

THE  
*Episcopal*  
CHURCH



**Eco-Justice Ministries in the Episcopal Church**  
**Survey Report**

**November 2011**

*“The hope we have in us contains the seeds of a renewed creation. The sea water that runs in our veins...may remind us that we are created of the dust of the earth, dissolved in the moist breath of God. We are intimately connected to all parts of what Sallie McFague calls the body of God. Creation is groaning in travail. But it is not the travail of childbirth. It’s the groaning of mortal illness. We must hear that cry, and respond.”*

Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, *Gospel in the Global Village*

Dear Friends,

In late July you completed an online survey for the Episcopal Church's Office for Economic and Environmental Affairs. Thank you very much for your participation! In your survey response, you indicated an interest in seeing a summary report of the results, which is included below.

We were delighted at the response. Over 900 people started the survey, over 550 completed it, and respondents represented 98 dioceses.

In the survey's introduction, we defined eco-justice ministries as "those designed to heal, defend, and work toward justice for all God's creation—land, water, air, plants, animals, human beings – all creation." Thank you for your care and engagement in these ministries and for sharing your thoughts and stories with us.


This is very important work, following in the footsteps of the Old Testament prophets calling for justice and in Jesus' example of serving and lifting up those whose voices so often go unheard. Engaging people of faith in the movement for eco-justice is especially important, a fact that has been recognized even by those outside the faith community. A relatively recent, powerful call came from Gus Speth, one of the world's foremost environmentalists (co-founder of the Natural Resources Defense Council, founder of World Resources Institute, and former Dean of the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies):


I used to think the top environmental problems facing the world were global warming, environmental degradation, and eco-system collapse, and that we scientists could fix those problems with enough science. But I was wrong. The real problem is not those three items, but greed, selfishness, and apathy. And for that we need a *spiritual and cultural transformation*. And we scientists don't know how to do that. *We need your help.*

Thank you for your part in moving us toward that spiritual and cultural transformation. We hope you find this report informative, interesting, and helpful in your own ministry. If you spend time with the results and want to share something you have learned, please do contact us.

With prayers that we all might find wisdom to know when to put our shoulder to the wheel, when to rest, how to laugh and celebrate, when to risk putting our bodies on the line, and the presence of God's grace through it all.

Peace,

  
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## I. Introduction—Goals, Methods, and Demographics

**Goals:** The Episcopal Church Center's Economic and Environmental Affairs Office provides support to eco-justice ministries in Episcopal dioceses, organizations, and parishes. The Office desires to educate and communicate effectively, to facilitate collaboration between dioceses, and to design and disseminate enriching resources. The Office also represents the Church in national and international arenas, engages in advocacy efforts, and encourages holistic ministries that connect the environment, the economy, and social justice.

Given this mission, the goals of this survey were to:

- Gather information about eco-justice ministries throughout the church;
- Gauge interest in a variety of environmental issues and related ministries;
- Determine what kinds of resources are most needed;
- Create/update a database of eco-justice leaders within the church;
- Introduce Episcopal networks that can support eco-justice ministries; and
- Help the Economic and Environmental Affairs Office better support current and future eco-justice ministries in Episcopal dioceses and parishes.

**Methods:** Respondents took the survey between July 19 and August 3, 2011. Administered by SurveyMonkey ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)), the link to the survey was sent to respondents via email. Email addresses of respondents came from Mike Schut's church and diocesan contacts and the listservs of the Episcopal Ecological Network (EpEN), the Episcopal Network for Economic Justice (ENEJ), and the Episcopal Public Policy Network (EPPN). A copy of the survey questions can be found as an appendix to this report.

Basic results (percentages, rankings, etc.) were provided by SurveyMonkey's analysis tool. Comments and long-answer questions were read individually; the latter were thematically categorized using SurveyMonkey's text analysis tools. For the question about respondents' theories of change (how the Church can inspire eco-justice), the data analysis software NVivo was used to identify the relative frequencies of the 75 most frequently used words greater than three letters. A text cloud was then created to visually display this information.

Excerpts from responses to various questions are shared throughout the document.

**Demographics:** Nine-hundred twenty respondents began the survey. Of those, 555 (60.3%) completed every question. Depending on the question, between 280 and 909 people responded. Two factors explain this variation. First, not every respondent was presented every question because the survey automatically directed respondents past certain questions based on their responses to earlier questions. (For example, if someone responded that he or she did not have a parish green team, the survey skipped the question requesting information on green team leadership.) Also, some people chose to skip certain survey questions. The average number of respondents was 555; the median, 548. In the report below, the number of respondents for each question is indicated in italics.

Ninety-eight dioceses were represented in the survey, including two international churches. Survey demographics were as follows:

- About 39% of respondents’ churches have an average Sunday attendance of 101-250; 44% have an average attendance of 100 or less. *531 responses.*
- Among respondents who knew their church budget (76% of all respondents), about 59% reported an annual budget less than \$500,000. *489 responses.*
- About 64% of respondents are laypeople. *561 responses.*
- About 80% of respondents are aged 51 or older. *550 responses.*
- About 93% of respondents are of Caucasian descent. *552 responses.*
- About 72% of respondents have graduate or professional education. *559 responses.*

## II. Eco-Justice Ministries at the Diocesan Level

**Diocesan interest in eco-justice:** About 58% of respondents indicated that their dioceses were interested or very interested in eco-justice issues and advocacy. *909 responses.*

### Diocesan green teams:

- Almost 40% of respondents indicated that their dioceses had green teams; over 40% did not know whether their dioceses had a green team. *909 responses.*
- Among respondents who did not have a diocesan green team or who did not know whether their dioceses had green teams, over 50% indicated interest in developing a green team. *515 responses.*
- Respondents were asked to choose up to five resources that would be the most helpful in starting a diocesan green team. The following table summarizes their choices. *280 responses.*

Resource	Percent (%) of respondents who placed resource in top 5
#1 Support of a bishop	68.2
#2 Planning resources for starting a green team	65.4
#3 Resources for greening a congregation	57.9
#4 Eco-theology/spirituality resources	57.1
#5 Stories of what others have done	51.1
#6 Identifying lay leadership	50.7
#7 Meeting with leaders of existing groups	48.2
#8 Liturgy and worship resources	26.8
#9 Resources for outdoor experiences (hikes, worship, etc.)	18.6
#10 Resources for starting a parish garden	8.9

***“Our ecological practices are deeply spiritual practices.”***

**Diocesan eco-justice activities:** Respondents were asked to indicate the eco-justice activities in which their dioceses had been active in the last three years. The table below summarizes their responses. *654 responses.*

Activity	Percent (%) respondents reporting activity
Reducing energy use	51.5
Energy audits	42.8
Reflecting on creation themes in worship and liturgy	38.4
Greening church grounds (lawn and garden)	37.2
Outdoor worship	30.3
Community gardening	29.5
Education on simpler living (reducing consumption, practicing Sabbath, relationship with money, reducing stress)	25.7
Reducing water use	25.5
Education classes on the environment (study groups, classes)	25.2
Actions and advocacy to address climate change	24.5
Writing and visiting legislators	21.6
Green construction of parish buildings	20.9
Programs for greening of households	20.5
Restoration projects (e.g., river clean-up, tree planting), hiking/camping	18.7
Eco-theology studies	17.9
Media outreach (e.g., press release, Letter to the Editor)	17.6
Benchmarking for energy use reduction	16.7
Alternative economic practices and education	14.8
Prayer vigils	11.3
Protest (e.g., sit-in, march, boycott)	5.2

\*Another reported activity was animal advocacy.

**Connecting eco-justice, social justice, and economic justice:** About 47% of respondents said their dioceses connect eco-justice ministries to social and economic justice. *528 responses.*

Respondents cited the following activities as integrating eco-justice and social-economic justice:

- community gardens;
- environmental justice advocacy;
- low-energy alternatives for low-income people;
- advocacy for water quality;
- support for migrant farmworkers; and
- purchasing fair trade coffee and tea.

***“a comprehensive whole...a vision of Shalom”***

Other respondents referenced their support for the following organizations that integrate these ministries:

- United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals (<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>);
- Episcopal Relief and Development (<http://www.er-d.org/>); and
- Jubilee Ministry ([http://www.ecusa.anglican.org/109342\\_ENG\\_HTM.htm](http://www.ecusa.anglican.org/109342_ENG_HTM.htm)).

Several respondents pointed to sermons as the way their dioceses make the connection.

### **Synthesis:**

- We are encouraged that so many respondents had dioceses with established eco-justice activities. We were also glad to see that in those dioceses where green teams do not exist (or in which respondents were unaware of such a team) that over 50% were interested in forming green teams.
- We noted that many people are unaware about eco-justice activities and organizations (including green teams) in their dioceses. Some respondents suggested that eco-justice ministries may be organized more at the parish level than at the diocesan level.
- While local and theological activities represented a large percentage of diocesan activities, advocacy through political action (media outreach, protests, contacting government) was less frequent.
- Respondents who indicated that their dioceses integrate environmental and social issues did so across a wide range of activities; these may provide helpful examples to others. It is also notable that dioceses participate with organizations within and outside of the Episcopal family to integrate ministries.

***“We must become a new kind of 'thrift' center, thrifty with the earth's resources, and grateful for the opportunity to share.”***

### **III. Eco-Justice Ministries at the Parish Level**

**Parish interest in eco-justice:** 52% of respondents indicated that their parishes were “interested” or “very interested” in eco-justice issues and advocacy. *669 responses.*

#### **Parish green teams:**

- About 37% of respondents indicated their parishes have green teams. About 12% did not know whether or not their parishes had green teams. *670 responses.*
- Among respondents who did not have a parish green team or who did not know whether their parishes had green teams, about 60% indicated interest in developing a green team. *409 responses.*
- Respondents were asked to choose up to five resources that would be the most helpful in starting a parish green team. The table below summarizes their choices. *257 responses.*

Resource	Percent (%) of respondents who placed resource in top 5
#1 Planning resources for starting a parish green team	69.6%
#2 Resources for greening a congregation	61.5%
#3 Identifying lay leadership	56.0%
#4 Clergy support	55.3%
#5 Stories of what others have done	52.9%
#6 Eco-theology/spirituality resources	50.2%
#7 Meeting with leaders of existing groups	37.0%
#8 Liturgy and worship resources	33.5%
#9 Starting a parish garden	14.4%
#10 Resources for outdoor experiences (hikes, worship, etc.)	14.0%

\*Respondents added that other helpful resources include funding, materials in Spanish, and the “trickle-down” support of bishops.

**Parish eco-justice activities:** Respondents were asked to indicate the eco-justice activities in which their parishes had been active in the last three years. The table below summarizes their responses. *598 responses.*

Activity	Percent (%) respondents reporting activity
Reducing energy use	67.7%
Greening church grounds (lawn and garden)	49.2%
Reflecting on creation themes in worship and liturgy	44.6%
Energy audits	40.5%
Reducing water use	36.0%
Education on simpler living (e.g., reducing consumption, practicing Sabbath, relationship with money, reducing stress)	31.3%
Outdoor worship	29.6%
Community gardening	28.4%
Education classes on the environment (e.g., study groups, classes)	26.6%
Programs for greening of households	23.1%
Green construction of parish buildings	18.4%
Restoration projects (e.g., river clean-up, tree planting), hiking/camping	17.6%
Benchmarking for energy use reduction	17.1%
Actions and advocacy to address climate change	17.1%
Writing and visiting legislators	16.4%
Eco-theology studies	15.9%
Alternative economic practices and education	14.5%
Media outreach (e.g., press release, letter to the editor)	11.9%
Prayer vigils	6.7%
Protest (e.g., march, sit-in, boycott)	3.3%

***“Contemplation is the first step in the process and the appreciation of all the sustaining gifts that our loving God has provided us...from our earliest ancestors and for all other creatures on the earth.”***

**Connecting eco-justice, social justice, and economic justice:** About 42% of respondents said that their parishes connect eco-justice ministries to social and economic justice. *564 responses.*

Examples of how parishes do so included:

- community gardens;
- providing jobs through gardens;
- supporting local agriculture;
- supporting fair trade products;
- energy efficiency guidance for low-income people;
- planting trees and working with women in Honduras to make safer, better stoves; and
- advocacy for access to clean water.

Other respondents referenced their support for the following organizations that integrate these ministries:

- Episcopal Relief and Development
- United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals

Many respondents said that the connection is made through sermons.

Several respondents who feel their parishes do *not* connect eco-justice and social and economic justice shared that the connection is “in language but not in practice”; others noted that while they personally see a connection, they are not sure their parishes, clergy, or bishops do.

**Synthesis:**

- Similar to the diocesan level, there is high interest in eco-justice issues and the formation of green teams.
- Awareness of green teams is higher at the parish level than the diocesan.
- Responses indicate that the impetus for and realization of parish green teams lies more in the “bottom-up” efforts of laity, while at the diocesan level “top-down” bishop support has more influence on the formation of green teams.
- Like diocesan activities, parish activities focus on local-level actions more frequently than political-level advocacy. Responses about parish integration of environmental and social ministries were also similar to responses about dioceses.

## IV. Interest in Issues and Ministries

**Relevant issues:** Respondents were asked how relevant certain eco-justice issues were to respondents' dioceses. Respondents rated each issue on a scale from 1 to 5. One corresponded to *not relevant*; five corresponded to *very relevant*. The chart below indicates the average rating of each issue. *520 responses*.

Issue	Average rating
Water quality and quantity	3.89
Environmental impacts on human health	3.85
Access to healthy food	3.84
Climate change	3.81
Access to clean water	3.72
Environmental justice (proportional environmental burden on poor and people of color)	3.71
Air pollution	3.56
Waste disposal	3.53
Land conservation	3.51
Sustainable agriculture	3.51
Industrial pollution	3.34
Biodiversity	3.24
Urban sprawl	3.08
Endangered species/extinctions	2.99

There was confusion as to whether this question referred to individual priority or that of the diocese. The intention was to ask each respondent to gauge how his or her diocese as a whole evaluates the importance of these various issues in the diocese. It was hypothesized that this valuation could be region-specific; for example, urban areas might be more concerned with air pollution and coastal areas with climate change. We also wondered if there were country-wide trends that indicated what environmental issues were of most concern.

***“If Amos or Isaiah were around today,  
their voices would be hoarse from the shouting.”***

**Personal interest:** Respondents were asked their personal levels of interest in certain eco-justice ministries. Respondents rated each activity on a scale from 1 to 5. One corresponded to *low interest*; five corresponded to *high interest*. The table below indicates the average rating of each issue. *600 responses*.

Activity	Average rating
<b>Simpler living</b> --reducing consumption, practicing Sabbath, relationship with money	4.35
<b>Buildings, grounds, and households</b> --energy use/efficiency, environmentally friendly construction, lawn and garden care, water use	4.23
<b>Eco-theology and spirituality</b> --connecting theological, spiritual, and scriptural resources to creation care ministries	4.22
<b>Climate change-related</b>	4.19
<b>Environmental education</b> --classes, study groups, and experiences at every age level	4.11
<b>Worship/liturgy</b> --reflecting on creation themes through prayer, sacraments, preaching, hymns	4.10
<b>Holistic greening</b> --guides to inspire multiple elements of sustainability for congregations and households	3.98
<b>Outdoor ministries/activities</b> --outdoor worship services, river clean-up, tree planting, hiking, camping	3.73
<b>Community gardening</b> --sponsoring eco-friendly gardens, providing produce to congregation members, neighbors, and outreach ministries	3.69
<b>Advocacy/direct action</b> --writing and visiting legislators, media outreach, protests, vigils	3.30

### Synthesis:

- Based on the prevalence of media coverage and general societal emphasis on climate change, one might predict that climate change would rank most highly. However, respondents indicated higher interest in local-level and personal ministries relating to eco-justice. These ministries might address climate change (e.g., reducing energy use), but the framing of the issue is specific to local implementation.
- Issues connected to other species are not ranked as highly as issues that impact humans.
- While healthy food was ranked highly, sustainable agriculture did not receive a comparable rating.
- The lower interest in advocacy and direct action corresponds to the earlier reporting of activities at the diocese and parish levels.
- Based on the growth in church community gardening, we expected that activity to rank more highly.
- While “simpler living” received the highest rating in the table immediately above (rating “personal interest”), offering education on simpler living has not been a priority at diocesan or parish levels.

You might find it interesting to look over the data above and see what sort of trends you can synthesize and see what seems significant to you. Feel free to let us know what you discover.

## V. Obstacles and Resources

**Obstacles:** Respondents were asked what obstacles their dioceses and parishes face in developing and sustaining eco-justice ministries. Respondents rated each element on a scale from 1 to 5. One corresponded to *not an obstacle*; five corresponded to a *significant obstacle*. The table below reports the average rating for each choice. *544 responses*.

Obstacle	Average rating
Funding	3.95
Action plans	3.62
Interest	3.50
Lay leadership	3.30
Connection to local groups	3.20
Clergy leadership	3.18
Information/education	3.08
Worship materials	2.71
Meeting locations	2.08

Many also indicated a lack of time for another activity, commitment, or committee.

**Episcopal eco-justice organizations:** The survey listed four resources for eco-justice ministries: the Episcopal Church Office of Economic and Environmental Affairs; the Episcopal Public Policy Network; the Episcopal Ecological Network; and the Episcopal Network for Economic Justice.

Respondents were asked to rate the efficacy of various methods of communication for these groups to be more helpful to dioceses. Each choice was rated on a scale from 1 to 5. One corresponded to *not useful*; five corresponded to *very useful*. The table below reports the average rating for each choice. *509 responses*.

Activity	Average rating
Announcements in diocesan communications	4.15
Networking opportunities connecting dioceses doing eco-justice work	4.07
In-person appearances in diocese	4.01
More web resources	3.99
More prominent links to these groups from The Episcopal Church Eco-Justice Ministries webpage	3.86
More email communication	3.46
Presence in social media (Facebook, Twitter, blog)	3.21

Respondents had other suggestions for how to make these groups more useful for eco-justice ministries:

- limit email, as too much email can dilute effectiveness;
- make local eco-justice offices stronger;
- work with clergy and bishops;

- note that some people do not have access to internet technology; and
- increased presence of the national eco-justice office.

**Methods of communication:** Respondents were asked more generally about which communication methods they find most effective in accessing resources. Respondents rated each option on a scale from 1 to 5. One corresponded to *not effective*; five corresponded to *very effective*. The table below reports the average rating for each choice. *557 responses*.

Activity	Average rating
Website	4.41
E-mail	4.15
In-person conferences	3.59
Hard copy	3.02
Video/web conference	2.80
Facebook	2.70
Phone conferences	2.47
Blog	2.43
Twitter	1.76

Respondents commented on their ratings:

- some elderly or low-income people do not have internet technology;
- some people do not have Facebook or Twitter accounts;
- there is no substitute for in-person contact; and
- resources should be distributed to individual parishes.

**Synthesis:** That funding is an obstacle to eco-justice ministries is not surprising given the nature of most church ministry and the larger economic climate. The next most significant obstacle, action plans, indicates that providing sample resources/plans would be helpful and also points to a lack of leadership or lack of knowledge regarding how to develop such plans. Lack of interest, competition with other ministries, and attracting and sustaining volunteers are also fairly common challenges. Finding convenient meeting places, although ranked low overall, is an issue for large dioceses. Several respondents indicated that the perceived political nature of eco-justice ministries further deters diocesan and parish involvement.

The challenge of the technological age is apparent in the responses about effective means of communication. Respondents indicate that email and the church website are useful communication tools, but “social media” (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, and blogs) are less so. That social media would be less effective makes sense when considering the fact that 80% of the respondents are over 50. Responses also affirm the value of the more personal phone and in-person contacts.

## VI. Theory of Change

Respondents were asked to reflect on how the world can realize and sustain eco-justice and what individual and church actions would be most effective in inspiring behavior and policy changes. *424 responses.*

The image below includes the 75 most frequently used words with more than three letters. The size of the font is proportional to the frequency of the usage of that word. By observing frequently used words, one can infer common themes in responses.

about action active awareness behavior being believe care  
change church  
community concern connections creation don't earth  
education effective environment environmentally example faith  
from good greening groups having help important  
individuals inspiring interest issues just justice  
know lead leadership level life living local making more most  
must need only others parishes parts  
people personal policy provide public realizing resources should  
small support sustainable taking than them things think those through time  
what when work world would

To further identify themes, all responses were “coded”, or categorized as representing certain sentiments. This report will highlight the eight major themes from the responses. These were the categories coded most frequently among all responses. Selected quotations from responses appear in italics.

The major themes (and the percentage of respondents who highlighted those themes) are the following:

- Education (27% of responses)
- Leading by and learning from example (18% of responses)
- Advocacy (15% of responses)
- Theological resources (15% of responses)
- Local level (14% of responses)
- Church leadership (13% of responses)
- Small changes (10% of responses)
- Connect to human life (8% of responses)

**Education** (27% of responses)

This category included those who thought education was important in creating change. Responses included raising awareness about issues, theological education, shared knowledge, and practical teaching. Responses included all levels of education—children, youth, adults, clergy and laity, and seminaries.

*Education is a key starting point in creating change.*

*I think one of the biggest limitations to eco-justice is simply a lack of information.*

*If neighbor can help neighbor (or parishioner to parishioner) in weatherizing their homes, sharing gardening & cooking ideas... then all learn and enthusiasm is nurtured.*

*Education needs to be practically oriented, not just theoretical.*

**Leading by and learning from example** (18% of responses)

This category included responses indicating that role models were influential in behavior change. Responses in this category mainly mentioned the church as the role model, exemplifying the behaviors they wish to promote. Some responses suggested the church should follow others' examples in "living lighter."

*Locally and individually, being a strong and persistent role model may be the most powerful inspiration for changing public attitudes and effecting policy change.*

*I believe that the church should be a witness for simpler greener living.*

*Actions speak louder than words.*

*If a parish can demonstrate passionately its belief in eco-justice, then that stance will influence our households....and thence our neighbors....and thus our community. It's the "mustard-seed theory"!*

*Is the Church called to have a prophetic voice here?*

*The Church's general lack of leadership and commitment on this issue undermines its moral authority within the culture.*

**Advocacy** (15% of responses)

The advocacy category included responses that cited media attention, public action, contacting government representatives, Congressional or agency testimony, lobbying, voting, and civil disobedience as influential to behavior and policy change for eco-justice. It was interesting that although few respondents indicate that their dioceses or parishes participate in advocacy, many valued it as effective for change.

*I think the Church has a place in advocacy, as an ethical and moral authority.*

*Climate change needs to be at the top of the list. If Amos or Isaiah were around today, their voice would be hoarse from the shouting.*

*Advocate/lobby for sustainable changes on the state, national, and global level.*

*Prayer and civil disobedience.*

*It is very important for the church at the local, diocese and national level to speak out frequently, regularly, and passionately about eco-justice.*

*I was a Freedom Rider in 1961 so use that successful model: people have to be committed to the point that they are willing to risk comfort, reputation, status, and even life.*

*Media outreach can be very effective in motivating the world on eco-justice.*

**Theological resources** (15% of responses)

These respondents felt that calling on Christian Scripture and tradition was important for the Church's role in promoting eco-justice. Responses included the stewardship model of creation care, developing a theology of nature, linking eco-justice to social justice, basing eco-justice in the baptismal covenant, and creation themes in worship and liturgy.

*I believe that our ability to realize and sustain eco-justice is founded on our ability to identify the Holy Spirit, the breath of God, in every living being and system. If we believe this to be true, then we must maintain a posture of stewardship, sustainable livelihood, and contemplative limitation in this world. I would like to see our baptismal covenant reflect this: to respect the dignity of every living being.*

*I think the church's role is primarily to make this a theological issue, to raise up congregations who know without question that eco-justice is a core value for the people of God...*

*Pray, and develop not only theologies but also spiritual practices that situate us as part of the natural world in kinship and awe.*

*Linking the issues of eco-justice to the Gospel imperatives to work for the well being of the poor and oppressed.*

*Must be presented as part of the Baptismal Covenant, that as Christians we are called to be stewards and seek justice for all our neighbors, including the environment. Who is your neighbor? Are trees your neighbor? Is the water your neighbor? Are animals your neighbor? The answer can only be "yes;" then we are obligated to care for them as part of God's Creation, as part of God.*

*... Embracing a new narrative of humility rooted in the joy and hope of loving communion with one another and our Creator.*

**Local level (14% of responses)**

This theme includes responses that call on individual or community-level changes to influence broader, societal changes.

*Focus on local, state, and regional issues: this is where the rubber meets the road and where oversight is weakest.*

*We need to build from the personal level to a community level, always actively supported by the diocese and national levels.*

*I think that realizing eco-justice requires that it be visible and evident in our every day lives, not distant and hidden or easy to ignore.*

*Although it takes longer, real change comes about when people engage in issues, programs, movements, projects, etc., on personal levels.*

*I think of Wangari Maathai of Kenya and how planting a few seedlings changed the landscape of Kenya. People need to see the effects through education and personal experiences and that these changes will make a positive difference in their lives.*

**Church leadership (13% of responses)**

Responses in this category indicated the importance of church leadership, example, participation, and advocacy for eco-justice. Church leadership includes clergy, bishops, and the Presiding Bishop.

*There is a crying need for strong, clear leadership that speaks to people's love for the creation - but speaks truth to power.*

*I think leadership is required. Leaders who know what concrete actions to take, and how to take them. Leaders with integrity, and who practice what they preach. Leaders who can and will work hard, and inspire others to work with them.*

*We need the clergy to make creation care part of our liturgy, sermons, and decisions for guiding the church's actions.*

### **Small changes** (10% of responses)

This category describes responses that focus on small actions as important for sustained eco-justice.

*It takes small actions by many people to make big sustainable changes.*

*If you ask people to save the planet you'll be ignored. If you ask them to bring an empty yogurt container to church they'll be happy to help.*

*Small actions matter, and when those small things become a habit, larger things will be easier to undertake.*

*Small doable steps that don't take up a lot of people energy or financial assets but that added together can bring about awareness and change.*

### **Connect to human life** (8% of responses)

These are responses that indicate the importance of making connections between environmental degradation and human welfare.

*I believe finding ways of communicating the extent of human (and other) suffering that result from environmental injustice and racism, and the degradation of creation. People respond more quickly and empathetically when the real human cost is clear*

*I think it is important for the Church to promote this as a moral issue which includes being aware of how our decisions impact all our brothers and sisters and the earth (which also affects all of us).*

*Through better understanding the impact of ecological issues on the most marginalized and realizing that our mission as Christians is not to only care for our fellow brothers and sisters of our human race as we work to see the finite resources of our fragile planet more equitably distributed but also ... to be good stewards of the environment, the planet and its resources, and charged with the task of treating with love and kindness the myriad species that inhabit it.*

*If people have opportunities to engage, to have first-hand experience of the link between injustice and the environment (particularly if they can see how it affects them or those they love), then their interest may be aroused, inspiring them to take advantage of learning opportunities, to participate in direct action, and to explore a wider spirituality.*

### **Minor themes**

Many minor themes emerged in the responses about how to affect eco-justice, including the following:

- provide experiential learning opportunities (outdoor worship, immersion trips, service projects);
- it takes courage to make change;
- need for cultural shift;

- addressing climate change;
- need to end the political connotations of eco-justice;
- engage young people;
- hope of community gardens;
- the need to integrate eco-justice into church life, especially preaching;
- engage in meaningful, welcoming dialogue;
- pessimism about the ability of society to change; and
- the church should partner with environmental advocacy groups on these issues.

***“People have to be committed to the point that they are willing to risk comfort, reputation, status, and even life.”***

## VII. Concluding Thoughts

Well, one of our favorite quotes from one of you was, "This survey was waaayyy too long!" This report may seem a little long, too, but we wanted you to have all the data; for one thing, it provides you the opportunity to draw your own conclusions.

In addition to the comments we've included under the "Synthesis" sections throughout the report, we would like to conclude with these few thoughts:

- There is significant interest in forming green teams, either at diocesan or parish levels. There is no single action or course to follow in building a green team, or in successfully "greening a congregation." Respondents indicated a need for green team planning resources. Existing organizations and networks can provide a good deal of support. We list a few here:
  - Episcopal Ecological Network: [www.eenonline.org](http://www.eenonline.org)
  - GreenFaith: [www.greenfaith.org/getting-started/houses-of-worship](http://www.greenfaith.org/getting-started/houses-of-worship)
  - Earth Ministry: <http://www.earthministry.org/take-action/congregations>
  - Eco-Justice Ministries: [www.eco-justice.org/tips.asp](http://www.eco-justice.org/tips.asp)
- Respondents see advocacy as one of the more important avenues through which significant change occurs. However, activities within the arena of advocacy -- within both dioceses and parishes -- did not appear as a high priority. We agree that advocacy is particularly important. The survey points to the need to more effectively train and provide resources within this arena. As a start, please consider the following organizations, which all do excellent work as advocates:
  - Episcopal Public Policy Network: [www.EpiscopalChurch.org/eppn](http://www.EpiscopalChurch.org/eppn)
  - Earth Ministry: [www.earthministry.org/programs/advocacy](http://www.earthministry.org/programs/advocacy)
  - NCC's Eco-Justice Office: [www.nccecojustice.org/takeaction](http://www.nccecojustice.org/takeaction)

- Interfaith Power and Light: [www.interfaithpowerandlight.org](http://www.interfaithpowerandlight.org)

- "Education on simpler living" was ranked highest in the "personal interest" question. Yet it appears that, relative to the level of interest, few dioceses or parishes have addressed that felt need. A desire for a simpler life certainly makes sense in the context of a world where many feel too busy, stressed about money, and concerned about inequity and ecological degradation. A few resources you could consider:
  - *Simpler Living, Compassionate Life: A Christian Perspective* by Michael Schut. This anthology of essays includes a community-building study guide.
  - Northwest Earth Institute's courses, one of which focuses on simpler living. See: [www.nwei.org/discussion\\_courses/course-offerings/voluntary-simplicity](http://www.nwei.org/discussion_courses/course-offerings/voluntary-simplicity)

We will further analyze the data but wanted to get this report out to you before too much time passed. Again, if you spend time with the results and want to share something you have learned, please do contact us.

We feel good about the survey process, about the number of responses we received, and have already found the information helpful. We will be using that information in defining future priorities and developing strategies for the national eco-justice office. And so, we want to say thank you once again for your participation!

***“Together, we can partner to build a world that is more Godly and more humane—a holy, whole, and healed place for all God’s creatures.”***

***Katharine Jefferts Schori, *Gospel in the Global Village****

# Eco-Justice Ministries in the Episcopal Church

## Introduction

Eco-justice ministries are those designed to heal, defend, and work toward justice for all God's creation—land, water, air, plants, animals, human beings – all creation. Within the Episcopal Church, these ministries have become more widely accepted as an important part of our call as people of faith.

The Episcopal Church Center's Economic and Environmental Affairs Office provides support to eco-justice ministries in Episcopal dioceses, organizations, and parishes. The Office desires to educate and communicate effectively, to facilitate collaboration between dioceses, and to design and disseminate enriching resources. The Office also represents the Church in national and international arenas, engages in advocacy efforts, and encourages holistic ministries that connect the environment, the economy, and social justice.

The goals of this survey are to:

- Gather information about eco-justice ministries throughout the church;
- Gauge interest in a variety of environmental issues and related ministries;
- Determine what kinds of resources are most needed;
- Create/update a database of eco-justice leaders within the church; and
- Inform you of a number of Episcopal networks that can support you in your ministries.

Thank you for taking a few minutes to complete the survey. By providing your thoughtful responses, you will help the Economic and Environmental Affairs Office to better support current and future eco-justice ministries in Episcopal dioceses and parishes.

All survey responses will be kept confidential.

A short report summarizing the survey's primary conclusions and findings will be emailed to you if you so request at the end of the survey.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact:

Michael Schut  
Economic and Environmental Affairs Officer  
Episcopal Church  
[mschut@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:mschut@episcopalchurch.org)

# Eco-Justice Ministries in the Episcopal Church

## Diocesan Green Team

### **1. In your opinion, how interested is your *diocese* in eco-justice issues and advocacy?**

- Very interested
- Interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not interested

### **2. Does your diocese have an environmental stewardship group, or "green team"?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

## Diocesan Green Team

**3. Who provides the leadership for the diocesan green team? If possible, please provide the names and contact information (email, phone, and/or mailing address) of at least two leaders. (The contacts you provide will not be added to email lists without their permission.)**

## Diocesan Green Team

### 4. Are you interested in developing a diocesan green team?

- Yes
- No

## Diocesan Green Team

### 5. What would be most helpful to you in starting a diocesan green team? Choose *up to five* responses.

- Support of a bishop
- Planning resources for starting a green team
- Stories of what others have done
- Meeting with leaders of existing groups
- Identifying lay leadership
- Liturgy and worship resources
- Resources for greening a congregation
- Resources for starting a parish garden
- Eco-theology/spirituality resources
- Resources for outdoor experiences (hikes, worship, etc.)
- Other/Comment:

# Eco-Justice Ministries in the Episcopal Church

## Diocesan Eco-Justice Ministries

### 6. In what eco-justice activities has your *diocese* been active during the last 3 years?

#### Check all that apply.

- Writing and visiting legislators
- Media outreach (e.g., press release, Letter to the Editor)
- Protest (e.g., sit-in, march, boycott)
- Prayer vigils
- Energy audits
- Benchmarking for energy use reduction
- Reducing energy use
- Reducing water use
- Greening church grounds (lawn and garden)
- Green construction of parish buildings
- Actions and advocacy to address climate change
- Programs for greening of households
- Alternative economic practices and education
- Community gardening
- Eco-theology studies
- Reflecting on creation themes in worship and liturgy
- Education classes on the environment (study groups, classes)
- Outdoor worship
- Restoration projects (e.g., river clean-up, tree planting), hiking/camping
- Education on simpler living (reducing consumption, practicing Sabbath, relationship with money, reducing stress)
- Other/Comment:

## Diocesan Eco-Justice Ministries

### **7. Does your diocese connect the work of eco-justice ministries to economic and social justice?**

Yes

No

If so, how?

## Parish Green Team

### 8. In your opinion, how interested is your *parish* in eco-justice issues and advocacy?

- Very interested
- Interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not interested

### 9. Does your *parish* have a green team?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

## Parish Green Team

**10. Who provides the leadership for the parish green team? If possible, please provide the names and contact information of at least two leaders. (The contacts you provide will not be added to email lists without their permission.)**

## Parish Green Team

**11. Are you interested in developing a *parish* green team?**

- Yes
- No

## Parish Green Team

**12. What would be most helpful to you in starting a parish green team? Choose *up to five* responses.**

- Clergy support
- Planning resources for starting a parish green team
- Identifying lay leadership
- Stories of what others have done
- Meeting with leaders of existing groups
- Liturgy and worship resources
- Resources for greening a congregation
- Starting a parish garden
- Eco-theology/spirituality resources
- Resources for outdoor experiences (hikes, worship, etc.)
- Other/Comment:

# Eco-Justice Ministries in the Episcopal Church

## Parish Eco-Justice Ministries

### 13. In what eco-justice activities has your *parish* been active during the last 3 years?

#### Check all that apply.

- Writing and visiting legislators
- Media outreach (e.g., press release, letter to the editor)
- Protest (e.g., march, sit-in, boycott)
- Prayer vigils
- Reducing energy use
- Reducing water use
- Greening church grounds (lawn and garden)
- Green construction of parish buildings
- Energy audits
- Benchmarking for energy use reduction
- Actions and advocacy to address climate change
- Programs for greening of households
- Alternative economic practices and education
- Community gardening
- Eco-theology studies
- Reflecting on creation themes in worship and liturgy
- Education classes on the environment (e.g., study groups, classes)
- Outdoor worship
- Restoration projects (e.g., river clean-up, tree planting), hiking/camping
- Education on simpler living (e.g., reducing consumption, practicing Sabbath, relationship with money, reducing stress)
- Other/Comment:

## Parish Eco-Justice Ministries

### **14. Does your parish connect the work of eco-justice ministries to economic and social justice?**

Yes

No

If so, how?

# Eco-Justice Ministries in the Episcopal Church

## Eco-Justice Ministries

**15. How relevant are the following eco-justice issues to your diocese? Rate each issue on a scale from 1 to 5. '1' corresponds to NOT RELEVANT and '5' corresponds to VERY RELEVANT.**

	5 (VERY RELEVANT)	4	3	2	1 (NOT RELEVANT)
Climate change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water quality and quantity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Industrial pollution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Air pollution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Urban sprawl	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Biodiversity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Endangered species/ extinctions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Land conservation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sustainable agriculture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environmental impacts on human health	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environmental justice--(proportional environmental burden on poor and people of color)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to healthy food	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to clean water	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Waste disposal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other/Comment:

# Eco-Justice Ministries in the Episcopal Church

## Eco-Justice Ministries

**16. What is your (personal) level of interest in the following eco-justice ministries? Rate each ministry on a scale from 1 to 5. '1' corresponds to LOW INTEREST and '5' corresponds to HIGH INTEREST.**

	5 (HIGH INTEREST)	4	3	2	1 (LOW INTEREST)
<b>Advocacy/direct action</b> ---writing and visiting legislators, media outreach, protests, vigils	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Climate change</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Buildings, grounds, and households</b> ---energy use/efficiency, environmentally friendly construction, lawn and garden care, water use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Holistic greening</b> ---guides to inspire multiple elements of sustainability for congregations and households	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Community gardening</b> ---sponsoring eco-friendly gardens, providing produce to congregation members, neighbors, and outreach ministries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Eco-theology and spirituality</b> ---connecting theological, spiritual, and scriptural resources to creation care ministries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Worship/liturgy</b> ---reflecting on creation themes through prayer, sacraments, preaching, hymns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Environmental education</b> ---classes, study groups, and experiences at every age level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Outdoor ministries/activities</b> ---outdoor worship services, river clean-up, tree planting, hiking, camping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Simpler living</b> ---reducing consumption, practicing Sabbath, relationship with money	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Other/Comment:**

# Eco-Justice Ministries in the Episcopal Church

## Resources for Eco-Justice Ministries

The following are offices and groups within the Episcopal Church that provide support for eco-justice ministries:

The [Office of Economic and Environmental Affairs](#) provides leadership and resources on environmental and economic justice ministries and advocacy.

The [Episcopal Public Policy Network](#) (EPPN) is a grassroots advocacy group to inform Congress and the Administration of church positions on important issues.

The [Episcopal Ecological Network](#) (EpEN) is a grassroots network of Episcopalians from around the United States that helps the Episcopal Church to advocate and articulate protection of the environment and preserving the sanctity of creation.

The [Episcopal Network for Economic Justice](#) (ENEJ) serves to strengthen and support those engaged in economic justice ministries and advocates for initiatives within the Episcopal Church.

### 17. Please indicate your previous knowledge of and engagement with these groups. Check all that apply.

	I am aware of this group.	I have accessed resources provided by this group.	Please add me to this group's mailing list.*
Episcopal Church Center's Office of Economic and Environmental Affairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Episcopal Public Policy Network	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Episcopal Ecological Network	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Episcopal Network for Economic Justice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 18. \*If you asked to be added to a mailing list above, please provide your contact information.

Name:

E-Mail:

Address:

Phone:

# Eco-Justice Ministries in the Episcopal Church

**19. How might these groups be more useful to your diocese? Rate each action on a scale from 1 to 5. '1' corresponds to NOT USEFUL and '5' corresponds to VERY USEFUL.**

	5 (VERY USEFUL)	4	3	2	1 (NOT USEFUL)
More email communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More web resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Presence in social media (Facebook, Twitter, blog)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More prominent links to these groups from The Episcopal Church Eco-Justice Ministries webpage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In-person appearances in diocese	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking opportunities connecting dioceses doing eco-justice work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Announcements in diocesan communications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other/Comment:

# Eco-Justice Ministries in the Episcopal Church

## Resources for Eco-Justice Ministries

**20. What are the obstacles your diocese or parish faces in developing and sustaining eco-justice ministries? Rate each obstacle on a scale from 1 to 5. '1' corresponds to NOT AN OBSTACLE and '5' corresponds to SIGNIFICANT OBSTACLE.**

	5 (SIGNIFICANT OBSTACLE)	4	3	2	1 (NOT AN OBSTACLE)
Funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lay leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clergy leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information/education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Action plans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connection to local groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meeting locations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Worship materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other/Comment:

# Eco-Justice Ministries in the Episcopal Church

## Resources for Eco-Justice Ministries

**21. What are effective ways for you to access resources for eco-justice ministries? Rate each option on a scale from 1 to 5. '1' corresponds to NOT EFFECTIVE and '5' corresponds to VERY EFFECTIVE.**

	5 (VERY EFFECTIVE)	4	3	2	1 (NOT EFFECTIVE)
Website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blog	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E-mail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hard copy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Phone conferences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Video/web conference	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In-person conferences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other/Comment:

# Eco-Justice Ministries in the Episcopal Church

## Demographic Information

**22. Name of your diocese:**

**23. Name of your parish:**

**24. Average Sunday worship attendance**

**25. Annual church budget:**

**26. Your role. Check all that apply.**

- Clergy
- Layperson
- Diocesan green team member
- Parish green team member
- General Convention deputy
- Other:

**27. Age:**

**28. Ethnic group:**

- Caucasian
- African-American
- Asian
- Native American
- Hispanic
- Pacific Islander
- Other:

## 29. Level of education:

- High School
- College
- Graduate/Professional
- Other:

## Theory of Change

**30. As a final reflection, take a few moments to outline your response to the following:**

**How do you think that the world can realize and sustain eco-justice? What actions by individuals and the Church do you think are most effective in inspiring behavior and policy change?**

## Additional Comments

**31. Please provide any additional comments you have to supplement your responses.**

## Survey Results and Further Discussion

**32. After we gather responses to this survey, we will compile a summary of the findings. We may also wish to conduct in-depth interviews with respondents. Please indicate below if you are interested in the report or in being contacted for further discussion.**

- I would like to receive a summary of the findings of this survey.
- I am willing to be contacted for further discussion about eco-justice ministries.

**33. If you checked either of the boxes above, please provide your name and contact information (email, phone, and mailing address).**

Name:

E-mail:

Address:

Phone:

# Eco-Justice Ministries in the Episcopal Church

## Survey complete!

You have completed the survey. Thank you again for your time and thoughtful responses.

If you have further thoughts about how to strengthen eco-justice ministries in the Episcopal Church, please contact Michael Schut.

[mschut@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:mschut@episcopalchurch.org)