



GreenFaithSM

Certification Program

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Eco-Theology and Eco-Justice Ministries

- The prefix, Eco, is derived from the Greek word, oikos, which means household, house, or a family. And, whereas the term's root meaning is the same as for Economy and Ecology, its connotation within an eco-justice ministry is "action to wholeness for God's household," that is, all of creation. Therefore, Eco-theology and its action corollary, Eco-justice Ministry, speak to the interrelatedness of all beings, as it advocates for world peace, social justice for all creatures, and environmental sustainability.

Outline

- GreenFaith History
- St. Aidan's Eco-History
- Relevance for Other Churches
- Attractiveness of GreenFaith to St. Aidan's
- Why would another church want to participate in this certification program?
- Application Process
- Program Overview
- Certification Program Congregations
- St. Aidan's GreenFaith Experience
- How it fits with Diocesan RSVP goals

GreenFaith History



- Mission
 - GreenFaith inspires, educates and mobilizes people of diverse religious backgrounds for environmental leadership.
- Founded in 1992 and operated as an all-volunteer coalition.
- In the late 1990s, United Jewish Communities of MetroWest and the Episcopal Diocese of Newark each provided seed funding to hire staff to promote the use of renewable energy by religious institutions.
- In the early 2000s, we focused our efforts on energy conservation and the use of renewable energy in religious institutions.
- Work on “greening” congregations started with individual congregations, expanded and broadened through several programs leading to the current Certification Program which encapsulated many years of best-practices.
- www.greenfaith.com

The Episcopal Church and GreenFaith

- On October 5th, 2010, the Episcopal Church and GreenFaith announced a collaboration to enroll Episcopal churches in the GreenFaith Certification Program.
- 30 congregations will have half of their tuition underwritten by the Episcopal Church and GreenFaith.
- Mike Schut, Economic and Environmental Affairs Officer of the Episcopal Church
 - The Economic and Environmental Affairs Office of the Episcopal Church seeks to embody the Episcopal Church's call to educate, act and advocate for environmental justice and care for all God's creation.

Compassionate Care

- The Rev. Fletcher Harper, Executive Director of GreenFaith, from the Bible and the Environment webinar.

Compassionate Care

- Gen. 2:15

The Lord God took the human creature and placed him in the garden of Eden, to till it and to tend it.



St. Aidan's Eco History

- We grew into an Ecological Justice Ministry.
- It happened in three major ways:
 - greening of the building
 - education about use of the planet
 - care and restoration of our grounds and a growing understanding of stewardship of the earth



Greening of the Building

- St. Aidan's had many influencers in our growing awareness of green practices that were healthy for us, saved money for the church, and let us make positive contributions to our environment.



Greening of the Building

- We began to buy healthier products.
 - We buy only paper products for disposable dishes. We encouraged use of china and ceramic mugs for dinners and coffee hour. We installed dishwashers to save water and to process dishes.
 - We buy only non-bleached coffee filters.
 - We buy fair trade organic coffee for coffee hour.
 - We buy eco-palms for Palm Sunday
 - We recycle everything we can.
 - We conserve paper in bulletin production.
 - We are beginning to buy eco-friendly cleaning products.

Greening of the Building

- We blew insulation into the church attics in a difficult volunteer activity, managing two buildings for \$700.00.
- We installed 7-day programmable thermostats.
- We installed blinds that can regulate solar gain.
- We switched to fluorescent bulbs for most lights.
- Replaced old toilet tanks with 1.6 gal water saver tanks.
- After an energy analysis we bought and had installed a 95% fuel efficient furnace. (With help from a Thretheway Downs Grant.)
- We replaced old refrigerators with new Energy Star models.



Boiler Upgrade



Education About Use of the Planet

- We held workshops on recycling and organic food buying.
- We took surveys about our carbon footprint and committed ourselves, through the work of a Sunday morning education series, to go on a “carbon diet.”
- We learned about the effect of western greed through deforestation and mining (oil, gold, diamonds) on the economies and lifestyles of people in different countries of Africa.
- We studied Environmental Theology in a Lenten study series.
- We sponsored several art gallery shows with nature and environmental themes.
- We included prayers for the environment and especially for water in our Good Friday Stations of the Cross.

Good Friday Stations of the Cross



Education About Use of the Planet

- We had elaborate blessing services every rogation day along with planting of native plants on our property.



Education About Use of the Planet

- We planted native grasses in our detention pond and dedicated it with an outdoor service.



Education About Use of the Planet

- We blessed most of our progress and special plantings (such as 20 hardwoods and conifers we planted at the dedication of our parking lot) in worship services. Bishop Gibbs blessed these 20 trees during a parish visitation.



Education About Use of the Planet

- We had our property certified as a Wildlife Habitat and began to celebrate this with an annual lecture series that provides education about the environment.



Education About Use of the Planet

- Blessing of the new path added in 2009.



Care and Restoration of 7 Acres of Church Property

- This aspect of our work was the most influential in our growing commitment to ecological justice ministry



History

- The Land itself: The 7 acre plot was donated to the Presbytery of SE Michigan in 1965. Three extreme slopes (N to S, E to W, and W to E). Two acres developed, 5 woodland. Frontage (off of Broadway in Ann Arbor) is only 40 ft. wide. 450 ft. frontage on Plymouth road (where church cannot be seen)
- Pre-church history: Until 1800 this land was a typical Michigan hardwood forest; It was cut 3 times and then used for pasture.
- Early church attitude: Bad location. Need to develop for human needs. No longer legally possible to develop because of slopes.
- Woods activity: A crude trail, chapel, enhanced trail and restoration work.

Chapel in the Woods



Modern Restoration Work Done by Church Volunteers

- We cleared the eastern slope of the property of invasive understory. We planted service berry trees and a variety of native plants on the slopes to replace the invasive growth.
- In 2002 began invasive species removal in the wooded portion of the property. Hardwoods were planted and native dogwood nurtured.



Modern Restoration Work Done by Church Volunteers

- In 2006 church volunteers relocated and developed the path. In 2009, scouts developed second path on the steep eastern slope of the wooded property.



Modern Restoration Work Done by Church Volunteers


- Now we have a continuing project that works to eradicate invasive species and nurture native hardwoods and understory plants.



Modern Restoration Work Done by Church Volunteers

- In 2009 St. Aidan's began a dedicated Retreat ministry to offer the spiritual ambiance of our natural setting to support people in their spiritual journeys.

[St Aidan home page](#) | [Day Retreat Center](#) | [Food For the Journey Retreat Series](#)



*St. Aidan's
Episcopal Church
Ann Arbor, Michigan*


Schedule your next retreat in our beautiful wildlife habitat (maybe the deer will pay you a visit)

Our peaceful setting at 1679 Broadway is five minutes from downtown Ann Arbor next to North Campus and is open for your retreat, meeting, or concert. St. Aidan's Episcopal and Northside Presbyterian Churches share this two-part building as Northside Associated Ministries (NAM), and St. Aidan's is sponsoring the retreat program. Our members spent many hours deciding on an outreach project in keeping with our long activist history, one that would highlight our 5-acre wooded natural habitat and multi-faceted building. Now we want to make our facilities available to other groups for their own memorable events; all are welcome and the building is fully accessible.

Our two sanctuaries, one big and one small, both have organs and pianos for concerts, and the large one adjoins the kitchen for easy meal service. Our Lounge and Library, with kitchenette facilities, are big enough for a crowd but small enough to be friendly—and you can use our computers and WiFi. For years we have hosted an art gallery: plan a show with an opening reception. Finally, the outside is lovely: picnic tables in the front yard, a labyrinth for meditative walking in the parking lot, a balcony overlooking the natural area in back, and two trails running through the woods.

Scenes of the Facility

(click on "Start" to view)



Welcome to Our Home

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Modern Restoration Work Done by Church Volunteers

- In response to a gift of land (10 acres of mixed wet-land and up-land environment on a county lake), St. Aidan's is seeking to expand the retreat ministry to a more remote and undeveloped natural setting.



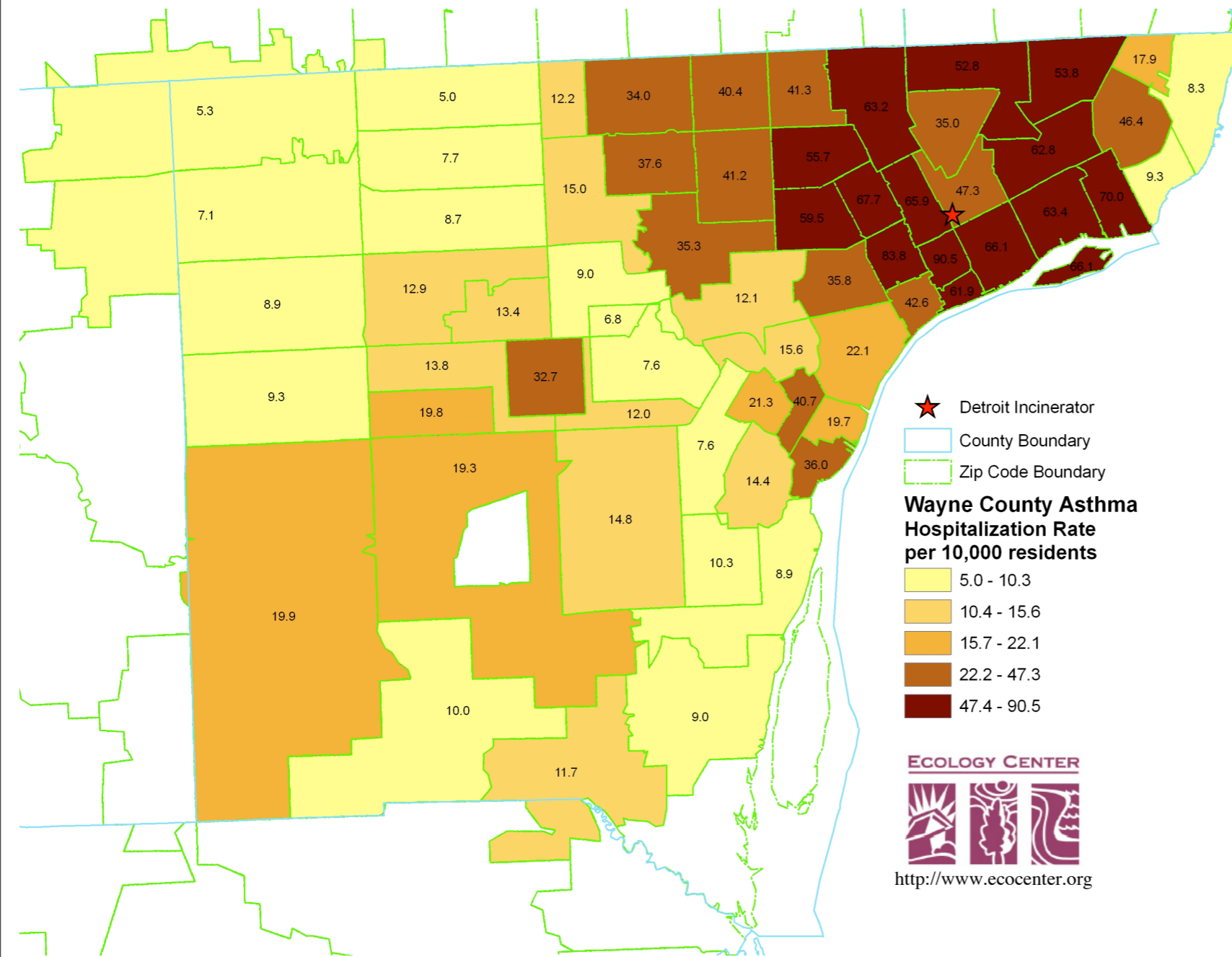
Recap

- Eco-Justice work was unplanned and unsystematic.
- In Advent of 2008, St. Aidan's began a parish wide vision process that demonstrated that the presence of the woods and its nurturance and restoration had become one of the major foci of St. Aidan's identity. The vision statement: "St. Aidan's is the Church in the Woods that demonstrates God's love through inclusive community, thoughtful exploration, loving service, and dedication to ecological ministry," reflects this new reality.
- In the fall of 2010, the diocese advertised the new relationship between the National Episcopal Church and the Interfaith organization GreenFaith, it was a natural fit. St. Aidan's applied by Dec. 1 and was accepted into the certification program and awarded a National Episcopal Church scholarship.

Relevance for Other Churches

- Not all churches have 5 acres of woods there are other reasons to join GreenFaith.
 - Energy costs.
 - Lifestyle.
 - Ecological justice issues in the neighborhood.
 - Connection with the Anglican Tradition's reverence for the natural world.
 - Jesus prayed and gained sustenance for his journey in nature.

Eco-Justice in Detroit



Attractiveness of GreenFaith to St. Aidan's

- Vision includes stewardship of the land.
- Organized approach. Systematic planned work in future to improve effectiveness and evangelism.
- GreenFaith has a 19 year track record and best practices.
- Requirements involve communication and relationship building to help St. Aidan's outreach and evangelism.
 - Example: Fair Trade Coffee.
- GreenFaith is an interfaith organization.
- The National Episcopal Church has a partnership with GreenFaith.

Fair Trade Coffee Visibility



Why would another church want to participate in this certification program?

- Financial savings through better building use.
- 19 year best practices development to promote success. It provides lots of resources
- Fletcher Harper, GreenFaith Director, is an Episcopal priest.
- Cutting edge of religious involvement in environmental issues will help the church be relevant to people who might not otherwise be interested an organized church.
- It provides systematic approach to ecological justice ministry while providing flexibility for individual congregational situations and needs.
- It is theologically consistent with the Anglican Tradition and Anglican Ideals.
- It will provide all people, but especially young people both the opportunity and the model for living lives in a more sustainable way to foster a future on the planet.

Application Process

- Application fee of \$50 which applies toward tuition fee
- Application form
 - Includes essay of 100 words or less
 - Not recommended if undertaking other significant projects, changing ordained leadership, facility renovations, or long-term strategic planning in the next two years.
- Create a Green Team
 - Green Team commitment form
- Formal public commitment
 - Resolution adopted by the vestry
 - Statements of support by the rector
- Episcopal Church scholarship application form
- Tuition fee

St. Aidan's Application Essay

- St. Aidan's, an Episcopal Congregation in ecumenical ministry with Northside Presbyterian Church, already strives to live more responsibly with the earth. Together we have made many energy-efficient improvements to our shared facilities. Yet we know we have more to do. The joint building and grounds committee recently voted to support St. Aidan's GreenFaith application. The preservation and restoration of a 5 acre forest on our land has become a focus of our outreach mission which includes public nature trails and educational programs. We expect to benefit from the Program by broadening the environmental concerns that we address and by extending our impact in the community and the world.

Green Team Commitment Form

- By signing my name to this form, I pledge that I will help to lead the GreenFaith Certification Program at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church through my participation in the Green Team. I commit to assisting with Program leadership activities for two years, including:
 - Participating in Green Team meetings on a regular basis
 - Communicating with other Green Team members between meetings, through a list serve and/or other means
 - Helping write the institution's Certification Mission Statement
 - Helping complete the Certification Program's Institutional Audits and Action Plan
 - Participating in Program webinar
 - Educating and mobilizing members of St. Aidan's to complete the Program requirement
 - Ensuring that the activities described in the Communications Plan are carried out
 - Creating partnerships with environmental organizations and religious institutions representing traditions different than my own
 - Assisting with the submission of twice-yearly Progress Reports

Tuition Fee

- Fee based on organization budget:
 - Institutions with budgets under \$500,000 pay \$500
 - Institutions with budgets \$500,000 - \$1 million pay \$1,000
 - Institutions with budgets \$1 million - \$2.5 million pay \$1,500
 - Institutions with budgets over \$2.5 million are determined in consultation
- The tuition fee provides institutions with full access to all Program resources, including 6 webinars, a special password protected website that houses over 200 resources, a virtual community, and email and phone support.

Program Overview

- First 6 months focus on getting started
- Fulfill requirements in the rest of the 2 years

Getting Started (First 6 Months)

- Write a Mission Statement
- Develop a Communications Plan
- Conduct a Comprehensive Audit
- Develop an Action Plan for fulfilling the Spirit, Stewardship, and Justice requirements.

Audits

- Completed within the first 6 months
- Questionnaires provided
- Snapshot of current practices
- Develop ideas for future activities
- Areas
 - Spirit
 - Environmental Justice
 - Stewardship

Action Plan

- 2-year plan developed in response to the audits
- Meet specified requirements in each focus area
- Focus areas
 - Spirit
 - Environmental Justice
 - Stewardship
 - Communications

Spirit Requirements

- Worship
 - 3 eco-themed worship services per year
- Religious Education
 - 3 classes per year for adults
 - 3 classes per year for teenagers
 - 3 classes per year for children
 - Education for ordained leader (webinar counts)
- Spirituality
 - One interfaith religious-environmental activity per year
 - One intergenerational religious-environmental program per year

Justice Requirements

- Environmental Justice Education
 - 3 education programs over the two years
- Building Relationships with Environmental Justice Leaders
 - At least 1 meeting per year with a local/regional EJ leader
- Advocating for Environmental Justice
 - Participation in 1 regional EJ issue per year
 - Participation in 1 international EJ issue per year

Stewardship Requirements

- Seven Areas
 - Energy
 - Transportation
 - Food
 - Water
 - Waste
 - Toxics
 - Grounds Maintenance
- Must complete 25 initiatives covering all 7 areas

Communications Requirements

- Internal Communications
 - Eco-tips in newsletter
 - Eco-theological reflections in newsletter
 - 4 newsletter articles per year
- External Communications
 - List of local & regional media contacts
 - 4 press releases per year

Resources

- 6 Webinars
 - Getting Started
 - Biblical and Theological Foundations
 - Religious-Environmental Education & Worship
 - Green Facility Management
 - Environmental Justice
 - Sharing our Stories
- Special password protected website that houses over 200 resources organized by topic
- Virtual community
- Email and phone support

Certification Program Congregations

- There are 26 congregations in the Certification Program and 13 more starting in May for a total of 39.
- 12 Episcopal congregations:
 - 3 joined before the scholarship program
 - 4 joined as part of the scholarship program
 - 5 are joining in May as part of the scholarship program
- Next application round is December 1.
 - 21 scholarships available

26 Congregations in Certification Program

- Temple Beth Rishon, Wyckoff, New Jersey
- Trinity Presbyterian Church, East Brunswick, New Jersey
- Jacksonville Jewish Center, Jacksonville, Florida
- Stanley Congregational Church, Chatham, New Jersey
- Adath Shalom Synagogue, Morris Plains, New Jersey
- Conservative Synagogue Adath Israel of Riverdale, Bronx, New York
- Christ Presbyterian Church, Martinsville, New Jersey
- St. Andrew and Holy Communion Episcopal Church, South Orange, New Jersey
- Red Bank United Methodist Church, Red Bank, New Jersey
- St. David's Episcopal Church, Austin, Texas
- The Manhattan Church of the Nazarene, New York, New York
- St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church, Elizabeth, New Jersey
- Temple B'nai Abraham, Livingston, New Jersey
- St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan
- Grace Episcopal Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee
- Congregational Church in Cumberland, UCC, Cumberland, Maine
- Grace Episcopal Church, Morganton, North Carolina
- St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Grand Island Nebraska
- Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple, New Brunswick, New Jersey
- Barnert Temple, Franklin Lakes, New Jersey
- Temple Emanu-el, Edison, New Jersey
- Temple Shaari Emeth, Manalapan, New Jersey
- Temple Shalom, Aberdeen, New Jersey
- Temple Shalom, Succasunna, New Jersey
- Temple Sharey Tefilo-Israel, South Orange, New Jersey
- Temple Sinai of Bergen County, Tenafly, New Jersey

Episcopal Congregations in Certification Program

- Joined before the Episcopal partnership:
 - St. Andrew and Holy Communion Episcopal Church, South Orange, New Jersey
 - St. David's Episcopal Church, Austin, Texas
 - St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church, Elizabeth, New Jersey
- Joined as part of the Episcopal partnership:
 - St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan
 - Grace Episcopal Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee
 - Grace Episcopal Church, Morganton, North Carolina
 - St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Grand Island, Nebraska
- Joining in May as part of the Episcopal partnership:
 - St. Mary's, Stone Harbor, New Jersey
 - St. Mark's, Seattle, Washington
 - Camp Marshall, Montana
 - All Saints, Hoboken, New Jersey
 - Grace Episcopal Church, Pemberton, New Jersey

St. Aidan's GreenFaith Experience

- Working on wrapping up audits
- Starting on action plan
- Trying to relate everything we do to green concepts
- Fundraising around green ideas
- Communicating more about the green things we do
 - Example: Fair Trade Coffee, advertising that we are buying it (not just do it, but teach it)
- This presentation
- Screen shot of website
- Screen shot of GreenFaith page of website
- Screen shot of John's article from website

St. Aidan's Going Green Web Page

Going Green



*St. Aidan's
Episcopal Church
Ann Arbor, Michigan*

The church in the woods that demonstrates God's love through inclusive community, thoughtful exploration, loving service, and dedication to ecological ministry.

St. Aidan's Episcopal and Northside Presbyterian Churches occupy five acres of forested land located in an otherwise congested urban environment adjacent to the University of Michigan North Campus. At St. Aidan's and Northside one really does worship in the woods as we face the NWF certified wildlife habitat through pane glass windows (sometimes the deer interrupt the service). The God of Creation is never far from mind. And we have found through the years that many of our members receive much of their spiritual nourishment from nature and are especially attracted to this setting. Preservation and sharing of this precious gift with the community is very important to us.

 [Link to GreenFaith - Interfaith Partners for the Environment](#)

Green News Bulletins

St Aidan's Episcopal, Ann Arbor, is the first church in Michigan to join the GreenFaith Certification Program[read more](#)

St Aidan's Episcopal and Northside Presbyterian Churches officially dedicate their joint property as a Certified Nature Habitat on May 3, 2009

Slideshow of Significant Events



Habitat Dedication, May 3, 2009

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The Theology of Eco-justice

The prefix, Eco, is derived from the Greek word, *oikos*, which means *household, house, or a family*. And, whereas the term's root meaning is the same as for Economy and Ecology, its connotation within an eco-justice ministry is "*action to wholeness for God's household*."

St. Aidan's Green Team

- Jim Barber
- John Board
- Michael Earle
- Marian Laughlin
- Susan McGarry
- Lark-Aeryn Speyer
- Stephen Uche
- Alan Vayda
- Others welcome to join!

Diocesan RSVP Vision Areas

- Celebrating Anglican/Episcopal Identity
- Congregational Development ★
- One Church
- Social Justice and Outreach ★
- Vibrant Christian Formation ★



How it fits with Diocesan RSVP goals

- Congregational Development
 - Strengthen relationships within the congregation
 - Relationship with community
 - Attracting people
 - Best practices for communication and support

How it fits with Diocesan RSVP goals

- Vibrant Christian Formation

- Commitment to the earth and all its creatures is a traditional Christian value.
- It is present in our Anglican liturgical tradition especially with Celtic influence.
- Associated with St. Aidan, English Bishop and Saint.
- Care for the Earth is the Biblical job description for humans.



How it fits with Diocesan RSVP goals

- Social Justice

- Ecological Justice is a fundamental part of Social Justice, caring for the earth and all its creatures (including humankind)
- Particular care for the vulnerable who often bear an inequitable share of the harmful effects of environmental degradation.
- Importance of healthy natural world for the physical and mental health of young people make Ecological Ministry a fertile ground for serving at-risk youth.

Young People Enjoy Nature



Sunday, May 8, 2011

Where is Paradise?

- The Rev. Fletcher Harper, Executive Director of GreenFaith, from the Bible and the Environment webinar.

Where is Paradise?

Revelation 21-22

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,
'See, the home of God is among mortals.
He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them;
he will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
mourning and crying and pain will be no more,
for the first things have passed away.'



Questions?

www.staidan.org


GreenFaithSM
Certification Program

