



**Diocese of Toronto**  
Anglican Church of Canada

# **Green Congregation Guide**

# Green Congregation

Use this checklist to:

- Recognize what you have done for the environment already
- See what you can improve without much more effort
- Gain recognition for your contribution to a healthier planet

## Steps to achieving Green Congregation

Complete this checklist and add up your points.

- If you get 75 points or more, congratulations, you are doing great. Note areas in which you can improve and start working on them.
- If you get less than 75 points, think about steps you can take to be more environmentally friendly.

## The Checklist

### 1) We have people committed to doing the work.

- a. We have a functioning ecology committee to monitor issues, take corrective actions where possible, and to request action from appropriate persons and groups. In small congregations this may be one person, provided others co-operate with the improvements. (Award yourself 10 points.)
- b. The ecology committee has checked the following points, and where needed, taken corrective action in the past year. (Award yourself points indicated.)

**Total \_\_\_\_\_/10 points**

### 2) We save money and the planet by practicing energy efficiency:

- a. All broken and unsealed windows, unsealed doors, and other places where heated air may be lost have been repaired. (5)
- b. Furnace has been cleaned and maintained in the past year. (2)
- c. Thermostat on the hot water tank is set at 130°F or less. (2)
- d. Hot water heater and hot water pipes are well insulated. (2)
- e. Signs are posted by all light switches asking everyone to turn off the lights when they leave a room. (2)
- f. All lights are fluorescent or LED. (3)
- g. In the summer, we leave the windows open during cool times of the day and close them and the draperies when the heat rises. (1)
- h. If our church has air conditioning, we set the thermostat at 24°C (75°F) or higher in the summer. (3, 5 points if you do not have air conditioning)

**Total \_\_\_\_\_ /22 points**

**3) In washrooms:**

- a. We clean the sinks and counters with a mixture of baking soda and water. (2)
- b. We always read the labels on hazardous products and follow the directions for application and disposal. (1)
- c. We maintain the taps and use them properly. We have a sign asking people to turn off taps tightly. (1)
- d. We use toilet paper made from recycled, unbleached paper. (1)
- e. We use cloth towels for hand-drying. (Hire a towel cleaning service to wash and replace the towels frequently, or arrange for the janitor or someone else to do so.) (1)
- f. We use cleaning products that will not harm the natural environment, such as commercially sold or homemade alternatives, as much as possible. (1)

**Total \_\_\_\_\_/7 points**

**4) In the church kitchen:**

- a. We always turn off taps tightly to be sure they do not drip or leak. (1)
- b. We never leave kitchen taps running! Leaks are repaired promptly. (1)
- c. We wash and clean fruits and vegetables in a partially filled sink, rinsing them quickly under cold, running water. (1)
- d. When cooking fruits and vegetables, we use just enough water to cover them. (1)
- e. We keep a large jug of chilled drinking water in the fridge, instead of running the tap until the water gets cool. (1)
- f. We switch off fridges and freezers when not in use for an EXTENDED period of time. (1, 2 points if you do not have a freezer. (2)
- g. We bought a new automatic dishwasher, fridge, or freezer for the church, or we bought an energy efficient, low water use model. (3)
- h. When possible, we wash the dishes by hand, or if we do use an automatic dishwasher, we only run it when we have a full load and use the energy saver cycle or the shortest cycle possible. We leave the dishes to air dry naturally. (2)
- i. We have replaced electric can openers, coffee grinders, and other small electrical appliances with manual models. (1)
- j. We do not use indoor pesticides in church buildings, unless there is no alternative. (If you must use chemical pesticides, always read the labels and follow the directions for application and disposal.) (1)
- k. We use cleaning products that will not harm the natural environment, such as commercially sold or home-made alternatives, as much as possible. (2)

**Total \_\_\_\_\_/16 points**

**5) We reuse and recycle in the kitchen:**

- a. We have separate boxes for paper, cans, glass, plastics and compostable wastes. All containers should be rinsed clean before being recycled. (1)
- b. We compost food scraps, such as leftovers, fruit and vegetable peelings, coffee grounds, egg shells, grass clippings, and organic yard waste. This includes municipal composting systems (green bins). (1)

- c. We avoid using disposable dishes, cups, serviettes, and cutlery, whenever possible, and use 'real' ones instead. The disposable dishes we do use are paper or other biodegradable materials. (1)
- d. We avoid using single-serving sugars, milk or creamers, which generate plastic and paper waste. We offer a bowl of sugar and a jug of milk and/or cream instead. (1)
- e. We use reusable tablecloths instead of single-use paper ones. Plastic tablecloths can be wiped and reused. (1)
- f. Our coffee percolator uses a mesh or fabric filter, rather than a paper one. If we must use paper filters, we buy unbleached ones. (1)
- g. We use cloth dishwashing and drying towels in the kitchen, rather than paper ones. We change them frequently, especially in the summer. (1)

**Total \_\_\_\_\_/7 points**

**6) We go green in the office:**

- a. We use the phone or e-mail whenever possible, rather than writing a letter. (1)
- b. Whenever possible, we use both sides of a sheet of paper. (1)
- c. We buy recycled and unbleached paper, whenever possible. (1)
- d. We reuse computer disks by deleting and re-formatting them. (1)
- e. We reuse envelopes. (1)
- f. We have recycling facilities for paper (blue box) available in the office. (1)
- g. We purchase office furniture from used office supply stores. (3)
- h. We recycle printer, photocopier and fax toner cartridges. (1) (Many of the larger office supply stores will accept used toner and photocopier cartridges for recycling.)
- i. We recycle the air in the offices, by having windows that open and by having some green and/or flowering plants. (1)
- j. We have replaced the electric pencil sharpener and other small electrical office appliances with manual models. (1)
- k. Our documents carry a request to recycle the paper. (1)

**Total \_\_\_\_\_/13 points**

**7) We practice eco-justice in our food purchases**

- a. We purchase standard food items in bulk (e.g., tea, coffee, sugar) to avoid packaging.
- b. Wherever possible, we purchase local produce. (4)
- c. We buy coffee and tea from "Fair Trade" suppliers. (4)

**Total \_\_\_\_\_ /10 points**

**8) In the sanctuary, chancel and nave:**

- a. We have a “blue box” by the exit for people to deposit unwanted bulletins. (1)
- b. We keep the exits and windows open or closed for the best temperature control. (2)
- c. We dispose of the altar flowers by giving them to someone who might enjoy them, such as people confined to home or hospital by illness. (2)
- d. We polish pews and other wood with Murphy’s oil, not spray waxes. (1)

**Total \_\_\_\_\_/6 points**

**9) Our church grounds show that we care for creation:**

- a. We water grass only when necessary and only every three to five days. (Avoid over-watering. Water during the coolest part of the day, either before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m., and on calm days with little wind to reduce water loss by evaporation.) (2)
- b. We avoid cutting the grass too low. (Keep it around 6.5 cm (2.5 inches) high. Taller grass holds water better and is more resistant to burning from the sun. Cut the lawn with a push mower, if possible.) (2)
- c. We maintain at least a modest flower garden. (1)
- d. We have an annual church gardening party, and make garden maintenance a social event! (3)

**Total \_\_\_\_\_/8 points**

**Total \_\_\_\_\_/100 points**

**If you scored 75 or more, good work!**

**If you scored less than 75: What else can you change around your church to help the environment?**