



# EarthCare Connections



unity<sup>®</sup>  
Worldwide Ministries  
EarthCare

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

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## 2017 Green Star Award

Has your congregation done **three things** to foster awareness of spiritual oneness with our Earth home and promote active care of creation for the environment in calendar year 2017? If so, you may qualify for the second 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 2018 Unity People’s Conference.

Please send your entry to Mike McCord at the address below no later than May 1st. Describe the events, objectives, dates, number of participants and picture/event information. Be sure to include the full name and address of your ministry as well as the name & contact information of your senior minister and primary Green Team person.

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Mike McCord, Editor

## Unity of Kalamazoo earns ENERGY STAR certification;

### Outperforms similar U.S. buildings on measure of energy efficiency

Unity of Kalamazoo in Kalamazoo, Michigan has earned the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) ENERGY STAR® certification for superior energy performance. This makes Unity of Kalamazoo one of only twenty churches in Michigan to earn the designation.

“Unity of Kalamazoo continues to demonstrate true environmental leadership by reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions that are proven to contribute to climate change,” stated



Jean Lupinacci, ENERGY STAR Director for Commercial & Industrial Buildings. “Today, 45 percent of U.S. emissions are attributable to commercial and industrial buildings, which is why improving energy efficiency is so critical for our future.”

“We’re honored to earn the ENERGY STAR for superior energy performance at Unity of Kalamazoo and appreciate the efforts of everyone who has been involved in its efficient operation,” said office manager Tracy Process. “Saving energy is just one of the ways we show our community we care, and that we’re committed to doing our part to protect the environment and public health, both today and for future generations.”

According to Ms. Process, among the many changes they made include replacing iridescent with LED light bulbs, installation of programmable thermostats, and water efficient facets and low flush toilets for a 30% water savings, just to name a few. Overall, Unity of Kalamazoo tested 81% efficient! Process credits this success to teamwork between the board of trustees, the congregation, and staff. For more information on Unity of Kalamazoo, visit [www.unitykalamazoo.com](http://www.unitykalamazoo.com)

For more information about ENERGY STAR for Buildings and Plants, visit [www.energystar.gov/buildings](http://www.energystar.gov/buildings).



(L-R) Ralph Huston, Consumer Rep. for Energy Star, Sr. Minister Joslyn Mason and Tracy Process.

## Earth Day is April 22nd!

Earth Day is coming soon! If you haven’t already planned your activities for “Earth month,” here are some ideas:

- Sign up for the **Earth Day Network** (<https://www.earthday.org/>), the world’s largest environmental network. Earth Day 2018 is dedicated to providing the information and inspiration needed to fundamentally change human attitude and behavior about plastics. In this regard, the Earth Day Network offers several options to take action to End Plastic Pollution on Earth Day and beyond. They also provide tool kits to end plastic pollution, an Earth Day action toolkit and resources for teach-in and faith-based organizations.
- Check out “chiff.com” for a list of 2018 Earth Day Celebrations, Events & Activities nationwide and in major cities throughout the United States.
- Planet Pals (<http://www.planetpals.com/>) provides a variety of Kid-friendly fun facts, activities, and resources for learning more about planet Earth, recycling & conservation, and lots of links to **Earth Day** information around the Web.
- Interfaith Power and Light (<http://www.interfaithpowerandlight.org/>) is committed to helping religious congregations become better stewards of Creation by



responding to global warming through the promotion of energy conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy. They provide a variety of resources to help congregations know what they can do to help.

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency website, <https://www.epa.gov/earthday>, provides a list of events and activities, project resources and ideas.
- Although not specifically related to Earth Day, [Richard Rohr's Daily Meditations from the Center for Action and Contemplation](#) seeks to empower individuals to live out their sacred soul tasks in service to the world through contemplative programs and resources. Here is a sample of what Mr. Rohr wrote on March 12, 2018:

*Long ago, St. Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), named a Doctor of the Church in 2012, communicated creation spirituality through music, art, poetry, medicine, gardening, and reflections on nature. She wrote in her famous book, Scivias: You understand so little of what is around you because you do not use what is within you. [1]This is key to understanding Hildegard and is very similar to Teresa of Ávila's understanding of the soul. Without using the word, Hildegard recognized that the human person is a microcosm with a natural affinity for or resonance with its macrocosm, which many call God. Our little world reflects the big world. The key word here is resonance. Contemplative prayer allows your mind to resonate with what is visible and right in front of you. Contemplation erases the separateness between the seer and the seen.*

*Hildegard often used the word viriditas, the greening of things from within, similar to what we now call photosynthesis. She recognized a readiness in plants to receive the sun and to transform it into energy and life. She also saw an inherent connection between the physical world and the divine Presence. This connection translates into energy that is the soul and seed of everything, an inner voice calling you to "Become who you are; become all that you are." This is our "life wish" or what Carl Jung called the "whole-making spirit."*



## Mentoring Calls

**National:** Facilitated by David Cordova on the second Saturday of the month, at 12 noon, Eastern Time. For more information, please contact David at [davecordova@msn.com](mailto:davecordova@msn.com), or by calling 210.825.8422.

**Mindful Eating:** Facilitated by Rev. Grace on the second Wednesday of the month at 4:00 p.m., Central Time. The call-in number is 641.715.3680 and the access code is 1043504#, 11 a.m. Central