



EarthCare Connections

An Offering from Your Unity EarthCare Ministry Team

Fall 2016

Special Points of Interest:

- EarthCare Program Updates
- Welcome Three New EarthCare Certified Congregations!
- Green Star Award
- EarthCare Mentoring Call

EarthCare Program Updates

Nurturing and protecting all beings of our beloved earth is a fundamental value of our Unity Movement. In its ongoing goal to foster this spiritual understanding, the EarthCare Ministry Team approved several changes at its September 2016 meeting.

Two of the recurring themes we've heard at and following the 2016 [Unity People's Convention](#) in Overland Park, Kansas, have been the sacredness of animals and Spirit-inspired eating habits. Therefore, two pertinent options have been added to the [EarthCare Program](#) under the "Act" step of "Promote Awareness of the Interdependence of Creation:" (pp 6-7)

- ◆ Creating a congregation-based intention which protects animals and respects the interrelationship of all sentient and non-sentient beings.
- ◆ Creating an engaged consciousness of healthy and environmentally aware eating habits.

In addition, the following resolution was adopted:

Mindful eating is a spiritual practice. It raises our consciousness of how we care for ourselves and the earth. It helps restore our sacred relationships with the earth, animals and all creation.

The resolution has been placed on the [EarthCare webpage](#) under the team's first resolution regarding humanity's impact on global warming.

Welcome Three New EarthCare Certified Congregations!

The EarthCare Team is pleased to announce that three congratulations have joined the EarthCare family. Two congregations, **Unity Comox Valley, British Columbia**, and **Unity Church in Lynwood, Washington**, completed **Level B** of the EarthCare Programs. **Unity of the Blue Ridge, Mills River, North Carolina**, has been certified at **Level C** by completing all seven steps on the path to EarthCare Program. A sample of each of the congregation's accomplishments follows:

- [Unity Comox Valley, BC](#), is the first congregation from Canada to become a certified EarthCare Congregation since 2010. They initiated 40-Day Prayer Program focused on care for the Earth. Each week, a different topic was featured with pertinent information and suggestions for things people can do put the ideas into action. The weekly topics were as follows: "Food, Glorious Food," "Reduce-Reuse-Reduce-Regift-Refuse," "Your Home," "How We Get Around" and "Notice Where You Shop—Your Dollars Count."





Welcome Three New EarthCare Certified Congregations! (cont'd)

(Unity Comox Valley, BC, cont'd)

Other activities included spiritual cinema highlighting EarthCare and an environmental fundraiser. They also promoted reduce-reuse-recycling, waste minimization, practicing energy conservation and supporting the natural resources such as the [Tsolum River Restoration Society](#).

- [Unity Church in Lynnwood, Wash.](#), was first certified under Level A in 2013. They have now moved on to Level B by completing an energy audit and implementing 33 of the recommendations. In addition, because their church building is adjacent to a nature preserve, the area has been restored by planting over 1,200 indigenous trees and removing several decaying structures and trash in order to rehabilitate a salmon run stream. The [Natural Wildlife Federation](#) has declared the Nature Preserve a [Certified Wildlife Habitat](#) which has been maintained to the present day.
- [Unity of the Blue Ridge, N.C.](#), the first congregation to complete all seven steps on the *Path to EarthCare* since 2015, has done many activities in each of the seven steps: Pray, Vision, Inspire, Learn, Act, Share and Renew. A few of the highlights of their many activities and programs include:
 - ◇ a monthly sustainability program through e-news, PowerPoint slides and information posted in restrooms;
 - ◇ an active youth education program focusing on Mother Earth and sustainability,
 - ◇ policies that reduced the use of paper by 50% and
 - ◇ purchasing sustainable products whenever possible.

Finally, Unity of the Blue Ridge placed a conservation easement through [Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy](#) on eleven (11) acres of their land, which ensures that the land can never be developed. The land was then sold to the [Carolina Memorial Sanctuary](#), a Conservation Burial Ground and the easement will be transferred to the sanctuary. The land is under a program eliminating invasive plant species and is being restored using all native species. The project is being financed through natural burials using only biodegradable caskets or shrouds, no embalming, no steel or concrete, and all graves are hand-dug. The sanctuary is open to the public and will offer environmental education.

Mother Earth and Unity EarthCare honors each congregation for its sacred commitment to being good stewards of our earth home. Congratulations!

[Thirty-seven congregations are now certified](#) under one of the three levels of the EarthCare Program.



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Green Star Award

Has your congregation done **at least three things** to foster awareness of spiritual oneness with our Earth home and promote active care of creation for the environment this year? If so, you may qualify for the first annual “Green Star Award for Congregational Environmental Excellence.”

Recipients will be honored with a certificate suitable for framing, be featured in the *EarthCare Connections* newsletter and on the [EarthCare webpage](#). In addition, your congregation will be recognized at the 2017 [Unity People’s Convention](#).

Please send your entry to me at the address below. Describe the events, objectives, dates, number of participants and picture/event information **by December 31, 2016:**

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Mentoring Program

Join David Cordova for mentoring on the second Saturday of the month, **12 p.m. noon, Eastern**, to learn how to form a Green Team or expand your existing EarthCare Program. What a perfect opportunity to share inspiration and provide an inspiring cross-pollination of ideas and encouragement from across the continent! For more information, contact David Cordova at davecordova@msn.com or by calling 210.825.8422.

Happy Thanksgiving!

