

CHARGE CONFERENCE FORM #1: Annual Report of the Trustees

Carbon Neutrality in United Methodist Churches

WHY A CARBON NET NEUTRALITY ASSESSMENT IS REQUESTED

The Book of Discipline 2020/2024 ¶2550.11 asks church Trustees Reports to include: "11. An evaluation of all church buildings, grounds, and facilities in relation to their impact of the church's ability to be carbon neutral and/or have net zero greenhouse gas emissions; and, when applicable, a plan and timeline for the renovation and development of church buildings, grounds, and facilities to bring the church closer to being at least carbon neutral and/or having at least net zero greenhouse gas emissions."

Guiding Principles

- This is not a project for one Trustee, for just the Trustees, or for just one year of Trustees work. Monitoring and working toward carbon net neutrality is a long-term project. **You will need time.**
- Find people in your church with a passion for the environment, people who understand buildings, and people who can collaborate and work together. **You will need people.**
- Start tracking your utility usage or have your utility meter upgraded to smart meters so that you can see how much energy you use. **You will want data to see trends and to see improvements.**
- Use the checklist below to consider when and where to use heating or cooling systems.
- Consider working with energy experts on renewable energy sources to add to your properties, like solar or gardens.
- Consult with the Eco-Justice Task Force of the Justice & Compassion EMT for ideas and to network with other campuses doing this same work of earth justice.

The journey to net zero begins with small first steps that nearly all churches can benefit from, even those churches that might only be used only on Sunday. They are relatively easy, with relatively fast pay back.

CHURCH NAME						
DISTRICT						
		Already Done / Up to Date	Not applicable on property	Not a priority right now	Will seek advice from expert(s)	Priority for us – work being planned
1	Are you maintaining the roof and gutters, to prevent damp entering the building's structure, which can increase heat loss from inside the building?					
2	Do you have a service or maintenance plan for the HVAC system, with annual inspections?					
3	Have you fixed any broken windows, made sure opening windows shut tightly and seal gaps to reduce heat loss?					
4	Have you sealed the gaps around any doors and their frames, or put up a door-curtain?					
5	Have you insulated around heating or hot water pipes? This may allow other sources of heat to be reduced in this area.					
6	Have you considered using rugs/floor-coverings on floors, and cushions on/around the pews/chairs?					
7	Have you / can you ask your utility providers to install smart meters, to better measure the energy you use?					
8	Will you commit to replacing appliances (at the end of their lives) with Energy Star Most Efficient ratings?					
9	Have you set thermostats and other timers to suit the timing of activities in the building, so you only use heating or cooling energy when needed?					
10	If you are heating the sanctuary, have you tried turning off the heating 15 minutes before the scheduled end of sanctuary use?					
11	Do you have coverings for your windows (to reduce heat from the sun through the windows & to protect heated spaces from losing heat)?					
12	Have you replaced lightbulbs with LEDs? (If necessary, have you replaced lighting fixtures to use LEDs?)					
13	Have you replaced outdoor floodlights or emergency lights with LEDs or solar-powered units?					
14	Have you installed timers or motion sensors so that the lighting will automatically switch on & off in areas that are often unoccupied?					
15	Have you added signage near switches to remind people to turn the lights off when not in use?					
16	Do you make sure that windows and lights are clean?					
17	If you have Internet on the property, could you install a smart HVAC thermostat/controller to better control energy use?					

		Already Done / Up to Date	Not applicable on property	Not a priority right now	Will seek advice from expert(s)	Priority for us – work being planned
18	If you have Internet on the property and sprinklers for your landscaping, could you install a smart sprinkler controller to better control water usage?					
19	Does your church have a task force, committee, or champion of environmental justice who agrees to track energy usage and energy efficiency actions, including training church members? (eg not leaving electronics on standby, turning off lights, closing doors to the outside, etc)					
20	Has your church considered moving committee meetings online during heat waves or cold spells, so that the building does not need heated or cooled?					

Making A Bigger Impact

These actions have a reasonably fast pay back for churches with medium energy usage, on properties where the church is used throughout the week. Most actions will cost more and require more time and planning.

		Already Done / Up to Date	Not applicable on property	Not a priority right now	Will seek advice from expert(s)	Priority for us – work being planned
21	Are your buildings (including the ceilings) insulated?					
22	Have you considered installing separate heating or cooling units for smaller spaces/rooms that will not require heating or cooling the entire building?					
23	Have you considered setting the thermostat 3 to 5 degrees cooler (when heating) or warmer (when cooling)?					
24	Have you considered changing the time of services in summer or winter so that less energy is needed in the sanctuary and other spaces?					
25	Have you installed double-paned windows on suitable windows, especially in often-used spaces like offices and classrooms?					
26	Have you consulted a solar company to see if your properties can benefit from solar panels?					
27	If there's no alternative except to rely on traditional energy sources, have you considered replacing old systems with new, more efficient equipment?					
28	Have you replaced outdoor lighting with solar-powered fixtures?					
29	Have you commissioned an energy audit?*					
30	If you have parking, could you install EV charging points for electric cars (if it would be cost-neutral or provide an income stream for the church)?					
31	Have you considered a water-wise or water-efficient landscaping of your property to reduce outdoor water use?					

* Energy audits are conducted by a variety of vendors. The conference is not recommending or endorsing any of them at this time.

Use this section for any comments about your energy usage and plans regarding it.