



# RECIPE

## for Building a Creation Care Team with your Congregation

Amidst the burgeoning climate crisis, we need all hands on deck — government, business, individuals, and yes, churches too! Churches have a unique role to play in addressing the climate crisis because they have buildings and property that can be retrofitted with clean energy, green spaces that can be planted with native species, as well as a number of other climate friendly adaptations. Additionally, churches are full of members of a community whose impact outside of the church walls can create a ripple effect.

Starting a creation care team is one way to get your faith community involved.  
Here's a 'recipe' for getting started!



### INGREDIENTS

- A committed, core team who believe in and express a desire to carry out your mission.
- Consider each of the four pillars of work the CWP can support you in: energy stewardship, education, worship, and advocacy. How much of each of these ingredients can you add to your recipe?
- A church body that expresses a willingness to engage with the message and mission of creation care.



### 'EQUIPMENT'

- A time and place to meet in person or online regularly is key to sharing ideas, starting projects, and engaging constituents
- Your church building and grounds serve as the primary site you and your team share. Utilize this space!
- The homes or apartments of your team are also sites where big change can occur!



### STEPS

- Brainstorm what to share with your congregation and church staff — how can they support your work by making time, space, and resources available?
- Identifying key assets like specialized knowledge, business connections, and local resources is a great place to start!
- Identifying opportunities for change will help your team direct their energy towards achievable goals.
- Start gathering and get to work. It may be hard to know where to begin, but once you get going, ideas and projects will come naturally!

We have regional organizers across the United States and Canada.  
We can help you get started with more ideas and resources.

[crcna.org/climate-witness-project](http://crcna.org/climate-witness-project) | [cwp@crcna.org](mailto:cwp@crcna.org)



# CREATION CARE TEAM EXAMPLES

## CHURCH OF THE SERVANT, GRAND RAPIDS MI

In 2016, Church of the Servant launched their Creation Care grassroots initiative with just a few individuals who were passionate about the work. The team's focus was on making the church a greener place, providing educational programs for the congregation, and partnering with other creation care teams in Grand Rapids for advocacy work. The initiative started with small projects, such as changing light bulbs and planting native plants in the parking lot area. Over time, the team has also spearheaded much larger projects like solar installation that have helped reduce the church's carbon footprint in significant ways.

## HOPE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN OAK FOREST, ILL

The church worked with CWP on an Energy Stewardship pilot project. Over the course of several months Hope CRC and a cohort of nine other churches participated in conference calls with Climate Witness Project representatives and Energy Star contractors. They conducted an energy audit, worked on increasing energy efficiency throughout the building and eventually were Energy Star Certified by the EPA.

## COVENANT CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN APPLETON, WI

The church decided to convert unused land into a community garden in order to connect with neighbors and share church property. The garden was launched in 2008 as a part of the Appleton community garden program, and has proved to be a valued asset in the neighborhood. They also added in a feature in the garden that's not as common: raised gardening beds that are handicap accessible and plastic mats so that a wheelchair can navigate through. Of the 12 available plots, only two are used by church members. The rest are being cultivated by neighbors from the surrounding community.

## MEADOWLANDS FELLOWSHIP CRC IN ANCASTER, ON

This church team upgraded its lighting, replacing about 380 fluorescent tubes (32W) with 325 LED tubes. This reduced the lighting energy demand in the building by about 50%. Other projects this team has tackled include writing letters to legislators to advocate for green policies. They hosted a six week lecture series on the basics of climate change facilitated by a local professor and regularly discussed creation care through sermons.

## CROSSPOINT CRC IN BRAMPTON, ON

CrossPoint's creation care work started by creating a butterfly garden. The garden grows native plants and provides pollinators for all kinds of insects including butterflies. Then with a grant from the local conservation authority, they started one of the biggest projects to date: a rain garden. Rain gardens direct heavy rainfall back into the ground rather than into the infrastructure of sewers. This type of landscaping is particularly valuable in areas where most of the land is covered in hard surfaces like roofs, roads, and driveways, and is an effective way for the church to steward their grounds to help nature flourish.