



Green Sanctuary Program 2030

Stage 3: Action Plan

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Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Raleigh

Candidate for Reaccreditation

Submitted

[DATE]

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[Link to Opportunity Assessment](#)

AT UUFR

HVAC Replacement [CURRENT]

Net Zero 2050 Goal [FUTURE]

Adult & Youth Educational Programming [ONGOING]

Earth Day Celebrations [ONGOING]

Climate Emissions Donation Fund [FUTURE]

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RAFI Farmers of Color Network [ONGOING]

Sister Communities of San Ramon Nicaragua Partnership [TENTATIVE]

Stream Cleanups [FUTURE]

Letter-Writing Campaigns [ONGOING]

Per conversation with Rachel Myslivy 8/7/2023, this Action Plan is organized around projects to make it easier for everyone to get the big picture of what UUFR has planned.

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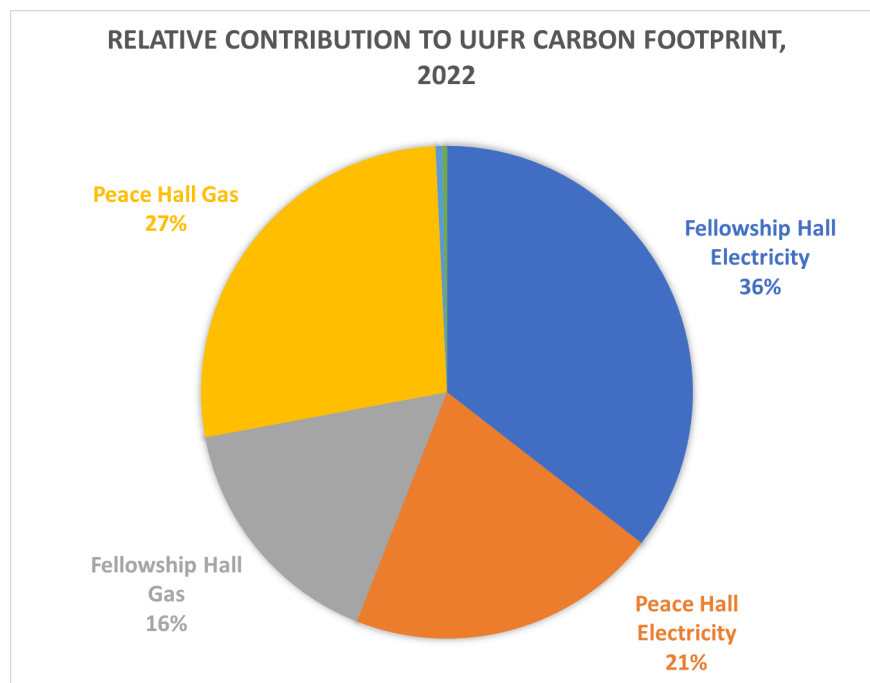
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AT UUFR

The projects in this section primarily focus on the premises and UUFR members.

HVAC Replacement [CURRENT]

Goal. UUFR has adopted the strategy of electrification of our utilities to the greatest extent possible as the best path to carbon footprint reduction. During 2022, we replaced the air conditioning and electric heat pumps in Fellowship Hall, which dated to the mid-1990's, with new, more efficient units. To fully execute this strategy, we are replacing the four air conditioning/gas furnace systems in Peace Hall, which date to the early 1980's and are quite inefficient (~8 SEER). We have selected high-efficiency, all-electric heat pumps to replace them, which will allow us to minimize consumption of natural gas on campus. In 2022, natural gas in Peace Hall contributed 27% to our total carbon footprint.



The Board approved this purchase on June 27, 2023, and the installation is now complete. These systems are four times as efficient as the ones they are replacing

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and will significantly reduce our emissions (over 350 metric tons of CO2 equivalents over 20 years).

As part of this modernization, we also installed new control systems which will allow us to manage temperature settings in our buildings so as to maximize energy efficiency. Staff and the Environmental Justice Ministry Team are working together on this aspect.

Intended Impact. Mitigate our contribution to the climate crisis by reducing our carbon footprint.

Steps. This project is underway.

Congregational Education. Timing, content, and format of communications is up to the discretion of the Lead Minister. Likely there will be a series of announcements in our newsletter, at an environmental-themed sermon, and in Board meetings. The EJMT will also conduct adult education sessions to inform the congregation of our efforts over the past four years to reduce our carbon footprint.

Metrics. Four HVAC and associated work completed and operating

Net Zero 2050 Goal [FUTURE]

Goal. Reduce total greenhouse gas emissions from our campus buildings by 50% by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2050, in alignment with the goals of the UN Paris Agreement of 2015. This goal appears in the latest UUFR Strategic Plan (UUFR Moving Forward Together, 2024–2029).

Intended Impact. Mitigate our contribution to the climate crisis by reducing our carbon footprint.

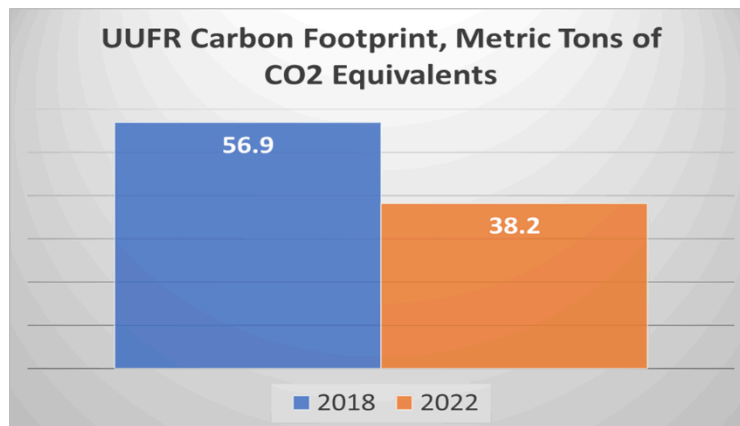
Steps. Through the installation of a 41.5 kW solar array, upgrading all campus lighting to LEDs, installation of insulating windows in Peace Hall and replacing our old, inefficient HVAC systems with high-efficiency all-electric heat pumps, we are set on course to meet this goal. By electrifying our buildings to the maximum extent possible, the emissions due to our electricity consumption will track the reduction

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in generation carbon footprint that Duke Energy is required to make under [HB951](#), namely a 70% reduction in emissions relative to 2005 by 2030 and net zero by 2050. The solar array and lighting upgrades have already significantly reduced our footprint (33% from 2018 to 2022):



Our current infrastructure does not allow for complete elimination of natural gas for some heating (the lower level of Fellowship Hall), so we will explore purchasing carbon-offset credits to offset those remaining emissions. New technology may allow completely eliminating natural gas in the future. We will monitor developments with that in mind.

Congregational Education. Timing, content, and format of communications is up to the discretion of the Lead Minister. The Environmental Justice Ministry Team can coordinate with adult-educational programming to discuss educational opportunities for what Net Zero means and how we can achieve it.

Metrics.

Bi-annual review of UUFR carbon footprint and projects proposed to reduce carbon emissions.

We monitor our utility emissions and analyze the data with an in-house designed spreadsheet. This methodology was presented to the GS2030 in a webinar on May 18, 2022.

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Adult & Youth Educational Programming [ONGOING]

Goal. Educate members about home-energy use, diet, transportation, and carbon offsets. Provide meaningful education for children/youth on environmental topics.

Intended Impact. Have members take steps to reduce their energy use, choose a more environmentally responsible diet, purchase carbon offsets, and inure to more environmentally friendly ways of getting around. Give younger people opportunities for learning experiences consistent with UU principles.

Steps. Exact steps depend on available technologies, programs, staff, and funding opportunities, which of course change over time. We will strive (1) to hold adult- and child-educational programming about these topics, and (2) to hold up examples of members who have successfully upgraded their systems or adopted new technologies or practices. Some of these might involve surveying members on current practices or aspirations, but we must be mindful of survey fatigue. Common delivery is Wednesday night adult education programming.

Congregational Education. These primarily are educational activities.

Metrics. Number of Environmental Justice themed meetings/seminars and attendance.

Earth Day Celebrations [ONGOING]

Goal. UUFR has had good ministerial support in recent years with large, visible Earth Day celebrations. We intend to continue holding these annually.

Intended Impact. Celebrate congregational achievements, promote the work of the environmental team, raise awareness of issues important to climate change.

Steps. Exact steps depend on available technologies, programs, and funding opportunities, which of course change over time. Recurring themes are adult and child education after a Sunday service, a Sunday message on an

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environment-related theme, and celebration/food outdoors. We will strive to create some muscle memory around organizing those elements that recur every year so that organizing is easier.

Congregational Education. These primarily are educational activities.

Metrics.

Number of events and number of UUFR and non-UUFR participants

Climate Emissions Donation Fund [FUTURE]

Goal. Adopt a Climate Emissions Donation Fund.

Intended Impact. Members would donate to this fund based on emissions calculated emissions from travel or other activities. Donors would use an app hosted on UUFR's website to calculate an activity's emissions and then be invited to donate to a special fund at a suggested rate of \$0.10 per pound of CO2 equivalent or any amount they choose. That fund would be earmarked for environmental projects, including affiliated Social Justice projects.

Steps. Our Strategic Plan will identify a new website as a goal for UUFR. The current plan is to incorporate this fund, which involves a calculator and other administrative setup, into that development. The timeframe for that project is uncertain but likely 2024/2025.

Congregational Education. This project will require special advertising and awareness, some of which can be mediated by the website itself, but some of which will likely require discussion on Sunday mornings.

Metrics.

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Establishment of fund, marketing and ultimately amounts donated or pledged.

Eco-spirituality on the Grounds [ONGOING]

Goal. Grow and improve the opportunities for environmental contemplation on UUFR's premises.

Intended Impact. Members and guests should feel invited to sit and contemplate the earth and our relationship to it from UUFR's premises, with sites similar in spirit to the Memorial Garden and Covenant Tree. For example, a bench with literature, artwork, or an environmental landmark (such as our recently planted spirit tree) and a salient marker of some sort to stop, be still, and contemplate the web of existence.

Steps. The environmental team will need to develop proposals, perhaps as part of larger efforts to improve the premises.

Congregational Education. Existing and new sites should be recognized for what they are and be made ascertainable from the website and orientation materials.

Metrics. Number of completed UUFR grounds projects completed & member feedback.

Sustaining Leadership [ONGOING]

Goal. Ensure that the environmental team's leadership can manage current and future projects while continuing to make the EJMT an entry point for newer UUFR members to get involved in justice ministry.

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Intended Impact. Ensure our excellent forward momentum can be sustained going forward.

Steps. Create opportunities for new members and attendees to get involved. Continue preparing for events well ahead of schedule.

Metrics.

Development of a playbook of recurring EJMT activities and procedures to start new projects.

RELATIONSHIPS & SERVICE WORK

The projects in this section are part of broader community service and community organizing efforts.

ICCT Projects; [Prayer Chain for the Earth](#) [ONGOING]

Goal. Maintain our relationship with [Interfaith Creation Care of the Triangle](#), raise climate crisis awareness in the community and foster unity within the Triangle faith community on climate action.

Intended Impact. Continue coordinating environmental-justice activities with local, diverse faith communities. The activities span mitigation, adaptation, resilience activities, but tend to focus on human systems (though projects vary considerably).

Steps. Many UUFR members attend ICCT events and subscribe to their newsletter. One member and one UUFR friend sit on their Board. We plan to expand active participation, especially among our youth. In cooperation with ICCT, the EJMT is planning the 2023 Prayer Chain for the Earth again in 2023 adjacent to the UUFR campus on Wade Avenue. In the future, we hope to hold this event as partners with BIPOC faith communities in their neighborhoods, as they are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Towards that end, we are working to develop a deeper relationship with St. Ambrose Episcopal Church, a predominantly Black

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congregation located in Rochester Heights. St. Ambrose and the Rochester Heights neighborhood in SE Raleigh have experienced flooding in the past due to location in a flood plan, which was historically the only area in Raleigh available to Black citizens.

Congregational Awareness. ICCT newsletters are shared through the UUFR Environmental Team's listserv, which is well-subscribed. Banner projects like prayer chains that need a lot of turnout do better with Sunday-morning style testimonials than with newsletter announcements.

Metrics. Number of events & UUFR participants

Build Regional UU Relationships [FUTURE]

Goal. Deepen our relationship with regional UU congregations and, as part of that, identify opportunities for support in the face of flooding events and risks.

Intended Impact. Support regional UU communities disproportionately affected by flooding.

Steps. Conversation about resilience & adaptation will need to be part of the dialogue with the UU groups we connect with.

Congregational Awareness. Depends on the event, but UUFR has a good track record of supporting UU congregations who have dealt with flooding, such as Shelter Neck.

Metrics. Number of events & UUFR participants

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White-Flag Center [ONGOING]

Goal. UUFR participates in the city's "white flag" shelter program, offering shelter to the homeless on freezing nights. There is anticipation that the city will extend this program to those in need of cooling on extraordinary hot nights as well. This has a natural association with addressing the fallout of climate change. Participate in "white flag" nights.

Intended Impact. Help people vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

Steps. Stay in relation with policy developments.

Congregational Awareness. Communicate to the congregation, through various means, that climate change is one reason that the homeless need cooling nights.

Metrics. Number of events & UUFR participants

Community Organizing through ONE Wake [ONGOING]

Goal. Participate in and support ONE Wake efforts that involve mitigation, adaptation, resilience, and environmental justice.

Intended Impact. UUFR is mindful of "White-savior syndrome." Local political action/community organizing needs to be mediated through an organization with sufficient professional experience and appropriate stakeholder representation, which can properly identify priorities in marginalized communities. As one of ONE Wake's largest members, UUFR will continue to support all of its activities. And when those activities have environmental components—such as the flooding risks to historically Black neighborhoods posed by downtown commercial development in 2020—we will be prepared to respond in line with our social and environmental justice values.

Steps. ONE Wake's projects vary over time. Sometimes there is an environmental component and sometimes there isn't.

Congregational Awareness. Depends on the event.

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Metrics. Number of events & UUFR participants

RAFI Farmers of Color Network [ONGOING]

Goal. We will continue to work with RAFI's Farm and Faith Partnership [program](#) which advocates for economically, racially and ecologically just farming communities and connects faith communities with a network of black and women owned farms in the region to form CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture).

Intended Impact. UUFR was a charter member in RAFI's CSA program and has forged a relationship with [Rocky Ridge Farm](#). This is still a relatively new farm, but it continues to grow and is now able to support a second congregation's CSA. Key components of the program are weekly visits from the farmers for delivery of produce, visiting the network farms and meeting the proprietors to learn about regenerative farming practices, what their challenges are, and so forth. Our partner farmers have, in turn, participated in UUFR activities and several friendships have formed over our 3 year relationship. Important both for community building and for environmental awareness.

Steps. Ongoing.

Congregational Awareness. Most of the congregation is aware of this program. We are enhancing communication through our Family Ministry Program - particularly in increasing awareness of farm visits. Rocky Ridge Farm owners, Steve and Elke McCalla, participated in our 2023 Earth Day celebration and described the regenerative agriculture practices they use at Rocky Ridge. UUFR was featured in a documentary developed by RAFI to promote future CSA programs.

Metrics. Number of events & UUFR participants

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Sister Communities of San Ramon Nicaragua Partnership [TENTATIVE]

Goal. To the extent there is interest and volunteer initiative, we will continue to work with fair-trade sales and ecological tourism programs through partnership with [this organization](#). This program has a somewhat uncertain status.

Intended Impact. Provide an opportunity for members to support fair-trade practices and to learn about ecological issues in South America.

Steps. EJMT facilitators should communicate to the EJMT about the contours of the program and assess interest.

Congregational Awareness. Most of the congregation is aware of this program, but we might be more intentional, if the program proceeds, about ensuring that people can easily learn about the program and how to get involved. That might be part of our website redesign.

Metrics. Dollar amount of products sold. Number of Nicaraguan families aided.

Stream Cleanups [FUTURE]

Goal. The City of Raleigh offers a 3-year “[adopt-a-stream](#)” program, in which a community organization can adopt part of a river for clean-up twice a year. UUFR’s environmental team intends, after a trial cleanup in Fall 2023, to participate in this program.

Intended Impact. The intended site is at a park in a marginalized neighborhood and adjacent to a flood plain, opening opportunities for education on flooding, climate change, and environmental racism. Opportunities for reaching out to one or more other religious communities will be explored as we assess sustained interest in this project.

Steps. Registration is free and a volunteer coordinator needs to handle the planning, liability waivers, and advertising, but the city provides supplies. Adult and youth members will be invited to sign up in advance, and youth might earn credit

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towards service-project hours they accumulate as part of an RE project. We will strive for a “trial” cleanup in late October 2023.

Congregational Awareness. The events will be promoted through regular channels.

Metrics. Number of events & UUFR participants

Letter-Writing Campaigns [ONGOING]

Goal. UUFR has a decent history of organizing letter-writing campaigns for various environmental legislation. We will continue to do so.

Intended Impact. Communicate to politicians how our principles support various pieces of legislation or administrative regulation.

Steps. These opportunities are communicated through UUA or ICCT or are identified ad hoc by individual members.

Congregational Awareness. The events will be promoted through regular channels.

Metrics. Number of events & UUFR participants