

Caring for God's creation: \$2^{million}

“WE ARE NOT IN RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REST OF
God's abundant creation, which we've put at risk by what we've done and left undone.”

—BISHOP SHAW

TOGETHER we will reclaim more fully our role as stewards by practicing, teaching and investing in sustainable ways so that this earth, our island home, might be healed and that all might live abundantly as God intends.

HOW ARE WE CALLED TO SERVE?

It is the moral, ethical and justice dimensions of environmental damage and climate change that call all of us and all of our congregations to reflect on our indulgent and carbon-intensive lifestyles and then do something about them—the kind of repentance and return to the Lord that is also part of living out our baptismal covenant. All of us suffer from the consequences of our unsustainable actions and unexamined inactions, but none more so than those on the coastlines and margins, the poor and the most vulnerable whom Christ's compassionate example shows us we are to serve.

Here the moral meets the practical, since energy conservation is a first step in qualifying us to speak with credibility about the value systems and interdependencies that sustain life on this earth. We recognize that church buildings, because of age, deferred maintenance and irregular use, are among the most energy-wasteful structures in this country. Our desire for more efficient church buildings is not enough to make them so; the resources and knowledge to do it are too often lacking. Our congregations should not have to choose maintenance over mission.



In the fall of 2010, our diocese launched an innovative Green Grants Initiative to encourage, support and challenge congregations in environmental stewardship through grants, idea sharing and education. Through this inaugural effort, 30 congregations in 2011 will receive modest grants for church building improvements that will reduce energy costs and carbon emissions.

HOW WILL WE ANSWER?

Because the need is still so great and many congregations are eager to do more, our Together Now campaign will make additional resources available in a variety of ways, which, when combined with educational programs, will transform our buildings and equip congregations to model what others can do in their churches, workplaces and homes.

Specifically, we will:

- Use \$1 million raised through this campaign to expand our successful Green Grants Initiative, allowing for such things as efficient heating and hot water systems, insulation improvements, window replacements, programmable thermostats, compact fluorescent light bulbs and water conservation—action which can be a catalyst for change beyond our churches' doors.
- Allocate \$1 million to develop a green loan program which will help churches fund the larger up-front costs of efficiency improvements that will pay for themselves down the road in energy savings, while also recirculating funds through additional congregations as loans are repaid. Green grants and loans also will leverage other grants and rebates from outside sources.
- Form leadership teams in congregations to teach and help others in their environmental stewardship, through workshops, idea and resource sharing and technical advice for making cost-effective and energy-efficient choices.