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Earth Care e-News

bringing Hoosiers of faith together to help curb global climate change

Bloomington, Indiana, October, 2011

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HIPL Newsletter Inaugurated

Last week saw the first issue of [Hoosier Interfaith Power and Light's](#) monthly newsletter. The issue was delivered electronically to a group including those on Earth Care's eNewsletter mailing list. We thought that you'd like to see the new statewide initiative. But if you'd rather not receive this additional email in future months, just follow directions in their email to remove yourself from the list.

Creation Care Workshop

Sunday afternoon, September 25, saw a unique event, sponsored by Monroe County Religious Leaders, Hoosier Interfaith Power and Light, and Earth Care. Over forty representatives of local congregations gathered in a Creation Care Workshop. At least two new congregational "green teams" coalesced, including a group from Trinity Episcopal Church and one from St. Paul's Catholic Center.



One participant shared impressions of the afternoon:

As the rain poured down outside, Rev. Lyle McKee opened last Sunday's gathering at St. Mark's by lighting a candle. Seated in a circle, over forty clergy and lay leaders from fourteen Bloomington congregations listened intently as, one after another after another, members from each read statements from their faith traditions. Here's a sampling:

- The U.S. Catholic Bishops: "Global climate change is not about economic theory or political platforms, nor about partisan advantage or interest group pressures. It is about the future of God's creation and the one human family."
- Climate Change: An Evangelical Call to Action: "Christians must care about climate change because we love God the Creator and Jesus our Lord through whom and for whom the creation was made."
- The Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life: "It is our sacred duty as Jews to... alleviate environmental degradation and the pain and suffering that it causes."
- The United Methodist Church: "We call upon The Church to respond to the perils that now threaten the integrity of God's creation and the future of God's children."

Pastor David Woodcock of Genesis Church spoke passionately about the centrality of caring for creation to his Evangelical Christian faith. Then IU professor Ben Brabson explained with graphs and images some of the scientific understanding of climate change.

And then everyone got down to work. In teams by congregation, some considered what to do next: once a number of us have significantly cut our energy use, do we reach out to others, install solar panels, or speak to our legislators? Others, together for the first time, considered how to start Earth Care's Task of the Month program.

After an invitation to continue collaborating at the monthly meetings of Earth Care and Monroe County Religious Leaders, everyone stood for a closing blessing:

In some of our scriptures, the ram's horn was sounded to warn of imminent mortal danger – and its piercing call had the power to send the walls of Jericho "a-tumblin' "

down". May the call of this horn break down the walls around our hearts. May we not only recognize the grave threat facing our Earth but may we act upon this knowledge, changing how we live, engaging our faith communities, and supporting each other in this sacred work. May we realize that we are not only the threat – we are also the hope. And then the ram's horn was sounded.

Earth Care's Next Meeting

Interested in getting more involved or learning more about what's going on? Members of Earth Care congregations are invited to our October steering committee meeting on Wednesday, October 5, 7 pm, at First United Church, at 2420 E. Third.

The main item on the agenda will be a discussion of how to build on the energy and ideas developed at the recent Creation Care Workshop. A few other smaller reports will be heard as well.

All are welcome.

Bloomington Solar Tour

Bloomington's SIREN is sponsoring a fall tour of solar installations.

The fourth annual Monroe County solar tour is scheduled for noon to 4 p.m. Oct. 15. About 40 residential and commercial sites using solar electric, hot water and space heating are on the self-guided tour that starts at SIREN's booth at the Bloomington Community Farmers' Market in the City Hall parking lot. Tour participants may select from several suggested tour routes, based upon their interests. New this year is a biking tour through Monroe County to see some solar installations "off the beaten trail." Another option: a walking tour through downtown Bloomington, with stops at some popular eateries. Tour sites will be identified by National Solar Tour yard signs. More information will be posted at www.sirensolar.org.

Task of the Month News for October

Task of the Month

Add attic insulation; seal and insulate ducts

Unless your home was constructed with special attention to energy efficiency, adding insulation will probably reduce your utility bills. Much of the existing housing stock in the United States was not insulated to the levels used today. Older homes are likely to use more energy than newer homes, leading to higher heating and air-conditioning bills.

Here are some [guidelines](#) on Earth Care's web site for installing additional insulation.

If you decide to upgrade your insulation, a federal tax credit is available through 2011 covering 10% of materials costs up to \$500. The credit applies to insulation added to a primary residence but does not cover installation and labor. The IRS website has the form you fill out. Contact TaskoftheMonth@gmail.com for more information about insulating your home.

Online Resources

Civil conflicts are associated with the global climate

A thought-provoking article recently appeared in *Nature* studying the correlation between climate change and conflict. This [summary of the article](#) gives an overview, although the full article is behind a pay wall. To read the full article either log in through IU (for example) or search the internet.

Community Initiatives

Clear Choices Clean Water

Our choices are connected to clean water. Clear Choices Clean Water is an Indiana

campaign to increase awareness about the choices we make and the impact they have on our streams and lakes. Visit ClearChoicesCleanWater.org to learn more about how our waterways are affected by our choices related to lawn fertilizer, pet waste, septic systems, and gardening. Then, take the pledge to help keep our streams and lakes healthy. Finally, take a look at the pledge map to see how your part of the state is doing.

Green Spots

What's a Green Spot? A Green Spot is a place, large or small, where nature is hard at work.

What kind of work is nature doing?

- Holding water after a rainfall
- Building soil and keeping soil in place
- Feeding and sheltering birds and other wildlife
- Filtering the air
- Providing beauty and sense of place

How can I learn more? Visit www.GreenSpots.in to find local Green Spots on an interactive map of Monroe County and learn how to create your own Green Spot. Green Spots is an initiative of the **Monroe County Storm Water Environmental Education Team (SWEET)**. Green Spots aims to inform citizens of Monroe County about the natural areas in their neighborhoods and to help county residents take simple steps toward improving the environmental quality of their communities.

WFHB EcoReport Fund Drive

EcoReport, the WFHB environmental news program, airs on Thursdays from 11 to 11:30am at FM 91.3. You are invited to contribute to the support of EcoReport during WFHB's fund drive that started on Friday, September 30, and runs through Sunday, October 9th.

Lucille Bertuccio, EcoReport producer says, "We truly try to bring you information that is NOT covered by our local media. We were the first to cover the Keystone XL Pipeline protest when one of our very own correspondents, Aaron Pollitt went to Washington DC and brought back footage. We were the first to cover the Wall Street protests. We have interviewed local, national and internationally known people – people such as Paul Watson, commander of the Sea Shepards, Elinor Ostrom, Nobel Prize winner for Economics, as well as people who make a difference right here in Bloomington such as Amy Countryman and the Bloomington Community Orchard. Where else but on WFHB can you get this kind of reporting and these kinds of stories?"

If you can't listen to EcoReport when it airs on Thursdays, it is on your computer, just a few clicks away. Go to WFHB.ORG, click on news and then EcoReport.

You may make a pledge on-line at www.wfhb.org or by phone 323-1200 or you may mail a donation to WFHB, 108 W. 4th St. Bloomington, 47404. Make sure the memo line reads ECOREPORT.

A Special Way to Support the Work of Earth Care

Are you ready for winter?

Contact Master Carpenters of Bloomington for help assessing your wall and attic insulation needs. Remember that before adding attic insulation you should take steps to ensure that all attic-to-home air leaks have been sealed!

MCBTN donates 10% of proceeds from energy efficiency work to Earth Care's Task of the Month program. Call 325-0902 or email MCBTN@hotmail.com

Earth Care e-News Editors: Allan Edmonds (First Presbyterian) and Ria Collee (Friends Meeting)

Check out our website at www.earthcareindiana.org to learn more about Earth Care.

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