

# Greener Congregation Stewardship Score

**Step One:** Working through these questions will enable you to evaluate your congregation's investment in creation care at present and to set goals for the future. Use Mennonite Creation Care Network's Greener Congregation Discussion Guides to review the areas below. They are available online at <http://www.mennocreationcare.org/sites/default/files/ScoresheetHelpsPlan.pdf>. Assign each question to the people most involved with the area addressed. Many hands make light work!

**Step Two:** Rate your congregation's creation stewardship from 0 to 5. A zero indicates no current activity or plan; a 5 means that your congregation has fully immersed itself in this area.

Score	Category
[ 2 ] 0 to 5	<p><b>1. Vision for Creation Care:</b> Stewardship of creation is named in the congregation's mission and core values. People understand caring for the earth as a key part of the Christian calling.</p> <p>A. Name the committee and/or individuals responsible for evaluating the vision category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transition Team- Ken Glick, Allen Guntz, Omar Zook, Tim Good, Heather Wolfe <i>This is our church leadership team, which has been working during the interim time between permanent pastors on identity work including core values, purpose and vision.</i></li> </ul> <p>B. Reason for current score: (Summarize in up to 50 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are a highly relational congregation that feels called to nurture and build wellbeing of self, others, community and the world. As we are living into this purpose and vision, creation care is emerging as an area we could follow Jesus' ministry of healing and join the Holy Spirit's creative work.</li> </ul> <p>C. Steps planned to increase the congregation's vision for creation care. (Summarize in up to 100 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In response to our LEAD transition minister's invitation to think about ways in which we want to live into the purpose and vision crafted earlier this year, individual ideas within the congregation have surfaced including composting initiative, planting church gardens (flowers, vegetables, fruit trees), healthy foods/cooking classes, and solar panels. Our newly appointed MCCN liaison will be helping us integrate creation care ideas into our broader vision. A creation care value is emerging and the pastor search team will be asking potential candidates about how creation care fits into their vision for ministry.</li> </ul>
[ 3 ] 0 to 5	<p><b>2. Creation Care Leaders</b> The congregation includes people with a passion and gifts for guiding the church in stewardship practices. These people are recognized and the congregation has formally blessed their gifts.</p> <p>A. Name the committee and/or individuals responsible for evaluating this category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MCCN liaison- Heather Wolfe</li> </ul> <p>B. Reason for current score: (Summarize in up to 50 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our MCCN liaison is personally passionate and dedicated in daily living to</li> </ul>

	<p>creation care. Church leadership and the congregation have affirmed pursuing new creation care initiatives proposed including composting and exploring solar panel installation. Many in the congregation are eager to support and encourage creation care work.</p> <p>C. Steps planned to develop creation care leaders. (Summarize in up to 100 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We would like to create a creation care committee that crosses all aspects of church life (worship, Christian ed, trustees, etc) so that creation care is considered across the board in planning and decision making. In this time of searching for a next pastor, we have an opportunity to be asking potential candidates about how they see creation care fitting into ministry. We'd hope a new pastor could share leadership responsibility in this area and be supportive of growing those gifts from within the congregation.</li> </ul>
Score	Category
<p>[ 2.5 ] 0 to 5</p>	<p><b>3. Ecological Setting</b> The congregation is aware of its place in the local ecosystems, watershed and foodshed. Local soils, plants and animals are familiar to members and they understand how to be careful stewards in this setting. Members are aware of the environmental issues in their community.</p> <p>A. Name the committee and/or individuals responsible for evaluating this category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members: Nick Wolfe, Abner Schlabach</li> </ul> <p>B. Reason for current score: (Summarize in up to 50 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are appreciative of the creation around us- annually we worship outdoors at a state park and a children's summer camp. Individually many members are sensitive to where their food is sourced. There is discussion, knowledge and interest around eco-friendly living, however there is not much action as a congregation.</li> </ul> <p>C. Steps planned to increase the congregation's awareness of its ecological setting. (Summarize in up to 100 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adding native plants, wildflower gardens on the banks would help us to decrease the amount of mowing and would attract beneficial pollinators. There is room for additional fruit trees and garden space. The idea of a labyrinth in our outdoor space would draw us outside more often. We have a rich local food movement and many gardener members who could be organized to provide surplus produce to those who don't have access. There are knowledgeable people within the congregation who could have workshops on gardening, invasive species removal, composting, hunting and gathering.</li> </ul>
<p>[ 3 ] 0 to 5</p>	<p><b>4. Creation Care in Worship</b> The worship experiences of the congregation recognize God's care for all created things. Caring for creation is addressed in sermons and appears in visual elements, in sharing times, in confessions, in song.</p> <p>A. Name the committee and/or individuals responsible for evaluating this category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worship Committee- Virginia Schlabach, Courtney Hollingsworth, Dorcas Lehman, Allison Good</li> </ul>

	<p>B. Reason for current score: (Summarize in up to 50 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation care has not been an explicit goal of the worship committee, but because it is something we believe in, it has come up naturally. Music and visual elements are our strengths- we regularly sing songs celebrating God as creator and use lots of nature visuals in worship. We could do more with confession.</li> </ul> <p>C. Steps planned to emphasize God’s care for all created things in worship. (Summarize in up to 100 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The congregation seems ready for an explicit emphasis on creation care. An Earth Day event, or worship focus, as well as a spring elective this year (such as Every Creature Singing) would yield fruit. We could highlight an organization doing creation care to pray for each week of that month. For the offering time we can consider more songs or prayers that are doxological in nature, as gratitude is so linked to Creator and creation care. As for confession, people seem aware of their place in creation, but giving that voice could deepen it.</li> </ul>
Score	Category
<p>[ 3 ] 0 to 5</p>	<p><b>5. Creation Care in Congregational Life</b> Groups and committees consider environmental impacts when making decisions. Structures are in place to enable practices such as recycling, carpooling, buying recycled materials.</p> <p>A. Name the committee and/or individuals responsible for evaluating this category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Church Council- Carmeleta Beidler, Jenn Driscoll, Omar Zook, Ken Glick, Tim Good, Laura Beidler</li> </ul> <p>B. Reason for current score: (Summarize in up to 50 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For many years we have purchased fair trade coffee, used reusable mugs/utensils, recycled, and not printed bulletins. We have just started composting. For outside of Sunday gatherings, carpooling is encouraged. Overall we are frugal in consumption, carefully stewarding our resources. There have not been any explicit creation care goals/guides to follow.</li> </ul> <p>C. Steps planned to encourage creation care in congregational life. (Summarize in up to 100 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have just begun composting and will invite the AA group, who use our building weekly, to join in our efforts. Members rotate weekly cleaning duties- we’d like to phase out commercial cleaners as they are used up, replacing with green alternatives such as homemade vinegar &amp; baking soda recipes. We could remove some of the 10 trash cans and add more prominent recycling (currently 1 unmarked discreet bin). Alternatives to throw away paper goods used at potlucks will be explored. The creation care bulletin board should be a place to highlight changes and recommendations.</li> </ul>
<p>[ 2.75 ] 0 to 5</p>	<p><b>6. Creation Care in Daily Living</b> Members are routinely challenged to adopt earth stewardship practices at home. Individuals have moved toward lower consumption lifestyles in the last five years.</p> <p>A. Name the committee and/or individuals responsible for evaluating this category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Congregational Care Team- Allen &amp; Mary Guntz, Omar &amp; Janice Zook, Mary</li> </ul>

	<p>Fullerton</p> <p>B. Reason for current score: (Summarize in up to 50 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is not a topic we have discussed as a group, so our individual/collective carbon footprint is really unknown. Vermont is one of the greener states and most of us have been recycling for years, are energy conscious (at least for financial reasons), many have been composting, and a few drive hybrid cars.</li> </ul> <p>C. Steps planned to encourage creation care in daily living. (Summarize in up to 100 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our Creation Care liaison will keep this subject before us (education) as an ongoing challenge. A dedicated bulletin board has been created for creation care. Plans for “Do Just One Thing” environmental stewardship challenges for members will be posted and announced regularly. We realize Creation Care is necessary not only for economic reasons but also to reduce our carbon footprint on God’s creation to preserve it for future generations. Each household could use a carbon footprint calculator to show us where we really stand collectively.</li> </ul>
Score	Category
<p>[ 3 ] 0 to 5</p>	<p><b>7. Energy Audit</b> The stewardship of your congregation includes evaluating energy uses in the church building. The facilities committee has established a historical baseline of heating, cooling and lighting costs.</p> <p><a href="#">The Cool Congregations Carbon Checklist</a> from Interfaith Power and Light can help you conduct your own audit. See other suggestions in the score sheet discussion guide.</p> <p>A. Name the committee and/or individuals responsible for evaluating this category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trustees- Omar Zook, head trustee</li> </ul> <p>B. Reason for current score: (Summarize in up to 50 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have done a formal energy audit. Based on the audit, we identified areas of energy inefficiencies, the biggest being our old dehumidifier. We continue to evaluate ways to be energy efficient. Last year we replaced our furnace.</li> </ul> <p>C. Steps planned to conserve energy usage. (Summarize in up to 100 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We plan to replace the dehumidifier with an energy star version and replace old light bulbs to a more energy efficient type. We are evaluating cost vs. benefit of more insulation and replacing our old windows. We are getting quotes for solar panel installation on our building’s rear roof. When we consider all options for increasing energy efficiency, it is clear that solar is our best return on investment and where we want to focus financial resources this year.</li> </ul>
<p>[ 3.5 ] 0 to 5</p>	<p><b>8. Practicing Ecojustice Locally</b></p> <p>“<b>Eco-Justice</b> holds together commitments for ecological sustainability and human justice. It sees environmental issues and justice issues not as competing agendas, but as intertwined elements of how humans are called to relate to God's creation. It asserts that it is not possible to care for the earth without also caring for humanity, and that seeking human justice must involve care for the environment.” <a href="#">—from the Ecojustice Ministries website</a></p>

	<p>The congregation participates in mission activities that promote ecojustice within the local community.</p> <p>A. Name the committee and/or individuals responsible for evaluating this category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach/MDS rep (Laura Beidler)</li> </ul> <p>B. Reason for current score: (Summarize in up to 50 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We give to projects that support ecojustice locally and globally. We support health in Harmony in Indonesia, which provides healthcare in exchange for forest protection. We support Bethany Birches Camp which links living in nature with Christian education. We support local agencies that help low income individuals afford heating.</li> </ul> <p>C. Steps planned to promote eco-justice within the local community. (Summarize in up to 100 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We plan to continue supporting organizations that promote ecojustice around the world. As we shift to using solar power, we will continue to support local agencies, such as SEVCA, that work to improve the winterization and energy efficiency of homes in our local area. In order to increase awareness in our own church body, we will emphasize the importance of ecojustice during our worship. We will also work to engage our local village community in understanding and supporting our shift to solar panels and our rationale behind that switch which includes an ecojustice message.</li> </ul>
Score	Category
<p>[ 3.5 ] 0 to 5</p>	<p><b>9. Creation Care Plan</b></p> <p>The congregation has developed a comprehensive plan for reducing the ecological and carbon footprint of all areas of congregational life.</p> <p>A. Reason for current score: (Summarize in up to 50 words.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committees and members were highly engaged in this stewardship score sheet process. Ideas generated were a good mix of small and substantial changes. Many achievable goals were articulated across all aspects of our congregational life together. Being a new area of focus for us, we will require intentional accountability throughout the year.</li> </ul> <p>B. By working through each category above, you will have completed a creation care plan. (Summarize B. in up to 100 words total.)</p> <p>1.) Describe how the conclusions each group came to above have been shared with the congregation and compiled into an overall plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ MCCN liaison will announce results on Sunday September 25<sup>th</sup>. The plan will also be emailed out to our congregational listserve and posted on our creation care bulletin board</li> <li>○ The compilation was pulled together by our MCCN liaison with support of our Outreach rep and reviewed/affirmed by our leadership team.</li> </ul> <p>2.) What are your top two priorities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Completing a solar panel installation on our church roof by spring 2017.</li> <li>○ Planning for an Earth Day worship service in April and connecting that to other spring creation care activities (invasive plant pulling, seeds starting,</li> </ul>

	<p>local foods potluck, solar celebration/open house).</p> <p>3.) What individuals or groups will be responsible to see that the plan moves forward?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Church Council with support of MCCN liaison</li> </ul> <p>4.) When will you return to this score sheet again to evaluate your progress?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Annually in September during the Season of Creation</li> </ul>
<b>26.25</b>	

**Total Score**

0 - 9 Visioning Leaf

10 - 19 Bronze Leaf

**20 - 29 Silver Leaf**

30 - 39 Gold Leaf

40 - 49 Green Leaf



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