

GLOBAL CHANGE Electronic Edition



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A Review of Climate Change and Ozone Depletion

Winter 2000

Moderating Change

Actions to Slow Global Change

CONGREGATIONS GO GREEN

Energy Conservation as Stewardship

Congregations, synagogues and mosques meet many social needs. Increasingly, the scope of religious service is environmental. Saving energy as a way of caring for creation is now easier because of some new church-state partnerships.

The Eco-Justice Working Group of the National Council of Churches promotes energy conservation for member congregations by partnering with the Energy Star Program of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EPA created an Energy Partnership to assist congregations in lowering energy costs for environmental reasons, knowing that faith-based organizations would also be attracted to the additional benefit of funds freed for mission commitments.

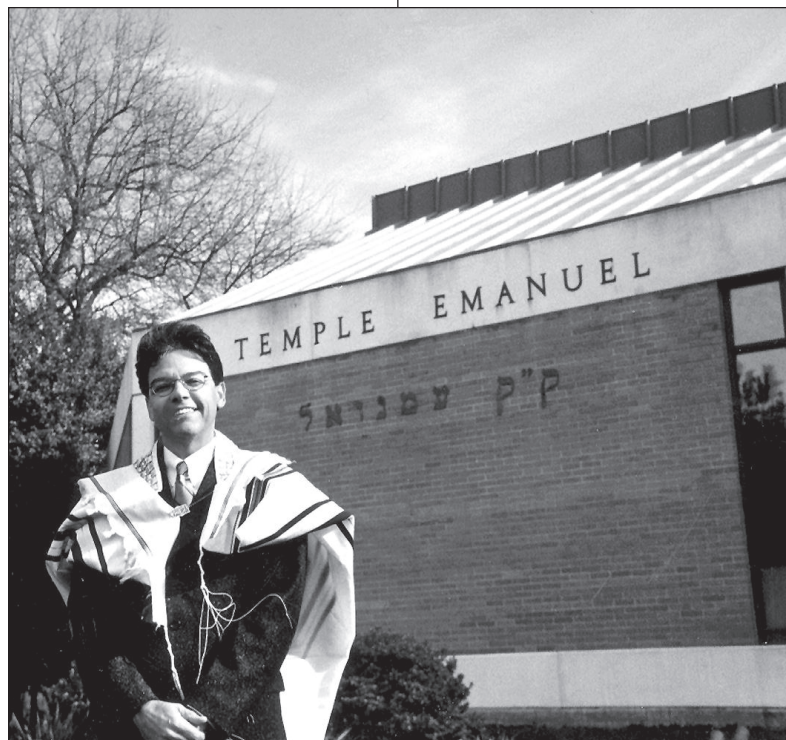
Under an Energy Star Partnership, congregations are offered tailored technical assistance in these energy conservation strategies: lighting, office and facilities upgrades, load reductions, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (HVAC) evaluation with specific guidance on upgrading and replacing physical plant equipment.

Congregations and affiliated entities in partnership with EPA number about 250. Sligo Adventist School in Takoma Park, MD saves \$11,136 annually while preventing release of 213,909 pounds or about 97 metric tons of carbon dioxide. New lighting

(including T-8 lamps and electronic ballasts) brightens the learning atmosphere. The School invests the ongoing savings on energy bills into its new and growing computer laboratory.

Judy Bugiaski, Controller of

Detroit's Doorstep Homeless Shelter, scrambles for funds particularly in the winter when heating bills are high and client needs peak. "In these times of economic hardship, nonprofit organizations must look into all operational expenses to save money without sacrificing the valuable services they provide to people in crisis." Lighting savings alone yield just over \$5000 annually. Bugiaski spends her energy dividend on food, clothing, medicine and counseling services.



Let There be Light! Rabbi Warren Stone of Temple Emmanuel in Kensington, MD hopes other faith communities will consider energy conservation an important part of living justly. *Source: Lisboa Communications, Washington, D.C.*



Doorstep, like most church entities, operates within a tight budget. EPA provides technical assistance on staging energy upgrades to fit budget constraints. Many congregations find investing in conservation measures difficult, despite the will to go green. .”

Web resources include the **EPA Energy Star Small Business and Congregations** pages at www.epa.gov/Congregations.

For environmental action by religious partnership and denominations, see the **Web site National Religious Partnership for the Environment** (www.nrpe.org/) or its member organizations:

Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life: www.jtsa.edu/org/coejl/

US National Catholic Conference of Bishops Environmental Justice Program: www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/index.htm.

Evangelical Environment Network: creationcare.org//index.html

National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA: nccusa.org/

Practicing What They Preach

San Francisco's Grace Cathedral made the switch to renewable power in October 1999 by selecting Green Mountain Energy Resources (GMER) for energy supply. Joined by sixteen other Episcopal parishes in Northern California, cathedral and diocesan leaders hope their actions will invite parishioners to choose less environmentally-disruptive sources of power in this new era of electricity deregulation and consumer choice. "In light of the ever increasing scientific evidence of global warming and in response to God's call that we be wise stewards of Creation, Episcopal Power and Light teaches that green power and energy conservation are responsibilities of Christians everywhere," intoned the Reverend Sally Bingham at an October 1999 liturgy.

In an arrangement with GMER, a new wind turbine will be built with acknowledged Episcopal support once 3800 parishioners in the Bay Area select the green energy alternative. Bingham heads the statewide initiative Episcopal Power and Light and hopes that the experience of flocks in California will be replicated in other states by all denominations.

For more information on Episcopal Power and Light see www.theregenerationproject.org/html/comm.htm. For details on green energy power options in California see Web sites of The Center for Resource Solutions (www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/index.htm) and Green Mountain (www.greenmountain.com/).

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