

Village Presbyterian Church Becomes an Earth Care Congregation

In March 2011, Village Church was certified as an **Earth Care Congregation** by PC(USA)'s **Environmental Ministries**. This action came after the Session approved the **Earth Care Pledge** in February.

Earth Care Congregations (www.pcusa.org/ministries/environment/earth-care-congregations/) was launched at the General Assembly in July 2010 to inspire churches to care for God's earth in a holistic way by incorporating earth care into their mission and ministry. To become certified, a church affirms the **Earth Care Pledge** to integrate environmental practices and thinking into all aspects of its church life and to complete projects and activities in the fields of Worship, Education, Facilities, and Outreach.

During the fall of 2010 under the guidance of Rev. Dwight Tawney, the **Environmental Action Committee (EAC)** performed an environmental audit. Using the scoring system outlined in the document entitled *A Guide to Greening Presbyterian Churches*, **EAC** determined that Village Church had accumulated sufficient points in each of the four fields of action. Based on activities and projects between December 2009 and November 2010, Village Church earned the following points:

- Worship 39
- Education 83
- Facilities 114
- Outreach 70

The minimum number of points required in each field of action is 25. Since the total points accumulated in 3 of the 4 fields was two or three times what was required, the case was made that Village Church was doubly qualified. With 306 total points, certification is a recognition of what has been accomplished by various groups within the church (not just **EAC**).

Certification honors churches that make the commitment to be stewards of God's Good Green earth and encourages other churches to follow their lead. Members of the congregation are also invited to participate as individuals by completing similar actions in their homes.

When it became certified, Village Church was the 23rd church nationally to become an **Earth Care Congregation**. This number has now grown to 51!

The **Earth Care Congregation** certificate has been framed and hung in the hallway between the Chapel and Friendship Hall along with other **EAC** certificates and awards. The certificate refers to Village Church's "environmental stewardship achievements in worship, education, facilities, and outreach actions in the life of the church."