



EarthCare Connections



unity[®]
Worldwide Ministries
EarthCare

Fostering awareness of our spiritual oneness with the earth and promoting active care of creation.

www.unityworldwideministries.org/earthcare
earthcare@unity.org

Reimagining Community Engagement: Stories of Sacred Service

On Thursday, June 17, 2021, 3:30 pm. Central Time, at this year's Unity Convention, EarthCare will sponsor a "learn shop" to help congregations reengage with community through sacred service. Doing so is critical following a year of social distancing as a result of the pandemic.

An esteemed panel will lead participants in a discussion of relevant topics, including:

- What does it mean to do the work of caring for the earth?
- How do we weave lessons from nature such as, adaption, reciprocity, resilience, regeneration, systems, and emergence into our daily lives?
- Getting out of the building to reengage community.
- The importance of flexibility and adaptation.
- Engaging youth through the Regenerative Process.

Find out more information about the virtual annual Unity convention at unity.org/convention.

Please join us!

2021 Green Star Awardees

Unity of the Blue Ridge

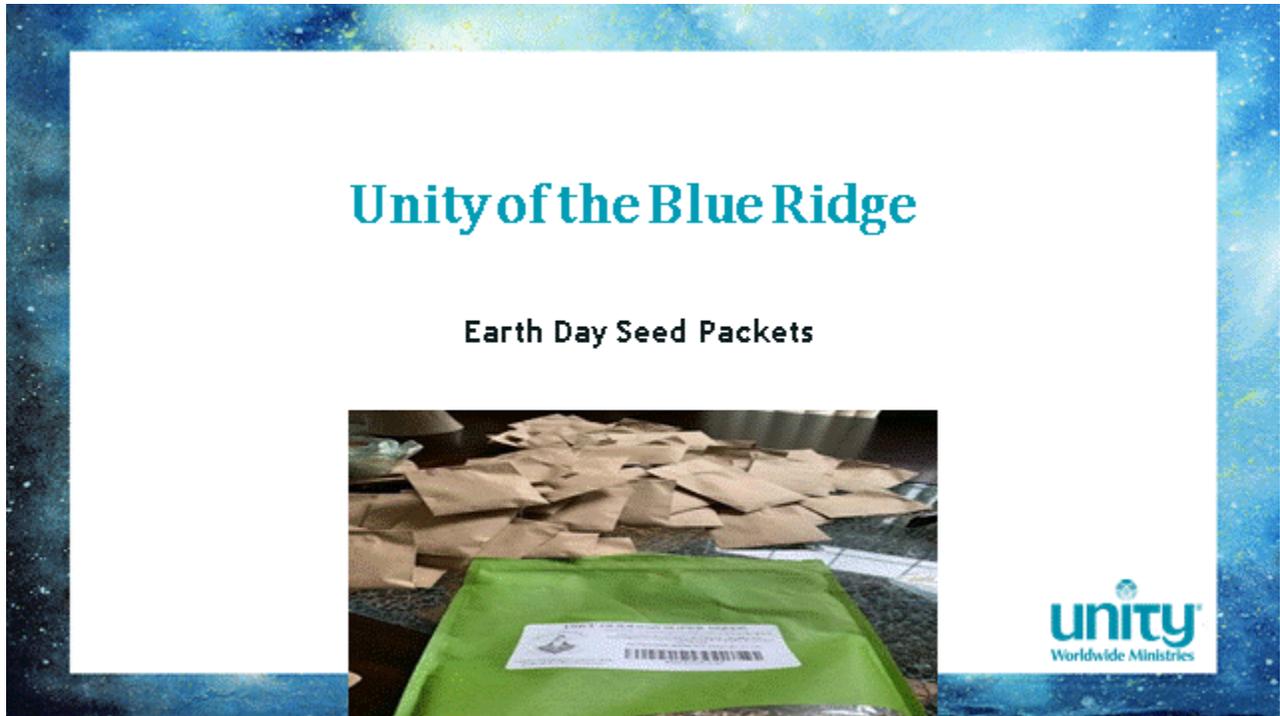
For the fifth consecutive year, Unity of the Blue Ridge, Mills Creek, North Carolina, is receiving the Green Star Award. Rev. Darlene Strickland is senior minister, and the Green Team Facilitator is Judie McKown.

In 2020, they completed five new activities, which are in addition to a number of ongoing projects from previous years.

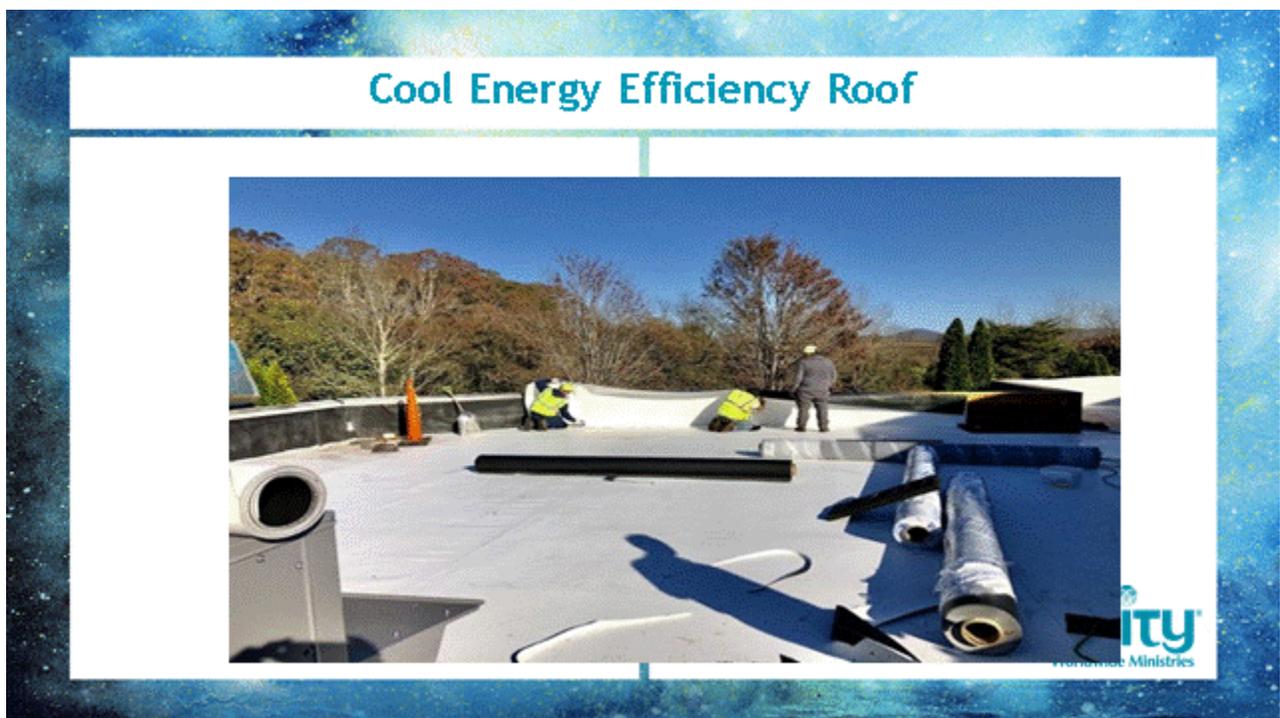
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Two activities are of note. First, their Youth of Unity put together pollinator seed packets that were blessed and mailed to the congregants.



But by far the biggest project was renovation of their 20-year-old building into a “green” facility through the “Raise the Roof” project. This has been a dream of the congregation since 2015.



The renovation included:

- A new high-energy, efficiency HVAC (Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning)
- New building siding and trim throughout
- New energy efficient LED exterior lighting
- Interior paint with low volatile organic compounds (VOCs)
- New “Green Label Plus” carpet (low VOC emissions)
- A new cool energy efficient roofing system that reduces heat by 70%. The roof membrane is also 100% recyclable. For this they have been awarded a “Duke Energy” rebate due to its energy efficiency.



Unity of Kalamazoo

For the fourth year, Unity of Kalamazoo, Michigan (senior minister Rev. Joslyn Mason and Carol Higgins, Green Team Facilitator), is receiving the Green Star Award. In 2020 they completed three activities, which are in addition to others that are ongoing from previous years.

In addition to an Earth Day Service, they created an environmental book swap for a set of 10 recently published books and stored them in an EarthCare bookcase.

They also created and published an EarthCare Blessing (ECB) made from recycled refrigerator magnets. They use the magnets at meetings and have given away others.



Congratulations to Unity of the Blue Ridge and Unity of the Kalamazoo for their long-time commitment to protecting and preserving the environment of our Mother Earth! They are shining examples for all of us in Unity.

What Is Mindful Eating? By Mary Gerken

Mindfulness is a Buddhist Zen tradition that many are aware of and are possibly practicing. To connect with the Divine by being present in this moment and this and this.... It would seem to be easy, but not so, as our mind wants to take us to the past or the future where we have no control.

One practice, Mindful Eating, could start at your next meal. Today, be fully present for a meal, keep your focus on each action and step of the meal. Be present as you prepare the meal, as you wash the greens, or heat the soup, and thankfully consider those who allowed you to nurture your body with these resources. For example, thank the Earth for the sun, rain, and soil that grew the carrot, the hardworking hands of those who planted, nurtured, and harvested the garden. Thank the truck driver who delivered the harvest, the clerk who kept it fresh, and the person that checked you out at the register.



Thank the water that washed the carrot clean and yours or other hands that prepared the food. Pray thinking of all those who were involved; all that gave energy and life to the meal that you are preparing to eat. As you chew each tasty morsel, you are present and eat slowing to get the full effect of your meal for your body's health and well-being. When eating mindfully, many decide to eat in silence to keep the focus on their meal, while their body absorbs the nutrition and joy of the harvest.

As we know, thoughts are things so it helps us focus on the beauty the Earth provides to nurture and sustain our body, mind, and spirit. It is a wonderful practice that brings you to the present and to the Presence.

EarthCare's YouTube Channel Mary Gerken, Facilitator

[EarthCare's new YouTube channel](#) is growing! It now has 66 videos in the following highly relevant topics of:

- Social Justice (17 videos)
- Educational (15 videos)
- Spiritual (4 videos)
- Videos over 20 Minutes Long (7 videos)
- Poems and Inspiration (17 videos)
- Music (6 videos)

Our resources provide a plethora of information that can be presented to your congregation or provide ideas for future activities by your Green Team or in creating one. Click on the link above to access our channel.

Investing in Socially Responsible Companies By Mike McCord

One of the ways that an organization can show its support for the environment and social justice is by investing all or a portion of their funds in companies committed to these issues.

There are a number of companies and mutual funds to choose from. In addition to maximizing shareholder value, these companies celebrate and value diversity, require inclusivity, and promote the well-being of both society and the environment while lessening negative impacts on them. They enact policies that promote an ethical balance between the dual mandates of striving for profitability and benefiting society as a whole.



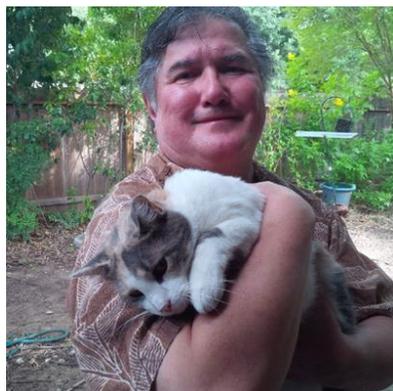
Special consideration should be given to firms that are approved or certified by the Underwriters Laboratories environmental standards BIFMA, BioPreferred, and Green Seal.

By the decisions they make with their investment dollars, Unity and Unity congregations have the opportunity to make a statement that they support companies that care about the future and fate of the world. And they can do so without sacrificing return on investment

Here are three links where you can find lists company that meet these altruistic standards:

- Classy: [9 Socially Responsible Companies to Applaud](#)
- Grow Ensemble: [The 10 Most Socially Responsible Companies & Brands to Model \(2021\)](#)
- Newsweek: [America's Most Responsible Companies 2021](#)

Mentoring Calls By David Cordova



Participation in our mentoring calls is increasing. At our last call we had five participants, including several who would like to incorporate EarthCare into their ministry.

At each call we highlight a different topic followed by a discussion that can go many directions. One of the benefits of participating in these calls is that they provide a way for you to connect with other churches in your respective region and open new avenues to collaborate.

David Cordova from Unity of San Antonio, Texas, facilitates these calls on the second Saturday of each month, at 11 a.m. (CT). For more information, contact David at davecordova@msn.com, or call 210-825-8422.

Facebook



Please check out our Facebook page for timely information and comments by fellow “Unitics” regarding our environment! This includes new information that will eventually be put on a renovated EarthCare website. Please go to:

www.facebook.com/UnityEarthCare

The page is maintained by EarthCare team member Beth Remmes of Unity Atlanta, Peachtree Corners, Georgia.

Regional Representatives

If you have a question regarding EarthCare, please contact your regional representative:

<u>Region</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
Canada	Mike McCord	michael_mccord@sbcglobal.net
Eastern	Martha Powers	mpowers7@gmail.com
or	Mary Gerken	agreatpickle@gmail.com
Great Lakes	Kathy Harwood Long	kathyharwoodlong@gmail.com
Northwest	Cylvia Hayes	cylvia@3estrategies.org
West Central	Mary Gerken	agreatpickle@gmail.com
Pacific Rim	Cylvia Hayes	cylvia@3estrategies.org
South Central	Mike McCord	michael_mccord@sbcglobal.net
Southeast	Beth Remmes	bremmes@hotmail.com
Southwest	David Cordova	davecordova@msn.com



Mike McCord, Editor
Unity Church of Overland Park, Kansas