






It is **EASY** being **GREEN!**

Congratulations to Fairwood Community United Methodist Church - recipient of the designation Climate Justice Church for 2013! This acknowledges that Fairwood, under the guidance of the Greening Committee has been able to reduce our carbon footprint as we celebrate and care for God's Creation. Here's some ways you can reduce your own carbon footprint:


Transportation


 **Set concrete goals for reducing your fossil fuel based travel.** We are a car culture. How can you reduce the number of trips you make? Can you carpool more? Can you make at least one day a week a car-free/car Sabbath day for your family? If you are traveling out of town, can you switch to a more fuel-efficient means of transport (buses or trains over planes and cars)? Get creative—what kind of experience might you have with a “staycation” where you stay in place rather than travel?

 **Whenever practical, walk, bike or use public transportation.** **If you own more than one vehicle, be smart about how you use them.** If only one or two people are traveling, choose the smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicle. Be sure tires are properly inflated to increase gas mileage.


 **Think twice before purchasing another car, SUV or truck.** When purchasing a vehicle, choose a fuel-efficient, low-pollution model.


Food


 **Eat less meat.** Methane is produced by ruminant animals (like cows). It is one of the most potent greenhouse gases. Industrial feedlot forms of cattle production are a significant contribution to climate change.


 **Buy certified organic produce.** Support local farmers by patronizing farm stands and farmers' markets or buying a share in a community-supported agriculture project. Going organic and/or local reduces greenhouse gas emissions in many ways. These approaches require less transportation, eliminate petroleum for fertilizers, use different soil management practices that can hold carbon, etc.

Caring for Your Home

 **Conduct an energy audit of your home.** Some electric utilities will do this for free. Some states and municipalities offer discounts or rebates when you hire certified energy auditing firms to do the job. These professionals will identify all the ways you can tighten up the “envelope” of your home to make it cheaper to heat and cool, and they can prioritize recommendations based on which will produce the greatest savings. Doing a better job of “weatherizing” your home is generally the smarter and most cost-effective first step you can take.

 **Install energy-efficient lighting and appliances.** In addition to lighting, the biggest energy draws are our heating and air-conditioning systems, water heaters and refrigerators. Change these as finances allow. When pricing appliances and other energy-saving products, factor in the cost savings over the life of the product to get a true sense of its cost. Compact fluorescent light bulbs, for example, are more expensive up front at the store but result in so much electricity saving over time that they more than pay for themselves. Tips: The Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star website and *Consumer Reports* offer helpful evaluations of the most efficient appliances and equipment. Individuals can receive discounts on Energy Star appliances through Interfaith Power & Light through their Shop IPL page.

 **Choose an electricity supplier that offers renewable energy.** As a result of energy deregulation, most people in the United States have options related to who supplies their energy. Some churches have even been able to negotiate discounts for their parishioners at home as well as for their church accounts! Visit Interfaith Power & Light for details.

 **If and when you move, choose your next home wisely.** How large is it? What is the environmental and human cost of heating and cooling all that space? How much of an energy guzzler is it? How convenient is it to public transportation? Can you walk to shops, school, restaurants and other places you frequent? Choose a place that reduces or eliminates your need to drive. Put your “climate smart” glasses on when considering options.

For more information check this link: <http://new.gbqm-umc.org/umw/enviroment/footprint>

