



## How to Get Your Congregation Involved

- ✿ Start a Green Team - Gather a group of people interested in environmental issues from your congregation. This could be as few as two or three people, or as many as 10 or more. Invite church committee members to get their input and help in accomplishing the work of greening your congregation: property, education, worship, women's groups, vestry, or trustees. Put an announcement in your congregation's newsletter, bulletin, or website; make an oral announcement during worship; show an Earth care film and invite those who attend to join you.
- ✿ Set up a meeting to discuss your Green Team's interests. Let your first meeting be a listening and sharing meeting rather than a decision-making meeting. Gauge where the interest and excitement is. See what other Iowa Green Teams are doing on IIPL's Green Team Registry. <https://iowaip.org/green-teams/>
- ✿ Our task is to bind care of creation to the heart of what it means to be a faithful person. Your Green Team's goal is to integrate Earth care into the entire faith life of the congregation. This means thinking about ways to include it in worship, education, property and facilities, mission and outreach, individual action, and policy and advocacy.
- ✿ Plan a follow-up meeting to start discussing specifics. Narrow down your interest (for now) to one area around which there is the most energy.
- ✿ Meet with clergy and lay leadership to discuss your ideas and get their blessing. They do not have to become members of your group, but you do need their support.
- ✿ Pick a project to start with. This project should be something that your group is excited about, that is visible and easily understood, and that has a measurable and reachable goal. By starting with a sure-fire winner, you will not only help boost your group's morale, but you will also have an opportunity to share your success with your congregation, which can bring new people on board.
- ✿ Celebrate your success!
- ✿ Offer education to the congregation about the importance of caring for the Earth as a matter of faith - whether through classes, film showings, educational displays, or other ideas. Don't expect everyone to immediately jump on board, but use every opportunity to emphasize the connection between environmental sustainability and your faith.
- ✿ Pick a next project to focus on. This could be a bit more of a stretch, but should still have measurable and attainable goals. Don't forget to celebrate!
- ✿ Develop a longer term action plan for your Green Team. Consider how both your work and your group can be environmentally and spiritually sustainable.
- ✿ Talk with nearby congregations to see if there are people with similar interests. Brainstorm ways that you could collaborate on projects or programming. See IIPL's Green Team Registry to find teams near you. <https://iowaip.org/green-teams/> List your team!



# IOWA INTERFAITH POWER & LIGHT

## Starter Project Ideas

### Education

- \* Host a speaker from Iowa Interfaith Power & Light staff or Speakers Bureau
- \* Attend or host one of three signature I IPL workshops with your Green Team: Cool Congregations (about energy); Food, Faith, Climate: Connecting the Dots (about food); The Good Life Redefined (about stuff). <http://iowaip.org/get-started/>
- \* Show a film and have a discussion - try Renewal for portraits of what congregations are doing to go green. Borrow it from [www.irms.org](http://www.irms.org) or buy it from <http://www.renewalproject.net/dvd>, or look at the list of films on the Iowa IPL webpage "Congregational Resources".
- \* Lead a book study
- \* Use flyers, bulletin announcements, and newsletter articles about environmental issues

### Congregational action

- \* Have your Green Team attend an Iowa IPL signature workshop
- \* Have an energy audit of your congregational facility and make a plan to cut the carbon!
- \* Change old exit signs to high efficiency LEDs
- \* Change incandescent and fluorescent lights to LED
- \* Put up reminder signs about turning off lights and fans
- \* Install programmable thermostats and set them
- \* Set up recycling for bulletins, paper, plastic, cans, and bottles
- \* Start using fair-trade shade-grown coffee and reusable mugs for coffee hour

### Worship

- \* Include Earth care in prayers and sermons
- \* Use recycled paper for bulletins
- \* Host a Green Worship service with hymns, prayers, and sermon about Earth care

### Individual / Family action

- \* Conduct the I IPL Cool Congregations program in your congregation to help others save energy
- \* Host a park clean-up, and recycle materials as you are able

### Mission / Outreach

- \* Do a light bulb swap in a low income community - switch to LEDs
- \* Outfit your next Habitat for Humanity house with energy efficient appliances and light fixtures

### Advocacy

- \* Call, visit, or write your state legislators and Members of Congress in support of climate policy, energy efficiency, and renewable energy

***Always make sure to advertise and celebrate what you do***