



*Green Sanctuary*  
*Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations*  
*Congregational Stewardship Services*  
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*Congregations and congregants working together to restore Earth and renew Spirit.*

September 13, 2010

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Binghamton  
Green Sanctuary Committee  
Wes Ernsberger, Chair  
183 Riverside Dr  
Binghamton, NY 13905

Congratulations! With this letter, the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, Office of Congregational Stewardship Services is honored to formally recognize the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Binghamton as an Accredited Green Sanctuary.

We appreciate your thorough documentation of your Green Sanctuary activities. Descriptions of each activity helped us to understand how much you have accomplished. You have succeeded in integrating the Green Sanctuary program goals into the ongoing life of your congregation through the many projects you have carried out. Your application offers strong evidence of the positive environmental consciousness that has developed in your congregation, resulting in new behaviors and new lifestyle choices by members individually and by the congregation as a whole. We were especially inspired by your “Bearing Witness to Coal” event – it takes a lot to realize that you are complicit in using it and to make the conscious choice to gather to reflect, up close, on the source of power. Your UUCB Faith-in-Action Community Nutrition Project is an excellent example of an environmental justice project. We are excited to hear that you plan to track your usage of electricity and gas overtime to realize your gains and to figure out other ways to reduce your energy consumption. The ethical eating film series is a great tie-in to the Congregational Study Action Issue – Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice for 2008-2012 and we encourage you to participate in it if you are not already. You now have a great foundation for continuing action in the future.

We know you are looking forward to celebrating your accomplishments with your congregation. Your Green Sanctuary certificate is being sent under a separate cover for you to display in a prominent place. You will be recognized as an Accredited Green Sanctuary at General Assembly 2011 in Charlotte, NC, as that time nears I will send you more information. In the meantime, you may want to begin to assemble a “scrapbook” which shares information about your Green Sanctuary movement – congregations create these in many different way; some use their applications, some include orders of service, newsletter columns, fliers about special events, and pictures, some write storybooks about the journey, and some come up with new ideas that

we've never seen before – this will be a wonderful reminder of where your congregation has been and will be on display at the Congregational Life booth at GA for other congregations to peruse.

We encourage all congregations to continue engaging in stewardship of the Earth even after they have become an Accredited Green Sanctuary. In four-to-five years, as you look towards re-accreditation in for years we encourage you to think about ways to get people on-board with reusable shopping bags. Are people in your congregations using the tee-bags you made during your “Jumping January” series? If not, you might consider a campaign to remind to congregants to bring their own bag (one congregation made “BOB” stickers to put on their cars to remind them to do this). If they are, perhaps you might consider ways in which you can get the larger community involved without the help of the grocers.

I do hope you are proud of your accomplishments. You have truly taken the goals of the Green Sanctuary Program to heart. Again, congratulations on successfully becoming an Accredited Green Sanctuary. Your accomplishments serve as a beacon of hope, demonstrating that we can all make a difference!

To a greener faith-community and world,

*Robin Nelson*

Robin Nelson  
Program Manager, Congregational Stewardship Services

“It’s not easy being Green.” – Kermit the Frog