



Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth

formerly The Seventh Principle Project

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May 18, 2006

Unitarian Universalist Church of Tallahassee
Rev. Bill Murchison, Interim Minister
2810 N. Meridian Road
Tallahassee FL 32312

Dear Rev. Murchison:

With this letter, the UU Ministry for Earth is honored to formally recognize the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tallahassee as a Green Sanctuary. Your strong commitment to caring for Earth is well demonstrated by your efforts. Congratulations to the congregation for your unanimous vote for accreditation!

In the nearly four years since beginning the Green Sanctuary program, members of your congregation have carried out a variety of activities in the four program elements. Your application for accreditation documents a process of increasing commitment to educate yourselves and take action on a variety of environmental issues of importance in the church and in the larger Tallahassee community.

Your reputation in the community places UUCT at the forefront of stewardship in Tallahassee and in the region. Especially impressive is your commitment to understanding the complexities of issues such as global warming and water quality. You recognize that there are no easy answers, but as a congregation have modeled a process of study, leading to action, followed by reflection that is so necessary for finding the appropriate answers.

Your accomplishments show that you have addressed a wide range of issues, some internal to the congregation and others focused on issues affecting the greater Tallahassee community. When the proposal for a coal-fired plant was raised, you immediately understood its connection to a larger issue of sustainable energy and the growing danger of global warming. You could have merely objected to the project, reinforcing local opposition, but instead you chose to work pro-actively with the city utilities staff to develop a sustainable energy plan.

From my visit to Tallahassee last year, I was impressed with your ability to involve such a large proportion of the congregation's members in your activities. Your application contains evidence of even greater success since then. You have been quite creative in drawing members in to the discussion and education to encourage personal actions for Earth stewardship. Your TAPP project, recycling program, Food for Thought pledges, and much more have developed a culture of consciousness in the congregation, recognizing the importance of both individual and collective action and short term and long term strategies. Your overall approach is very impressive.

Katya Taylor's haiku poem in your application is truly heartwarming! What a wonderful metaphor of your congregation's emergence as a Green Sanctuary! Thank you for sharing your journey.

The UU Ministry for Earth believes the connection between our faith and our environmental values is one of the most important contributions we can make as Unitarian Universalists in response to the environmental crisis. Our relationship with Earth is both an intellectual and a spiritual calling. Without both elements our efforts will run out of steam and succumb to the inertia, and even despair, that prevents effective action in the world. Your efforts make that connection evident in the world.

I do hope you are proud of your many accomplishments. You have truly taken the goals of the Green Sanctuary Program to heart. This is a lifelong commitment without an easy road map that tells us what to do and where and how to do it, but you have demonstrated this commitment and created the foundation for continuing work. Again, congratulations on successfully completing the required steps for the Green Sanctuary program.

With Hope for Earth,

Rev. Katherine Jesch
Director of Environmental Ministry