

Sustainability Ideas for the First Parish Community

Looking at Sustainability through the lens of specific church activities

General

- Carpool
- Lower heat.
- Reduce lighting.
- Limit the use of paper goods.
- Reduce paper output, such as by using double-sided printing.
- Have all emails say at bottom "only print this if necessary."

Events

- Weigh using china (uses water, energy, & time) versus paper goods (convenient but uses resources and requires disposal). In general, china looks best when you can run full loads.
- Offer vegetarian/vegan options. Label them so people know. Consider providing recipe.
- Collect coffee grounds/tea bags/compostable items. Bring to community garden plot.
- Use no tablecloths or use butcher paper for tablecloths.
- Find alternatives to plastic water bottles.
- Ask Doug if he has any environmentally friendly cleaning products for you to use.

Coffee hour

- Offer at least one vegetarian option. Label it so people know. Consider providing recipe.
- Buy locally grown/raised food.
- Buy locally available products that require less transportation.
- Purchase recycled paper products.
- Use environmentally friendly cleaning products.

Committee Meetings

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

Worship

- Try a worship without paper.
- Carpool, as well as offer car pool benefits (e.g., parking spot, reserved pews, etc.).
- Only do worship inserts with information on both sides OR use half size paper.

Office and Operations

- Purchase eco-friendly supplies—cleaners, paper goods, toilet paper, etc.
- Track electricity and heating usage and devise ways to reduce it and be accountable for these reductions (e.g., a reward for ideas on reducing our carbon foot print).
- Look into purchasing cooperative with other faith communities.
- At staff meetings, regularly raise the question of how to make FP more sustainable.
- Include benchmarks for "Green" activities within staff and program evaluations.

Looking at sustainability through the lens of personal choices we can make

Ideas for reducing dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals, & minerals

- **Monitor your sustainability.** Use energy efficiently. 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.
- Carpool
- Conduct a home energy audit
- Buy green power
- Ride bikes
- Use local and/or minimally processed food
- Think through how to make FP travel programs green

Ideas for reducing dependence upon synthetic chemicals & unnatural substances

- **Become a zero-waste facility.** Compost organic materials from events and promote recycling and reuse of materials, including such events as the HGRM day, etc.
- **Purchase items with high sustainability ratings.** Refer to guides, such as "The Better World Shopping Guide," or GoodGuide.com (which also has an app).
- **Commit to a goal.** Buy 10%, 30%, 50% of one's purchases with a guide rating of A or B.
- Promote Drop-Of/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

Ideas for reducing environmental impact & greenhouse gas emissions through dietary choices

- Commit to eating five vegetables and three fruits every day.
- Eat at least one totally plant based meal daily (e.g., a bagel, jam, and fruit for breakfast; or spaghetti and salad for supper). For easy, tasty recipes, visit: www.vegetariantimes.com.
- Replace animal-based products with a plant-based ones (e.g., Earth Balance spread for Butter, almond milk for cow's milk, Tofutti instead of cream cheese, Field Roast products, Garden Crispy Tenders, etc.).
- Try alternative milk/creamer products in coffee and in baking (e.g., almond, soy, coconut).

Ideas for reducing encroachment upon nature

- **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.
- 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

Ideas for meeting human needs fairly and efficiently

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