issue within our church; and other, more focused discussions are anticipated after the General Assembly vote.

APPENCIX D: 4

Environmental Leadership Team Annual Report 2014-2015

ELT Members: Chris Randall and Peter Lowitt (Co-Chairs), Bethany Lowe (FP staff liaison), Bob Andrews, Debbie Barr, Laura Bernstein, Bruce Blumberg, Laura Bremer Benedict, Topher Buck, Leslie Fisher, Brad Hubbard-Nelson, Mike Jacobs, Berni Jenkins, Bob Van Dyck

Divestment

Getting FP to divest their fossil fuel holdings—in keeping with the 7th Principle—was ELT's major work this year. A Divestment Subcommittee researched the issue, consulted with the Trustees, ran three forums on the issue, drafted a resolution, and presented it to the Trustees and Standing Committee, which gave it very favorable support. The resolution will be voted on at the June 14 annual meeting.

Facilities Energy Audit

FP's Facilities Committee asked the ELT's help in identifying firms to do an energy audit of FP. We helped select Interfaith Power & Light and provided \$250 to cover the audit cost. We will use their audit report to make the case for funding an engineering study and as the data for a facilities capital campaign.

Forums and Events

The ELT cosponsored or ran: a film series (3 films); a speaker series (4 speakers); 7 Forums (three on divestment). In addition, co-chair Peter Lowitt presented to the Concord Humanists and Brad Hubbard-Nelson ran an Earth Science and Climate course at the high school. Finally, the ELT contributed \$250 as one of six community groups running climate-change films and speaker series.

Shout Heard 'Round the World (Interfaith Climate Action Initiative)

The idea was launched at an interfaith potluck and evolved over the course of months. Taking place on the Sunday before Patriots Day, it was a biking and walking event where people followed Paul Revere's route from Charlestown to Concord to raise awareness about climate change. Another part was having people sign ribbons with wishes for a sustainable future. Several ELT members worked with people from other congregations to plan the event. FP was a focal point, with a picnic on our lawn and the walk to the North Bridge rally starting here. Work included making a website, planning, organizing a picnic, arranging speakers (Fred Small, Rebecca Rule, Shoshanna Freeman), finding partners, etc.

Compost

FP continues—with great success—to compost items from the Sunday Coffees by sending them home with parishioners. We only generate one 5-gallon bucket a week (food scraps, pizza boxes, coffee grounds) and on-site storage is an issue. For this year, we're only using the "home" approach. If FP wants to expand the program, we researched piggybacking on Open Table, which sends its scraps to a pig farm, and doing a combined program with local restaurants, which would let us add to their volume.

Green Sanctuary

This year, we worked to make FP events more sustainable. We also helped add "Green Sanctuary" competencies to the staff review process and wrote an inventory of what ELT has done over the past five years as part of our Green Sanctuary initiatives. In December, FP's Green Sanctuary status will expire. To maintain it's Green Sanctuary status, FP needs to develop an action plan for the next five years, send it in to the UUA for comments, and then carry out the projects. For reaccreditation, our plan needs to emphasize social-equity components (e.g., sustainable living and environmental justice). These can be actions, such as our HGRM work, our energy conservation work in Roxbury, Earth-Day service, the community garden, etc. We need to get feedback from congregation, prioritize, integrate our ideas with other realms of social action, and carry out the ideas over the next five years.

APPENDIX D: 5

2015-2016 Annual Report

Environmental Leadership Team

The Environmental Leadership Team at First Parish Concord was ably supported by Bethany Lowe ; who we all will miss and to whom we wish good fortune as she pursues her calling. Membership in ELT consisted of Bruce Blumberg, Bob Andrews, Berni Jenkins, Brad Hubbard-Nelson, Joyce Biggs, Janet Clark, Laura Bremer Benedict, Debbie Barr, Suzi Chivvis Mark, Peter Lowitt (chair), Kate Crosby , Topher Buck, Mike Jacobs and Janet Rothrock.

Point of Contact: Peter Lowitt peter.lowitt@verizon.net

During the church year ELT continued to pursue our Green Sanctuary recertification, conducting a public outreach campaign which included an interactive Forum on the topic and hosted tables at coffee hour to further solicit input from the congregation. A draft was produced and sent to UUA for their comments. Once those are received and incorporated, a final report highlighting our goals for the next five years will be produced and new certification should follow in the fall.

In addition to this, ELT sponsored and participated in the following events:

- Showing of Divide in Concord coupled with an Interfaith Potluck October 16th followed by a facilitated discussion with Evan Seitz, UUA Climate Activist affiliated with First Parish in Bedford.
- Sponsored a Forum with Evan Seitz on FPC Bedford's Climate Justice work
- Supported the Concord Farm and Garden Event weekend
- Managed coffee composting over the course of the year
- Brad organized a Climate Activists walk to Walden Pond as part of a Day of Action in solidarity with the Paris Climate Accords.
- Sponsored and participated in the Climate Solutions Speakers Series, hosting a February talk at FPC featuring the City of Cambridge's efforts to get to Net Zero energy.
- Met with Bedford FPC's Climate Justice Group to discuss collaboration possibilities.
- Liaised with the FPC Facilities group around issues arising from an energy audit of the church.
- Co-sponsored numerous events such as the Film Rightful Heritage, FDR and the Land of America.
- Formed as taskforce to work on developing a Climate Justice Resolution and Action Agenda for FPC.
- Participated in SAC Candle Lightings as part of Climate Justice month between World Water Day and Earth Day this spring.

APPENDIX E:

ELT's process for Institutionalizing Green Sanctuary Principles at First Parish

2011-2012

The Green Sanctuary Focus Areas and Associated Goals

Green Sanctuary is based on a framework of four focus areas:

- **Worship and celebration**
- **Religious education**
- **Environmental justice**
- **Sustainable living**

Green Sanctuary program goals for each focus area:

- **Build awareness of the significance and complexity of environmental issues**
- **Encourage personal lifestyle changes**
- **Engage in community action on environmental issues**
- **Strengthen the connection between spiritual practice and Earth consciousness**
- **Work to heal environmental injustices.**

The Town of Concord's (ToC) sustainability goals that First Parish is using to help people/groups brainstorm specific actions they can take to implement the Green Sanctuary program goals above

- a. Reduce dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals, and minerals.**
- b. Reduce dependence upon synthetic chemicals and other unnatural substances.**
- c. Reduce encroachment upon nature.**
- d. Meet human needs fairly & efficiently**

Example of how a brainstorm would work, using Green Sanctuary Program Goal #2

Green Sanctuary Program Goal #2—Encourage personal lifestyle changes

ToC Sustainability Goal a: Reduce dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals, & minerals.

- Carpool
- Home energy audits
- Church buys green power
- Ride bikes
- Use local and/or minimally processed food
- Think through how to make travel programs green

ToC Sustainability Goal b: Reduce dependence upon synthetic chemicals & unnatural substances.

- Promote Drop-Off/Swap Off
- Use organic fertilizers
- Use butcher paper for tablecloths
- Promote purchasing green cleaning products
- Use local and/or minimally processed food
- Find alternatives to plastic water bottles

ToC Sustainability Goal c: Reduce encroachment upon nature.

- Use native species in landscaping
- Support the community garden
- Pave less or with porous materials
- Support local farms
- Eat more plant-based foods
- Think through how to make tourism/vacations green

ToC Sustainability Goal d: Meet human needs fairly & efficiently

- Purchase Fair Trade products
- Support Open Table
- Support political action
- immigration issues
- Offer bus/van transport to services
- Support Heifer Proj., plant-based eating groups, etc.

Each First Parish department and committee would develop 20 lists of brainstormed actions appropriate to their charge or work. (4 Concord Sustainability goals for each of the 5 Green Sanctuary program goals = 20 lists) The ELT would sort these bulleted brainstormed actions into the four focus areas of the Green Sanctuary framework. We assume we would populate

Application Instructions

Using this format, submit your electronic application to uua_greensanctuary@uua.org . If you cannot email the application, please contact Lesley Murdock at the above address for snail-mail instructions.

For additional information and advice for preparing your application, feel free to contact Karen Brammer via email at kbrammer@uua.org or by phone at 802.753.7726.