

Starting a Creation Care group at your church:

1. **Get your pastor and church leaders on board.** Read this section on Creation Care and then meet with your pastor to share your ideas and see if it fits with their vision. Explain your reasons for wanting to start a Creation Care ministry at your church, and the benefits to the congregation.
2. **Form a Green Team.** This is a critical first step, and working together with a team helps to keep your efforts strong, focused, and continually moving forward. Hold a meeting and share ideas like the ones below to develop a plan to get your ministry started. Stay connected with an email or Facebook group.
3. **Show an Environmental Film.** Showing a video or film is a great way to give your community an inside glimpse into environmental problems – and the good work that is being done in response to them. You can research what is available on Amazon.com.
4. **Publish Eco-Friendly Tips** Supply your church office with green tips for your church bulletin or newsletter like these from GreenFaith:
<http://www.greenfaith.org/files/eco-tips-for-how-pdf>
5. **Make Your House of Worship Eco-Friendly** Most congregations can significantly reduce their energy use and save money through several easy and no-cost energy conservation steps. These efforts will not only produce immediate environmental benefits, but the savings that result will inspire and excite the entire congregation. Provide recycling bins throughout the church. Use reusable or compostable dishes instead of disposable. Your local utilities company may provide a free audit of your facility. Just changing bulbs to LEDs and getting programmable thermostats can make a big difference.
6. **Preach a Green Sermon** This sends a clear message to members that environmental stewardship is a religious value. Include Creation Care songs, prayers, and blessings.
7. **Celebrate Earth Day** Plan a special weekend around Earth Day. This may include a community clean up, showing a film, having a special sermon, or working in a community garden.

(Compiled by Cara Fleischer, Creation Care Ministry Leader at Saint Paul's UMC, Tallahassee. Adapted from GreenFaith.)