

May 5, 2021

To: UMC Leadership Team and Membership

From: Jean Landis for the Creation Care Committee

Re: Creation Care Committee Report

Historically the Creation Care Committee has been focused on the goal of achieving a small environmental footprint for the church building. Currently that aspiration takes the form of considering the most cost-effective system through which to achieve net zero carbon emissions.

As part of the discerning process for reserve fund distribution, in October 2020 Matt prepared and submitted a Net Zero Energy and Climate Reinvestment Plan. Although the plan was not accepted for the reserve fund distribution, there was favorable feedback suggesting that it would be considered for a future special giving campaign.

We now are exploring new models for installing solar panels. Jim has requested a quote from POWERHOME Solar which would finance the installation and contract with us to sell us the power over the next 5-7 years at a set price. They would get the tax credits, as we are a tax-exempt non-profit and thus ineligible to receive them. He has been told that the company is working on a proposal. When it is completed, it will be presented to us via Zoom.

Creation Care activity has been happening in multiple UMC venues that are not specifically under the umbrella of the Creation Care Committee.

- The Education Committee offered four sessions related to understanding our physical world and its relationship to climate change issues. Thanks to Rick Stehouwer and Marvin Hall for teaching us.
- The Worship Committee arranged for Douglas Graber Neufeld, EMU Biology Professor and Director of the Center for Sustainable Climate Solutions, to preach and teach on Earth Day.
- Pastor Kate infuses her sermons and weekly correspondence with creation care and climate justice concerns. She also continues efforts to recruit members of the congregation to participate in various creation care activities including the Walnut Springs Habitat Restoration Project and the monthly calling campaign of the Citizens Climate Lobby.
- A form of Creation Care Justice is ongoing as we share our land and other resources with the Guatemalan women who currently are landless.

Since Creation Care concerns permeate our UMC identity, we thought it appropriate for the committee to take action that would officially own it as such. A proposal to join the [Mennonite Creation Care Network](#) (MCCN) as one of their Greenpatch Congregations has been submitted to Leadership Team (See attached.) Through this designation we will be named on their website, receive a newsletter twice a month, have access to curricula and other resources, and have opportunities to network with and learn from other Network congregations. This Greenpatch Congregation designation can be added to our website and may help attract potential new members. To be eligible, the congregation must designate a creation care liaison to MCCN.