

## GO GREEN, GET GREEN



There's not much time left, but you can still apply for a Power to Change grant to improve the sustainability and energy usage of your church facilities. There are two grants left for 2022: That's \$2000 each for two congregations.

**DON'T DELAY. APPLY TODAY.**

The PCUSA calls congregations to care for God's creation and to aspire to live carbon neutral lives. The grant provides matching funds up to \$2,000 per congregation for actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve water at churches or educate and advocate to further such actions. Appropriate projects: energy audit of the church building, improve building insulation, install energy saving sensors, LED lights, alternative energy systems, educational Earth Care programs, advocacy of earth care issues in the public arena, projects that preserve and sustain native species and biodiversity, promote sustainable watershed protection. Your congregation does not need to be certified by the PCUSA as an Earth Care Congregation to receive these funds. [https://thepresbytery.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Earth\\_Care\\_Application\\_Part\\_II\\_Revised\\_09-2016.pdf](https://thepresbytery.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Earth_Care_Application_Part_II_Revised_09-2016.pdf)

Providence, Fairlington, and OPMH in Alexandria each applied and received 2022 grants for \$2000 each.

**Here are some recent ideas from other NCP congregations.**

### 2021 POWER TO CHANGE AWARDS

**Rockville United Church [Rockville, MD]** is a certified PCUSA Earth Care Congregation. They used their grant to replace 98 old windows throughout their building with Pella double-pane interior glazed insulated low-emissivity glass and argon gas windows with U-factors between 0.23 and 0.29. These windows meet/exceed Energy Star guidelines and they refinished the exterior window frames removing old asbestos paint.

**Fairlington Presbyterian Church [Alexandria, VA]** is a certified PCUSA Earth Care Congregation. Fairlington used the grant to fund continued leadership of David Grace for the Youth Carbon Analyst Program (YCAP) of the National Capital Presbytery Earth Care Network for 9 weeks. YCAP involved 3 components - (1) calculating the greenhouse gas emissions of the Presbytery; (2) outlining pathways the Presbytery can take to reduce its greenhouses gas emissions; (3) measure reductions over time. The YCAP was planned for 9 weeks, but they were not able to recruit additional youth to participate, and the program ended when financing and leadership did with David Grace's departure from the area. The many competing opportunities for youth in the area made it difficult to recruit participants.

**Old Presbyterian Meeting House** [Alexandria, VA] is not a certified PCUSA Earth Care Congregation. OPMH used grant funds to replace two non-functional parking lot pole lights with solar-powered LED lights to reduce energy footprint and costs. The lights are fully dark-sky compliant. The project reduced bulb waste and the effort that goes into changing them (often necessitating a special truck to change the bulbs). They calculated reduced electrical usage of approximately 1,530 kWh of electricity per year. They learned that although they were able to eliminate use of the electrical grid, they still have batteries that must be replaced every 3-5 years, thus not completely eliminating usage costs or carbon footprint. They also learned a lot about the challenges of using solar in an urban environment.

### **Reformed Institute of Metropolitan Washington**

The NCP Earth Care Network used grant funds to co-sponsor Professor Bill Brown to come to Washington to offer a Reformed perspective on the climate crisis and Earth's general destruction. Prof. Brown is the leading voice on climate among Presbyterian Biblical scholars. His major address at National Presbyterian Church was very well received and well attended (110 RSVP's, 50 present in person and 35 present online). During his stay, Heritage Presbyterian hosted him for an adult education session, and OPMH hosted him for a subsequent sermon. The Reformed Institute matched the ECN grant to pay the basic honorarium and travel expenses, and both OPMH and Heritage paid Prof. Brown a conventional honorarium for their separate sessions. His three live events were very moving and informative, and they filled a gap by providing the theological and Biblical grounding for Earth care that has not been firmly grasped in many of our congregations. This event was recorded and can be viewed here. YouTube( <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BBlxX9LHy2g>) . A summary is also available. <https://reformedinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Bill-Brown-talk-Fall-2022-summary-7-7.pdf>

### **2020 POWER TO CHANGE AWARDS**

Five grants of \$2000 apiece were awarded to: Fairfax, First United of Dale City, Providence, Rockville United, and Warner Memorial.

**Fairfax Presbyterian Church** [Fairfax, VA] is a certified PCUSA Earth Care Congregation. They used the grant as part of the HVAC replacement project to acquire smart thermostats to help better regulate the system and be more energy efficient. The new units are rated about 25% more efficient than the units they replaced.

**First United Presbyterian Church of Dale City** [Woodbridge, VA] is not a certified PCUSA Earth Care Congregation. They used volunteer labor to replace 271 fluorescent lights with LEDs expecting to reduce energy consumption. COVID has interfered with installation and measurement of impact.

**Providence Presbyterian Church [Fairfax, VA]** is a certified PCUSA Earth Care Congregation. Providence used grant to help fund the Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions (FACS). FACS is an interfaith coalition representing about 180 faith communities that are Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, Jewish, and Unitarian based in Fairfax County, VA. In 2021, FACS promoted environmental advocacy in Fairfax County, VA, and has expanded its reach to the city of Alexandria, and Arlington, Loudon, and Prince William Counties. FACS had an extraordinarily successful year getting the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to agree to a climate action plan that will bring down the county's carbon footprint by 50% by 2030, 75% by 2040, and 100% by 2050. This is in alignment with the Paris Accords. The FACS process has brought together people of many different faith traditions into a common front.

**Rockville United Church** is a certified PCUSA Earth Care Congregation. They used this grant to replace old asphalt roofing on the sanctuary and fellowship hall. Our old roofing was over 20 years old and had incurred leaks and repairs. They replaced this roofing with environmentally friendly EcoStar synthetic slate roofing tiles made from up to 80% recycled post-industrial rubber and plastic. RUC prioritized roof replacement options that are environmentally friendly, sustainable, and recyclable. Rather than replace our roofs with conventional asphalt singles, which are manufactured from fossil fuel and are not typically recyclable, we chose a slightly more expensive but environmentally friendly EcoStar synthetic slate. This synthetic slate is manufactured from up to 80% recycled post-industrial rubber and plastic. EcoStar roofing products divert scrap rubber and plastic from landfills to produce sustainable material that is warranted for up to 50 years.

**Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church [Kensington, MD]** Is a certified PCUSA Earth Care Congregation. They used the grant to replace the aged and failing air-conditioning in the sanctuary and 4 meeting rooms and add cooling and heat to the kitchen. The eight serving the sanctuary and four meeting rooms were 20 years or older, and some have failed. The new units were more energy efficient, quieter, and use less harmful coolant.

**Bush Hill Presbyterian Church [4916 Franconia Rd, Alexandria, VA 22310]** is not a certified PCUSA Earth Care Congregation but was welcomed to apply and receive a grant to replace original (1950s) single-pane casement windows with energy-efficient windows. They removed 10 60-year-old single-pane casement windows, which did not close or lock and were difficult to see through and installed 10 vinyl, double-pane, sliding, low E glass windows. The primary user of the space is a preschool, which greatly benefited from the replacement windows. Having new windows that open were also extremely beneficial to COVID-19 safety protocols in 2020 and continue useful today. Windows that lock add another level of security that was missing with the old windows. This project provided additional reassurance to preschool parents and other community organizations that we can operate our buildings in a safe and secure manner.

For more reports from earlier years click here: <https://thepresbytery.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/NCP-Power-to-Change-Grant-Program-Summary-2020.pdf>