Green Sanctuary Committee

Annual Report

April 1, 2016 —March 31, 2017

The FUUSM Green Sanctuary Committee meets at 12:30 p.m. on the third Sunday of each month in the RE building parlor. Dawn Hewitt is the chair.

Two goals for the GSC for the year included:

1. Expanding and strengthening our relationships with local environmental groups (outside FUUSM) to work on common goals
2. Supporting expansion of FUUSM’s solar panel installations; support financing additional installations (or possible buyout of Golden Rule LLC.
3. Continue to encourage all FUUSM members and friends to practice a Seventh-Principle lifestyle.

We have made progress on these goals, as the following activities attest:

Earth Day 2016 participation:

* Earth Day Marietta, April 21
* Earth Day WVUP, April 23
* Earth Day Parkersburg, April 23

2016 Adult RE classes:

* April 3– Low Carbon Diet, Mike Bailey
* April 10 – Solar Power for FUUSM, George Banziger, Mike Bailey, Dan Harrison, and Kevin Morey
* April 17 – Sharing Space with Wildlife, Dawn Hewitt
* April 24‑Upcycled Art, Heather Royer and Cindy Taylor

Just Dinners:

* May 20, with Universalist Convocation attendees as honored guests
* August 19, theme: Genetically Modified Organisms in food
* February 17: “Eating Ethically” was a Service Auction item in which GSC members brought food and drink for paid attendees. Dinner was followed by a video on the topic, and thought-provoking conversation.

Members of the GSC also serve on each of the Community Meals teams, overseeing waste reduction and striving to attain zero waste.

On May 18, several members of the GSC participated with the Athens County Fracking Action Network in a news conference/protest to oppose fracking in the Wayne National Forest.

On October 15, the GSC and co-sponsored Mid-Ohio Valley Climate Action screened the film *Groundswell Rising*, about fracking and its effects on land, air, water, and people. Clearly, our Seventh Principle encourages us to oppose fracking.

On November 26, the solar array on the FUUSM roof was energized. Although the GSC was little more than a cheerleader on this project, we were a loud and enthusiastic cheerleader.

Late in 2016 we requested curbside recycling pickup at FUUSM, rather than relying on GSC members to haul away all recyclables collected in the kitchen. We are grateful to board for granting this request, which allowed us to simplify recycling collection and reduce the number of bins. GSC members have much less to haul to Marietta Area Recycling Center, and the mixed recyclable bin in the kitchen can be dumped into the outdoor recycling bin anytime it gets full.

We also sent a letter to AA, asking them to support our efforts to recycle.

In December, we entered two categories of the Cool Congregation Challenge, an environmental contest sponsored by Interfaith Power & Light, a nationwide nondenominational, faith-based environmental organization. Our entry in the Community Inspiration category won honorable mention—no prize money, unfortunately, but national recognition.

In January, we learned of an anonymous benefactor who offered up to $10,000 in matching grants to expand our solar array. The GSC has started planning to raise money for this, especially from outside the FUUSM community.

We have been working (slowly) with the De-Clutter Committee and Buildings and Grounds to find a way (perhaps a new chair storage cabinet with recycling collection drawers neatly built in) to remove the table between the restrooms in the Fellowship Hall. We are willing to lose that table, but we must have a place somewhere for collecting small recyclables, such as dead batteries, spent ink cartridges, CDs, and CD cases. We are eager to work with other committees on this.

Ongoing, year-round projects

* River Trail cleanup
* Sunday coffee sales

Using funds generated from sale of recycled aluminum, GS joined/contributed to

* Friends of the Lower Muskingum River
* Ohio Environmental Council
* Pizza for Universalist Convocation Just Dinner

Several members of the GSC are also members of these local environmental groups:

* UUA’s Commit2Respond climate change group
* Mid-Ohio Valley Climate Action (our own Dave Ballentyne was a presenter at one of their meetings)
* Appalachian Renewable Energy Consumer Cooperative
* Keep Wayne Wild—Marietta Chapter
* Planet Action group, started in February at the Mobilizing for Social Justice event
* OHSun and WVSun, solar cooperatives aiming to facilitate solar power in the Mid-Ohio Valley

Thanks to the FUUSM board for approving curbside recycling; thanks to all members of all Community Meals teams for working with us to reduce waste to zero to the fullest extent possible; thanks to Golden Rule, LLC, for enabling solar power at FUUSM; thanks to the Men’s Group for switching to LED lights during the winter holidays; thanks to the Building and Grounds Committee for installing LED lights in the sanctuary; thanks to GSC member and Marietta City Council member Roger Kalter for keeping us up-to-date on environmental issues and green initiatives in Marietta; thanks to all FUUSM members who prove their dedication to our Seventh Principle in the sanctuary, fellowship hall, kitchen, RE building, grounds, and in their own daily lives.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Hewitt

Chair

FUUSM Green Sanctuary Committee