



Green Sanctuary
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
Congregational Stewardship Services
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Application for Green Sanctuary Accreditation

Congregation Name	Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Phoenix
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Minister or Congregation Leader	Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

I. Congregation Profile

A brief introduction, to include: membership, demographics, maybe a little history and what issues are significant - whatever is relevant (about 2 to 5 paragraphs).

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Phoenix (UUCP) is located on nine desert acres in Paradise Valley, a residential suburb of Phoenix, Arizona. Phoenix has more than 300 days of sun per year and an average temperature of 72 degrees. More than 50% of the City's population is between 18 and 54 years old, which is younger than the national average. The Phoenix-metro area is a growing one with over 4 million people (2006) in the metropolitan area, including 1.5 million living in Phoenix. Phoenix is now the 5th largest city in the United States and the largest capital city in terms of population.

UUCP was organized in 1946. The congregation moved to its current location in 1961 and has been in operation at this location for over 45 years. Blaine Drake, a student of architect Frank Lloyd Wright, designed the main facilities. UUCP is home to 367 members with a recent average Sunday attendance of 218 adults and 70 children/youth. During the week, UUCP is also home to two schools - a cooperative UU preschool and an unaffiliated elementary school for grades 1 through 4.

Approximately four years ago, UUCP moved towards policy-based governance and adopted a Five-Year Strategic Plan for growth and development to facilitate its ability to remain at its current location and build a beloved religious community. The Strategic Plan includes plans to accomplish significant renovation of UUCP's physical plant and to grow its membership. UUCP membership has grown from 260 members in January 2006 to 367 members in January 2010. The Green Sanctuary Committee and its goals have been incorporated into the Strategic Plan.

In April 2008, UUCP called the Reverend Susan Frederick-Grey to be our minister. Our growth has been such that we now exceed the capacity of our parking lot for one service and we now have two services each Sunday during the regular year. We drop back to one during the summer.

Within our Strategic Plan, we do have a few specific considerations - particularly maintaining our natural desert environment and the architectural integrity of our facilities while, at the same time, conserving water and other natural resources. In addition, UUCP must conform to the site master plan (recently approved by the Town of Paradise Valley) with respect to renovations of its facilities. To that end, UUCP's efforts to incorporate Green strategies must complement the plans approved by the Town.

II. Congregational Vote

Please attach documentation of your congregation's vote to seek Green Sanctuary certification (e.g., Annual Meeting minutes). Include the specific statement the congregation voted on.

Following is the resolution voted on by the UUCP at its January 2010 Congregational Meeting:

We, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Phoenix, in our desire to be agents for change in the cause of environmental awareness and sustainability commit ourselves to do the following:

- Examine our daily lives for ways to be better stewards of our environmental resources.***
- Encourage the incorporation of the Seventh Principle - respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part - into the fabric of our congregational life. Examine our practices at UUCP for ways to be better stewards of our environmental resources.***
- Engage with the larger community to create a sustainable society that will provide a healthy environment for future generations.***

The motion passed unanimously. The minutes of the meeting are attached to the application in a separate file for your reference.

III. Completion of Program Activities

Describe the 12 projects or program activities your congregation has accomplished: What action was taken? What specific outcomes have resulted from the action? Each project description should be no more than half a page.

Worship and Celebration

1. A Greener Sunday Service—the material part.

Examine the Order of Service as the primary vehicle for communicating the service components and the announcements. Look at coffee hour to see if there are greener ways to feed and serve the congregation after service.

At the beginning of this process, UUCP utilized an Order of Service that included a cover page on colored paper and 1-2 pages of service specifics and announcements on white paper. Members of the Green Sanctuary Committee (GSC) research different options, including the approaches used by other congregations. Through the efforts of many and the leadership of Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, the Order of Service has transformed to a cover made of card stock with a one page insert. The covers are reused each Sunday, although visitors are welcome to take one with them as they contain information about our congregation, our UU faith, and our staff. The insert is printed on white paper and includes information about the specific service. Now, announcements are primarily communicated through a weekly email called Compass.

The staff of the coffee hour developed the following environmentally aware philosophy:

- (1) limiting the use of disposable items – this translates into practices such as using glass plates/cups and silverware for the coffee hour service, rather than plastics, and using dishcloths rather than paper towels.
- (2) reusing and recycling – this means that the staff washes and reuses containers, recycles when appropriate, and saves food scraps for one member's pet pig or for the composting bin set up by the on-site preschool.

2. A Greener Sunday Service—the worship part

Work with Sunday Services Committee in bringing in new guest speakers and designing services around committee members' talents and contributions.

In addition to the services planned by Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, the Green Sanctuary Committee worked in partnership with the Sunday Services Committee to offer the following green services:

- “Building a Green Culture” - The sermon was given by committee members; the focus was on sustainable actions we can take as individuals, as a congregation, and as part of a larger community
- “Energy Independence” – The focus was on energy interdependence and the urgent topic of renewable and alternative energy
- “A Greener Future for our Schools” – The sermon was given by the Director of U.S. Green Schools, a non-profit that works to design and renovate schools in an environmentally conscious manner.

- “Desert Biofuels” – This service explored the growing movement towards sustainable energy in the desert.
- “Food” – This service presented the social, environmental, and cultural dimensions of eating.

3. Incorporate Green Sanctuary into ministerial functions wherever possible.

Meet with the minister regularly, invite her to GSC meetings, assign a liaison to the Committee on Ministry, and incorporate any and all suggestions and new information into the above outline.

The Chair of the Green Sanctuary Committee, as well as various committee members, met with our minister, Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, several times, both in person and on the telephone. Rev. Susan was invited to GSC meetings, she received copies of meeting minutes, and she attended one committee meeting. Over the two years of our certification process, she delivered several sermons with a green, environmental, or sustainability focus. Also, Rev. Susan was part of the discussion about green communication (#1 above) and was instrumental in the implementation of the Order of Service changes. Rev. Susan implemented a “Share the Plate” program in which each month UUCP returns one Sunday’s collection plate to the community. One “Share the Plate” recipient (nominated by the Green Sanctuary Committee Chair) was the Phoenix Permaculture Guild, a local non-profit that works to inspire sustainable urban living through education, community involvement and creative cooperation

UUCP experienced some reorganization after Rev. Susan’s arrival in summer 2008. Consequently, it was no longer relevant to have a liaison with the Committee of Ministry. However, partially as a result of meetings between Rev. Susan and the Green Sanctuary Chair, a UUCP Council was created with the purpose of increasing communication and providing opportunities for collaboration between committees so that they can better carry out our congregation’s mission. All program, worship, and administrative committees sit on the Council and the Green Sanctuary Chair served as Chair of the Council.

Religious Education

1. Adult Religious Education (ARE) classes

Work with the ARE Committee to implement classes and workshops with environmental themes. The ARE Committee already generates an annual schedule of six to eight courses that are published at the beginning of every school year. For three years, they have offered a class about ecospirituality in April to coincide with Earth Day. We will help formalize this as part of the Green Sanctuary program and help ARE to publicize it as such, and to help build and keep strong enrollment in this annual course. New course offerings will also be researched and developed.

Members of GSC and ARE continued to offer the ecospirituality class that was jointly planned and advertised. Another course about Thoreau and the environment was developed. Currently, we are offering a class titled "Considering the Asian Religions," based on a book by a UU minister. The course incorporates analyses of Asian religions through the lens of liberal Western religious views, which is devoted largely to a green worldview. The two committees also

offered movie nights with environmentally themed films like *Food, Inc.*, *The Story of Stuff*, and *Who Stole the Electric Car?*

The GSC planned and held green workshops. In spring 2009, classes on green living practices, solar energy, and composting were presented; the workshop topics in spring 2010 were sustainable gardening, rainwater harvesting, and raising chickens. The workshops were open to members of the congregation and the greater community.

2. Membership Profiles with Green Focus

Interview new as well as older members of the congregation to learn about them and their households' efforts to be green. Publish interview in monthly congregation newsletter, Horizons. Also, display interviews on the Green Sanctuary bulletin board in the main hallway. This project promotes our ties with the Membership Committee.

The membership profiles proved to an interesting, effective way to “introduce” members and their green practices to the congregation. The “Getting to Know You, the Green You” has been a regular component of the GSC’s submissions to the congregation’s newsletter, Horizons. The profiles shared green practices and tips related to gardening in the desert, composting, solar energy, alternative fuels vehicles, transportation alternatives, graywater, and recycling.

3. Children’s Religious Education Projects

In connection with the Children’s Ministry Committee, the Green Sanctuary Committee has identified that our children’s RE project will actually consist of two types of events with four different age groups. The YRUU (9th-12th graders) group and the COA (7th-8th graders) group will each develop an environmentally friendly service project that they will perform. The GS Committee will meet with each group in the fall for planning purposes and will provide support when the service projects are performed in the spring. The other type of activity will be planned for the younger children in two groups: Pre-K through 2nd graders and 3rd through 6th graders. The children and their families will be invited to go on an environmentally educational field trip on one Saturday during the year. Possible destinations include a visit to a Permaculture farm, a hydrogen house, or a trail clean-up with the local park service.

The Green Sanctuary Committee researched, purchased, and assisted with the planning of an environmentally focused curriculum, "Teaching Global Sustainability in the Primary Grades: A K-4 Curriculum," that was used during the summer of 2009. A total of 96 children participated in the program.

Also, our children and youth were involved in the following green activities:

- Children in pre-K through 4th grade participated in an Eco Scavenger Hunt and Potluck Dinner. The children learned about solar energy, graywater systems, and dual flush toilets. Then, everyone enjoyed delicious food and roasted marshmallows for s’mores.
- Students in the 5th and 6th grade class helped to organize and advertise a Fork and Spoon Drive (see details under Booker T. Washington below).
- The Coming of Age class of 7th and 8th graders assisted with the greening of Cabaret.

- The YRUU (9th-12th graders) worked with the Committee on the Work Day at Booker T. Washington. Also, the Committee assisted the YRUU with its green dinner favors at District Assembly.

In addition, GSC held a workshop for the teachers at our early education cooperative on greening their classrooms and their activities. The Committee facilitated bringing an 8 week gardening class to the 4-year old classroom. The preschool now maintains a vegetable and flower garden; they also installed a compost bin for the congregational community to use.

Social Justice and Sustainability

1. New Day Center Garden Project

This project was selected after the initial feedback from the UUA Green Sanctuary Review Committee to replace the Community Supported Agriculture program. UUCP has an established history with the New Day Center, whose mission is to provide homeless and low-income families with food, shelter and tools to build a bridge to self-sufficiency. Committee members will meet with New Day staff to identify an appropriate project with environmental focus. Congregational members will be recruited to assist with implementing the identified project.

GSC members met on several occasions with staff at the New Day Center to develop an appropriate, sustainable project. The New Day Center recently moved into a new facility which had an open space available for a community garden. Congregational members researched gardening curricula for upper elementary-aged children and found a Junior Master Gardener program that had been used successfully with a local elementary school. Volunteers met with the children of families at the New Day Center monthly to prepare the garden plot, plant seeds and seedlings, tend the growing plants, learn about dirt, explore the interconnected web of life, and eat the fruits (and veggies) of their labor.

2. Environmental Justice Project with Booker T. Washington Head Start Program.

UUCP has had a long relationship with the Head Start Program at Booker T. Washington School. As one of our environmental justice projects, representatives from the committee and the Head Start staff will identify and develop two projects each church year. The projects will involve an “in kind” donation of service time from members of the congregation. The committee will work to emphasize the ways that the projects can be done in a more environmentally friendly/sustainable way. For example, if the Head Start program needs a room painted, UUCP will supply the labor to paint as well as assist in securing low VOC paint for the project.

Members of the committee met with the director at Booker T. Washington; three projects were identified and completed.

1. Painting a classroom building: The Committee organized a workday. Members of the congregation, including a group from YRUU, scrapped and repainted the window trim and doors of the building.

2. Gardening: During the workday, congregation members helped prepare two garden beds for classroom use. Seeds and seedlings for the gardens were delivered from the congregation.
3. Collecting forks and spoons: Booker T. Washington serves its students 2 meals and 2 snacks every school day using plastic forks and spoons. The plastic utensils were then thrown away. With assistance from the 5th and 6th graders, the Committee organized a Fork and Spoon Drive. 440 utensils were donated by members of the congregation.

Replacing the paper plates with reusable ones is the planned next step in this project.

Sustainable Living

1. Incorporate Green Practices into UUCP's Master Landscape Plan.

Review the landscape portion of UUCP's master plan to incorporate greener practices where possible. Of particular interest is the approximately 4 acres of natural (undeveloped) land. The enhancement of a currently existing trail within that land, including plant identification, will be considered a priority.

Under this project, an illustrated Trail Guide was created for a nature trail on UUCP's property. The Guide includes pictures and descriptions of plants and animals that can be seen along the trail. The plant information also includes a summary of each plant's uses. Hard copies of the Trail Guides are available in the lobby of the church and can be taken for reference during a walk on the trail. The trail guide has also been posted on the church's website. The GSC sponsored two workdays to perform the needed periodic maintenance on the trail, including trimming trees/plants and rebuilding pathways.

In a natural extension of this project, a member of the GSC participated in the meetings of our Renovations Committee that is addressing sewer, parking, and expansion issues facing the congregation. An Environmental Summary on the plans was completed. The Renovations Committee is including environmental considerations in their planning and decision-making process. For example, the first phase of renovations included replacing windows with dual pane glass and old sliding glass doors with dual pane, push bar doors. A dust abatement issue in one parking lot is being solved with the environmentally friendly solution of an organic binding material. Also, they examined low flow toilets and waterless urinals for possible use in the plans for a new bathroom core.

2. Information Dissemination.

Committee members will collectively serve as an information disbursement hub. We will provide monthly e-mail notices of Meet Up gatherings and green events. To do this, we will collect information from members, friends and others regarding local green events, such as monthly alternative energy meet-up meetings, lectures at the Phoenix Science Museum regarding climate change, green trade shows, film series and the like as well as practical websites regarding steps to preserve and conserve environmental resources. We will also post links to vetted and useful websites on UUCP website under the GSC.

The Green Sanctuary Committee has provided monthly contributions to the congregation's newsletter, Horizons. In addition to information about green events and resources, the committee wrote articles about green topics, such as greening for the holidays and composting. The Committee added a Green Sanctuary page on the congregation's website and used the site to provide information about the committee's work, upcoming events, and resource links. Visit the site at www.phoenixuu.org (under the Social Action tab). The GSC regularly posted information and tips on a prominent hallway bulletin board at the congregation.

GSC also worked with the planning committee for the Pacific Southwest District Assembly in 2009. Members provided assistance with identifying and selecting a local non-profit with a green focus to be a part of the meeting and with providing ideas and supplies for the green dinner favors prepared by the youth.

3. Research a plan for solar water heaters and electricity panels at UUCP.

The evaluation will at least include a.) determining the capacity and nature of UUCP's current hot water system along with its current cost to operate. b.) learning the age and its likely life. c.) Conferring with solar energy company representatives regarding the feasibility and cost to convert to solar hot water heater and any negatives. d.) Investigating the availability of grants or solar energy credits that may be available to non-profits, if any, and/or the possibility of serving as a demonstration project in return for a discount. e.) Providing a cost savings analysis for conversion. Follow similar plan for solar electricity panels.

GSC members researched and prepared an evaluation that examined the costs and feasibility of installing solar water heaters and electricity panels at UUCP. The report was shared with the Board President, the minister, the chair of the Renovations Committee, and the chair of the Buildings and Grounds committee. In summarizing the water heater component, the report concluded that a first economical step is to wrap the two existing water heaters with thermal blankets. When the water heaters need to be replaced, the report contains an analysis of options such as an on-demand system and a solar water heater.

The researchers found and tracked an interesting development in the evaluation of solar electric panels. Solar companies in Arizona have recently received approval to install solar panels on the buildings of large institutions, like schools. The solar company pays for the installation of the panels and retains ownership of the panels; the host institution receives the benefit of the power produced and the associated cost reductions. This approach eliminates the up-front costs that can make solar panel installation cost prohibitive. Currently, this option is being approved on an individual basis by the Arizona Corporate Commission so we will continue to monitor its progress and application.

4. Develop a comprehensive recycling and waste reduction program for the congregation.

Continue to monitor recycling contract to maximize our recycling. Investigate the feasibility of recycling aluminum cans to reduce the overall cost of recycling. Determine best place to cash in, for price and convenience. Longer term plans include recycling of florescent and CFL bulbs, if practical.

When the GSC was created, UUCP had a recycling contract that only included paper products. Even as our candidacy application was being reviewed, committee members worked on researching recycling options. Based on the results of that research, UUCP's administrator signed a much more comprehensive recycling contract that collected not only paper, but also plastic, glass, and aluminum.

Committee members also researched the feasibility of recycling other materials such as CFLs. With the wide availability of recycling options offered by the different cities in the area and by local retailers, GSC decided that the most efficient alternative was to gather information regarding recycling of a wide range of items including CFLs, electronics, and hazardous materials and to post this information on our web site for reference by congregational members.

IV. Accomplishment of Program Goals

In a two or three page narrative, describe the degree to which you have achieved the five Green Sanctuary Program goals with your program:

- *To build awareness of societal environmental issues among UU's.*
- *To generate commitment for personal lifestyle changes.*
- *To motivate UU's to community action on environmental issues.*
- *To build a connection between spiritual practice and environmental consciousness.*
- *To build awareness of and rectify environmental injustices.*

From its inception, the Green Sanctuary Committee (GSC) has seen its mission as broader than Green Sanctuary accreditation. That belief is clearly stated in the committee's charter; the mission of the GSC is "to motivate our UUCP community to be agents of change for environmental awareness and sustainability." We have truly been striving for a cultural change and the ball is definitely rolling at UUCP.

The GSC has successfully reached out in many ways to build awareness of environmental issues not only among UU's but also the general populace. During the past two years, UUCP has offered Sunday services, adult classes, children's programs, and workshops that examined issues related to sustainability and the environment. The congregation's newsletter, Horizons, featured regular submissions with green tips as well as member profiles with a green focus.

The Green Sanctuary Committee has been very active in partnering with other committees at the congregation. GSC worked directly with the Adult Religious Education Committee, the Sunday Services Committee, the Building and Grounds Committee, the Social Action Committee, the Children's Ministry Committee and the Music Committee. In addition, GSC had meetings with the Membership Committee, the Early Education Cooperative (the on-site preschool), and Desert View Learning Center (the on-site elementary school).

An example of a very successful collaboration is the "greening" of Cabaret, an annual fundraising event produced by the UUCP Choir and Music Committee. For three straight years, GSC has coordinated a crew of workers that enabled the use of non-perishable plates, cups and

utensils; washable table linens and napkins; and bottle/can recycling at the bar. One year, the crew was able to reduce the trash from 8 bags to two by separating the recyclable material.

These efforts to communicate with a variety of people and groups generated conversation. People started talking about green topics like recycling, composting, gardening, and using CFLs and committees started considering the environmental ramifications of their activities. For example, the Finance Committee now reviews their spreadsheets on laptops, rather than printing the reports. The Board is currently reading Michael Schuler's book, *Making the Good Life Last: Four Keys to Sustainable Living*. Environmental consideration is becoming embedded in our congregational life.

In its charter, the GSC is charged with reaching out on several different levels; the first of which was individual/personal. UUCP fostered a commitment to personal lifestyle changes by sharing information, by modeling green practices, and by teaching our children. A variety of UUCP members were interviewed about their choices for greener living, including building materials, transportation (alternative fuels), solar energy alternatives, permaculture landscaping, gardening, local foods. By learning the intentional, accessible, and creative choices of our friends and neighbors, we are inspired to make changes in our own lives.

UUCP offered its own practices as a model for individuals. As members help with maintenance of our Nature Trail, they learn about indigenous low-water use plants and trees. Our 'Order of Service' cover is now re-used many times. As attendees of Sunday services return their hand-out materials for re-use in the next service, or eventually deposited for recycling, they are reminded to make it a habit: re-use and recycle! The congregation has recently started using a carpool website to help members get to services and meetings in a more efficient, less polluting way.

We made a conscious decision to include children in our green efforts. GSC researched and helped to implement the curriculum, "Teaching Global Sustainability in the Primary Grades: A K-4 Curriculum," used during the summer program offered by the Children's Ministry Committee. Both schools on campus have gardens and compost piles. Our youth were involved in planning and fulfilling several projects, like the Fork and Spoon Drive and the District Assembly dinner favors. Children in our related communities learned about different aspects of sustainable living and took their knowledge home to their families, widening the circle of encouragement. As Rev. Susan pointed out in her "Seven Generations" sermon on Nov. 16, 2008, our individual efforts are a first step in respecting our environment and its future.

UUCP is beginning to translate its improved environmental awareness into action in our greater community. The congregation invited the at-large community to participate in its environmentally themed movie nights and in its Earth Day workshops and some attendees were from outside our UU community. UUCP is developing a relationship with the Phoenix Permaculture Guild and we dedicated one of the "Share the Plate" offertories to them. Our work with the New Day Center and Booker T. Washington Head Start are other examples of our involvement in the community.

Individual congregational members as well as two committees (Green Sanctuary and Social Action) have met legislators and participated in legislative events at the State Capitol,

including the Environmental Day at the Legislature sponsored by the Sierra Club. Coordinating involvement in the legislative process would be a logical next step in growing our community action.

Sunday services and adult religious education were the foundation for building our connection between spiritual practice and environmental consciousness. Several times a year, Rev. Susan designs the Sunday service around a green topic. She skillfully interweaves the music, the readings, and the meditation to enhance the theme. In addition, GSC worked with the Sunday Services committee to showcase environmental topics in five services during the two years of our certification candidacy.

During its annual planning session, the Adult Religious Education (ARE) Committee, with representatives from GSC, works to include environmental subject matter in the course offerings. Every spring, ARE offers an ecologically-themed course. This course is often facilitated by members of GSC. The course sets the tone for upcoming Earth Day observations. Our spring offering last year highlighted Ecospirituality. One final note about spirituality and the environment is that UUCP is fortunate to have a beautiful, natural campus. The meditation garden features many native plants and is the start/end to the Nature Trail loop featured in the guide developed by GSC.

In order to build awareness and work to correct environmental injustices, UUCP and GSC reached out to two organizations that have a long history with the congregation and that serve disadvantaged populations. A very important outreach of UUCP's Social Action Committee is working with the New Day Center, an organization that assists families in breaking the cycle of homelessness. GSC developed a gardening program for use at the New Day Center. The children at the New Day Center planted seeds and seedlings while learning about the interdependent web of existence.

At the Booker T. Washington Head Start program that serves at-risk children, UUCP completed three projects identified by the Head Start Director: painting, garden preparation, and utensil drive. The outline for the fourth project is to continue the environmental change in the meal delivery system focusing on the plates.

Overall, the Green Sanctuary Committee believes that UUCP made progress (in some cases, significant) in obtaining the program goals outlined in the Green Sanctuary Program. GSC supports the philosophy that creating a cultural change is an on-going process. Several of the projects would benefit from a continued effort beyond certification. The congregation is probably also ready to identify new areas of focus as we continue our path to be good environmental stewards.

V. Program Evaluation

Please evaluate the effect the Green Sanctuary Program has had on your congregation. This narrative should be approximately 3 to 5 pages, and include the following questions:

- *What do you believe has been the most important benefit your congregation has gained as a result of your participation in the Green Sanctuary Program?*
- *What has been the most difficult or challenging aspect of the program for your congregation to achieve?*

- *Have you been able to discern positive changes in your congregation's culture as a result of the activities you accomplished? If so, what are they?*
- *What are your intentions/aspirations for continuing to live out your Green Sanctuary commitments?*
- *What on-going role do you expect your congregation will take in the wider community relative to environmental issues? How do you feel recognition as a Green Sanctuary affects your position in the community?*

When the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Phoenix's Green Sanctuary Committee (GSC) was created in the fall of 2007, the Board charged the committee with not only working towards Green Sanctuary accreditation, but also with working to create an on-going culture of environmental awareness and sustainability. The committee's efforts were to reach out on three different levels: personal/individual, congregational, and community-wide (outreach). Our Green Sanctuary program has impacted UUCP on all three levels.

Based on the initial environmental audit and interest survey, the congregation showed some understanding of environmental considerations in its daily practices and many expressed a desire to learn more. In reflecting on our Green Sanctuary experience, members of the GSC overwhelmingly agreed that the most significant impact of our program was the increased level of awareness about issues of sustainability and the environment. Conversations among individual members as well as committees progressively included more and more questions and shared experiences about green ideas.

For example, UUCP dramatically improved its recycling efforts over the two years by securing a recycling contract for more items, by distributing clearly marked recycling containers throughout the campus, and by modeling recycling behavior with the Order of Service and the coffee hour. These actions affected our individual members. When the City of Phoenix changed its recycling guidelines, one member created a handout that clarified the new policy and distributed it for use.

Also, there are many indications that on both the individual and congregational levels, people are increasingly sensitive to environmental impacts. The membership profiles illustrate how many people are incorporating greener practices in their lives. Members have discussed the different companies, options, and rebates available for solar energy. As a congregation, we moved to more electronic (rather than paper) means of communication. The monthly newsletter, Horizons, and the weekly announcements, Compass, are both sent to members electronically. The Board uses the projector to share information at its meetings, rather than printing copies for all.

In addition to the examples given above, there have been many other positive changes in UUCP's culture. As a congregation, we are more committed to using less disposable products and more re-usable ones. Dishes, glasses, and flatware are washed after each coffee hour and after many congregational events like Cabaret and Celebration Sunday (after the annual pledge drive).

We are learning more about how to sustain our planet. We have emphasized the value of our native plants by maintaining the natural xeriscape (low water usage) landscaping on our property and by educating about these plants in our Natural Trail Guide. Through our

partnership with the Phoenix Permaculture Guild and the interests of individual members, we are spreading the word about sustainable gardening – how to compost, how to harvest the limited rainwater we received, how to plant with our different growing seasons. Several families in the congregation are now raising chickens.

Both children and adults have participated in educational endeavors that have made a difference. The young people in our congregation spent an entire summer reading books, discussing ideas, and completing activities that explored sustainability. Green awareness has been a part of the regular Sunday classes with teachers communicating with parents via email and with clean-up/recycling being a part of the class structure. The children creatively strategized for a special lesson on recycling and reusing items; they tried to keep all the objects out of the landfill by finding other uses or by composting.

The adults had similar exposure with the green workshops, the movie nights, and the adult RE classes. Over the last two years, the Book Group has selected and discussed six books with green themes, including *The Green Collar Economy* by Van Jones, *The World Without Us* by Alan Weisman, and *Hot, Flat, and Crowded* by Thomas L. Friedman.

There has clearly been a broader consideration of environmental issues within the congregation. This is best exemplified by the work of the Renovations Committee with its sustainability study. As we take steps in each phase of our renovation project, the environmental impact is examined and environmentally friendly options are considered. The new dual pane windows and doors, the dust abatement solution in the parking lot, and the plans for the new restroom core are examples.

The most challenging part of the Green Sanctuary process has been that we set “creating a cultural change” as our goal. We found that completing the individual certification projects involved the congregation or smaller groups for well-defined tasks which for the most part had start and ending times. We could readily tell when a project was completed. Working to achieve a shift in fundamental thinking has been a more nebulous, much slower process. Evaluating our success in this effort comes mostly from a gauge of general atmosphere and from antidotal evidence. GSC does believe that a cultural change is underway at UUCP based on the interest and participation of congregational members in our certification projects as well as on the numerous questions that committee members hear about sustainability practices. Committees are increasingly aware of how their work can be done in a greener way.

As noted by the resolution passed at UUCP’s January congregational meeting, the UUCP community, as both individuals and as a whole, intends to continue learning and growing in its environmental practices. Our cultural change will continue. We envision that one true measure of the change will be the incorporation of the Green Sanctuary Committee’s mission into the mission and work of all the congregational committees and activities. Environmental sustainability will be integrated fully into the life of the congregation and there will be less dependence on a separate committee (GSC). In the meantime, GSC expects new projects to be identified and undertaken.

UUCP is striving to be a beacon in the desert. Originally, being this inspiration was defined in the area of liberal thought. We would like to add environmental sustainability as part of the definition of our guiding light. UUCP will continue its long tradition of working with organizations like Booker T. Washington Head Start and the New Day Center. Our on-going role will include partnerships with groups like the Phoenix Permaculture Guild. Education

related to environmental lessons will be a focus for members of our UUCP community and for those of our larger community.

In the winter 2010 issue of Yes! magazine, Rev. Canon Sally Bingham made the following statement when asked about the role of the faith community in addressing the climate crisis: “The faith community didn’t start out in a leadership role on this issue, but I think we’re going to end up there. Now that the moral voice of religion is involved in the dialogue, things are going to happen.” (p. 47) UUCP’s status as a Green Sanctuary will give it credibility as we become a Beacon in the Desert for this very important issue.

VI. Application Instructions

Using this format, submit your electronic application in MSWord format to greensanctuary@uua.org. If you cannot email the application, please contact Robin Nelson for snail-mail instructions.

For additional information and advice for preparing your application, feel free to contact Robin Nelson via email at rnelson@uua.org or by phone at 617.948.4251.