

3 Pathways for Decreasing Carbon Footprint for Congregations

In response to a recent General Assembly policy on lowering church building's impact on climate change, the PC(USA) recommends two excellent structured congregational programs from our partners that will help congregations reduce their carbon footprint. Also shared below are ways a congregation could design their own path to lowering their carbon footprint. Presbyterians are called to take the results of our energy consumption seriously, to pray asking for God's forgiveness and guidance, to reduce energy consumption, and to calculate carbon emissions* and offset their negative impact. We know that we need to make outward changes together in community AND we need structural change, global political will, and massive adaptation/mitigation/funding for climate solutions.

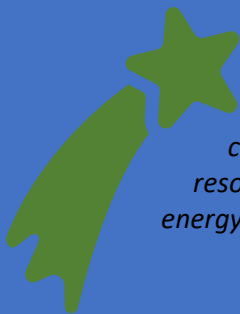
Become a Cool Congregation

An offering from our partners at Interfaith Power and Light, the Cool Congregations challenge is a unique stewardship program helps congregations reduce the carbon footprint of their facilities and engages their members in reducing their carbon footprint at home. The program educates, inspires, and saves money too! Start up Kits, useful calculators and applications for awards are available online at <https://interfaithpowerandlight.org/coolcongregations/>



Energy Star for Congregations

An offering from the EPA that provides the tools, training, and technical support to help your congregation achieve and sustain a high level of stewardship. Offerings include a workbook to serve as a resource and planning guide for clergy, staff, and laypersons of houses of worship who want to increase the energy efficiency of their facilities by implementing realistic and cost-effective energy improvement projects. It is available with the accompanying appendices at www.energystar.gov/congregations.



Design Your Own

Changing to LED lighting, adjusting thermostats to less heat/AC, turning off lights and electronics when not in use, sealing building envelope including window leaks, and otherwise making suggested changes from a localized energy audit are key steps in designing your own program to save energy. The Presbyterian Hunger Program, in conjunction with other partners, offers several resources with suggestions to round out a program designed by your own congregation for carbon footprint awareness and reduction. Some of those include:

- The Climate Care Challenge: www.pcusa.org/cc
- Blessed Tomorrow's Moving Forward Guide: www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/blessed-tomorrow/
- Presbyterians for Earth Care Webinar Series: <https://presbyearthcare.org/events/>
- Tread Lightly for Lent: www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/tread-lightly-for-lent/
- And more: www.pcusa.org/climate



*Carbon Calculator available at <https://coolclimate.berkeley.edu/calculator>

The Presbyterian Hunger Program works to alleviate hunger and eliminate its root causes, including environmental devastation and climate change. Learn more at www.pcusa.org/hunger