

## **Clean Air Day Environmental Justice**

### General Goals:

- ❖ Join with Peace and Justice Committee to promote church-wide awareness and understanding of societal environmental justice issues, develop and implement church projects that rectify environmental injustices.
- ❖ Work with other churches and/or groups that rectify environmental injustices beyond the scope of just our church.
- ❖ Develop and implement church policies with regard to finances that are in accord with our principles and environmental justice.

### **Project 6 from the UUCD Green Sanctuary Action Plan:**

The church will organize a spring “bike, carpool, or bus to church” day for the congregation. We could think about something fun to do with it (a fashion show of bike gear?) It may be possible to incorporate air quality issues and education, too. The plan is to work eventually with other congregations to have a bike/carpool day and keep a record of the energy savings.

### **General Goals of Clean Air Day:**

- To encourage the integration of environmental issues into worship and religious education programs for children and adults. (Religious Education)
- To help our church to find ways to live our faith in a way that are best for Earth as well as our community. (Religious Education)
- To work with other churches and/or groups, that rectify environmental injustices beyond the scope of just our church. (Environmental Justice)
- To motivate, support, and encourage congregants in their personal and social actions for a healthy and sustainable environment. (Sustainable Living)
- To generate commitment for personal lifestyle changes. (Sustainable Living)
- To leave the world a better place for the generations to come. (Sustainable Living)
- Provide worship that grounds our activities in our UU values and beliefs. (Worship)

### **Specific Goals for Clean Air Day**

- Develop cross-generational activities that are fun and bring people together.
- Encourage congregation to “Walk or Roll Together to Church” to build community and reduce emissions for better air quality and lessen impact of global warming.
- Keep track of the amount of air pollution reduced on May 21 by our congregation
- Reach out and invite other congregations to join us.
- Raise awareness of how what we do impact the Environment.
- Distribute materials to educate the congregation regarding air quality, global warming, bike paths and commuting, etc.
- Improve our church Bike rack situation to encourage bike use.
- Facilitate ride-sharing by giving the congregation the opportunity to sign up for carpools.
- Reconfigure the church parking lot to be more accessible for buses.
- Have the Sunday worship service relate to Clean Air Sunday.

## **What did we do in 2006?**

At the UU Church of Davis, Earth Day in 2006 was the start of a month of Green Sanctuary activities related to global warming, air pollution, and saving energy:

- On Saturday, April 22, our campus ministry group and members of the congregation marched in the UC Davis Picnic Day parade with signs for the campus ministry and ones for Green Sanctuary (UUs for Earth, To Be Powered by the Sun, Walk'n'Roll to Church, Clean Air Sunday - May 21, etc.)
- On Sundays between Earth Day and Clean Air Sunday, we had huge map of Davis and a smaller regional one. We encouraged everyone to put a pin where they lived and to sign up to bike or rideshare and "Walk'n'Roll Together" to church on May 21.
- We included weekly notes in the church bulletin and articles in the April and May monthly newsletter about our Clean Air efforts and invited members and friends to participate.
- We set up a table-top kiosk with information on issues related to air quality, pollution, and solar power, forming carpools and biking together to church. We distributed materials on related topics.
- We gave out activities books about the environment to elementary age children and information about Clean Air Day.
- We set up a "UU Green team" for "Million Mile May" month and all who signed up kept track of their bike miles for the month. The goal was a million miles for the region.
- We developed a bike safety brochure.
- During early May, Eliza Galaher, the church Intern, worked with the GS committee to present a special family service during May on environmental awareness. We introduced a Clean Air Pledge at this service.
- The grounds committee provided a new bus turn-area for those coming from retirement communities.
- On May 21, 2006 (Clean Air Sunday), the Reverend Elizabeth O. Banks gave services titled "A Blade of Grass and a Star: Then Interdependent Web" on global warming in which she related our GS efforts to our principles and purposes as UUs - grounding us theologically.
- We had meeting spots in various parts of town with leaders who lead groups of bikes to church.
- At church, as we did not have enough bike racks for all to park and lock; we set up a corral in a big circle where we could actually see them from the sanctuary.
- We kept a record of all those who biked or carpooled or came by bus and the distances traveled. Using the data, we made an estimate of how much energy we had saved and pollutants reduced.
- We had tire pumps on hand and checked the pressure of tires of both cars and bikes and aired up any that need air.
- We handed out a number of small freebies (tire gages, pads, pens, pins, etc.), and all that walked, biked, took a bus or carpooled got to pick out a small gift.
- The GS committee provided drinks for those biking and after church, light refreshments and "glacial melt" ice cream cones for everyone to celebrate the day.

The whole month was a time of building connections between members of our congregation and enhancing our church community. From the records we collected, we had 52 people who biked or walked a total of 316 miles, which saved about 316# of emissions and 14 gallons of gas. We also had 93 people come in 35 carpools a total distance of 394 miles, also saving gas and emissions. Although some folks did not participate at the last moment because the weather was a bit rainy, we felt the day a great success. We shared the success of this week with the interfaith group, Care for God's Creation and some faith groups plan to join us next year.