**Report of the ELCA NWPA Synod Green Team**

**For the 2021 Annual Synod Assembly Meeting**

In 2017, the late Rev. Ken Laber (former pastor of St. Peter’s in North East, PA) and congregation member, Mr. Dennis Groce, put their heads together and decided to create and encourage a team of people who were concerned about being good stewards of the earth and to find ways to encourage renewal, recycling and reusing the gifts of nature that God has entrusted to us. The subsequent group of people - now known as the Green Team- has grown to approximately twenty individuals who continue this mission in many ways. The Green Team is now officially sanctioned by action of the NWPA Synod and has responded to the following mission statement to guide it:

The Green Team’s purpose is to “raise awareness of and advocate for the care of creation”. Our mission is to support and encourage creation care ministries, raise awareness and model creation care advocacy consistent with ELCA teachings in our faith communities and public life.

***If you find this interesting and challenging, would like to know more about any item(s) or would like to offer to serve on the Green Team, please contact Dennis Groce at 814-384-3025 or d\_mgroce@labs.net for further information.***

The Green Team has worked in many ways to respond to this mission statement. Over the years the committee members have reached out to congregations, synod organizations, individuals and civic organizations by way of presentations and collaboration in some of the following ways:

* Offered Synod Assembly presentations, table displays, led Holy Hikes and arranged for expert speakers.
* Created a Green Team Link on the synod website.
* Shared numerous articles on the synod Facebook page.
* Submitted Green Team information to the WELCA newsletter and the synod newsletter.
* Have begun to create a list of creation friendly supplies for congregations.
* Created a resource list for churches.
* Made presentations to the Conference #1 gathering of WELCA, the Lawrence Park Kiwanis Club and local congregations.
* Worked in conjunction with Lutherans Restoring Creation, Penn State Extension offices, LAMPa and Penn Future to advocate with legislators for creation care agenda items.
* In collaboration with other Pennsylvania synods, the team gathered soil samples from across our Synod and sent them with pictures and prayers on to LAMPa for the marking of Rogation in Pennsylvania.
* Conducted a recycling survey of synod congregations, tabulated the results and shared the information with congregations, Synod Council and Recycling Coordinators from all 15 counties which are part of the synod.
* Created bulletin inserts for congregations.
* Shared information about green burials.
* Been in contact with other synods about synod resolutions concerning creation care and creation care synod staff positions.
* Have begun to make contact with sustainable energy producers and plan to share that info with various churches.
* Encouraged congregations to recognize Earth Sunday 2021 in their worship services.
* Several team members attended the ELCA Creation Care Ambassador training with one member becoming an Ambassador.
* Talked with Bishop Lozano about a broad range of directions for the Green Team including exploring paths of financial support, considering the pros and cons of a few ways to use grant money and consideration of a synod level staff member dedicated to creation care ministry.
* Researched creation care events, and several have taken place across the synod and in local congregations.
* Met monthly to set priorities for team members to work on each month.
* Researched the use of Podcasts to share information.

Thank you for your interest in the NWPA Synod Green Team. Feel free to share this information with your congregation and other interested parties.