



## Vision: Covenants, Vision Statements, Mission Statements and Action Plans

Prayer guides the ministry to its own unique expressions of caring for creation through **covenants, vision statements, mission statements and action plans**. They are a progressive flow of inspiration, guidance and ideas, each of which is more specific than the one before. The process leads the congregation to create an action plan that specifically outlines the ways in which the leadership and congregation intend to express an earth-care consciousness in the life of the ministry.

### Covenant

An EarthCare covenant is a sacred trust between the church community and Spirit. It is a general expression of conscious awareness of our oneness with creation and a commitment to care for the Earth as a significant component of the ministry. Writing a covenant helps develop a vision for the work. When developing a vision for EarthCare, the congregation may hold a prayerful dialogue by asking questions such as: “How do we perceive God?” “What is our relationship to God’s creation?” “How can we be good stewards of Earth?”

We suggest the covenant be presented and signed at a ceremony involving the entire community, and posted in the ministry as a declaration of their sacred trust.

Here are some examples:

#### **Unity EarthCare Ministry Team - 2008**

Our consciousness reveals that all of creation is connected as one. The story of creation reveals that we are to be good caregivers of the creation. As a people of faith, we commit to a renewed reverence for life and respect for the interdependent web of all existence.

We honor our spiritual commitment to the care, support, and defense of the balance between our individual needs and those of nature. We envision a world in which everything has intrinsic value and where all beings are assured a secure and meaningful life that is ecologically responsible and sustainable.

We agree to transform our individual and congregational lives into acts of moral witness, discarding harmful habits for new behaviors that demonstrate our respect for this harmony and interconnectedness.

We declare our covenant with God to walk upon the Earth for the greatest good of all creation.

**Unity Centre, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada - 2009**

We hold a currency of consciousness that all of creation is connected as one. We commit to a renewed reverence for life and respect for the interdependent web of all existence.

We honour our spiritual commitment to the care and support of the balance between our individual needs and those of nature.

We envision a world in which everything has intrinsic value and where all beings are assured a secure and meaningful life that is ecologically responsible and sustainable.

We agree to transform our individual and congregational lives into acts of which reflect our spiritual commitments, transforming harmful habits for new behaviors that demonstrate our respect for this harmony and interconnectedness.

We declare our covenant with God to walk upon the Earth lightly, for the greatest good for all of creation. *(Last line also adopted as one of our core values.)*

**Unity Church of Overland Park, Kansas - 2009**

Spirit guides our actions, decisions, and intentions in the care of our church home, our local environment, and the world. We practice conservation of energy, using materials and maintenance procedures that minimize waste for the best possible benefit from financial and natural resources while reducing our impact on the environment.

**Unity Center of Cedar Rapids, Iowa - 2010**

We acknowledge that all of creation is connected as one, and we hold great reverence for the interdependent web of all existence.

We envision a world that is ecologically responsible and sustainable.

We commit to actions that align us with oneness, and the interconnectedness of all.

We acknowledge our personal and spiritual commitment to this EarthCare Covenant, and we declare our covenant with Spirit to walk upon the earth with the greatest good for all creation.

### **Unity of Fort Meyers, Florida - 2013**

Our consciousness reveals that all of creation is connected as one. As a people of faith, we commit to a renewed reverence for life and respect for the interdependent web of all existence.

Earth blesses us with nourishment, water, minerals, fresh air, fire, and beauty. When we remember this, we become mindful in our attitudes and actions. We commit to a reverence for life coexisting in harmony with all existence. We express our gratitude through our awareness of oneness with our Creator.

We declare our covenant with God to walk upon the earth lightly, for the greatest good for all creation.

### **Unity of Cape Cod, Hyannis, Massachusetts - April 2015**

Acknowledging that all of creation is connected:

We, as a sacred community, are committed to being responsible stewards of our earthly home.

We affirm that we hold a deep respect for all life, and a sincere reverence for the interdependent web of all that is.

We envision a world where all beings are supported in living the lives for which they were created. We live in gratitude and appreciation while working to bring awareness to others.

Let us join together as we mindfully support the well-being and protection of Cape Cod's natural environment and the world beyond. We declare our covenant with God to walk lightly upon this beautiful Earth as we hold this vision for the greatest good of all creation.

## **Vision Statement**

Although not required, some congregations also choose to create a vision statement in addition to a covenant. A vision statement is a clear and inspirational one-sentence description of the long-term desired change resulting from the covenant. It is an affirmation that sets the direction for future planning.

Some examples include:

#### **Unity Earthcare Team**

- All humanity lives in a spiritual consciousness that manifests as loving co-existence with all creation and care for our Earth home.

### **Unity Church of Overland Park, Kansas**

- To promote stewardship of the environment and an awareness of our oneness with the earth.

## **Mission Statement**

A mission statement is a summary of the purpose, objectives, and goals of the EarthCare program, as a good steward of the environment.

Examples include:

### **Unity EarthCare Team**

- To foster awareness of our spiritual oneness with the Earth and to promote active care of all creation.

### **Unity Centre of Kitchener, Ontario**

- We are committed to learning, loving, and living in harmony with our Self, one another, and the earth.

### **Unity Church of Overland Park, Kansas**

- To envelope and sustain participants for the rest of their lives with a spiritual awareness of our oneness with our Earth home and promote active care of creation in the areas of:
  - Sustainable living (i.e., recycling, energy conservation, waste minimization),
  - Natural resources,
  - Respect for the interdependence of the Universe and,
  - EarthCare advocacy.

## **Action Plan**

An action plan is a document that lists what steps must be taken in order to achieve the goals of the congregation's EarthCare program. The purpose of the action plan is to clarify what resources are required to reach the goal, formulate a timeline for when specific tasks need to be completed, and determine what resources are required for the Green Team to succeed. An action plan has three major elements: (1) Specific tasks—what will be done and by whom, (2) Time horizon—when will it be done, (3) Resource allocation—what specific funds are available for specific activities.