

# Model Environmental Justice Projects

## INTRODUCTION

The following 35 model environmental justice projects affirm that care for creation is now an irreversible priority for the American religious community. In congregations, interfaith coalitions, urban, and suburban settings, faith communities not only illustrate how low-income and vulnerable populations bear a disproportionate burden of environmental destruction, but how the work of caring for creation is renewing religious imagination and devotion. These projects were selected from among hundreds of exemplary efforts; they indicate the best of what is possible while serving to introduce us to an even richer array of local religious environmental initiatives.

## INDEX

Alabama, Collinsville		Minnesota, St. Paul	
Lebanon Baptist Church	1	Minnesota Catholic Conference	8
Alabama, Fairfield		Mississippi, Columbia	
St. Mary's Church Social Action Committee	1	Jesus People Against Pollution	9
California, Carlotta		Missouri, Kirkwood	
Redwood Rabbis	2	First Presbyterian Church	9
California, Reseda		New Jersey, Elizabeth	
Environmental Ministries	2	St. John's Episcopal Church	10
California, Santa Rosa		New York, Brooklyn	
World Stewardship Institute	3	El Puente	10
DC, Washington		New York, East Amherst	
Pearly Gate Full Baptist Church	3	Temple Beth El	11
Georgia, Augusta		New York, Grand Island	
Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church	3	Interfaith Center for Environmental Stewardship	11
Georgia, Brunswick		New York, New York	
St. John Missionary Baptist Church	4	Church of the Intercession	11
Illinois, Chicago		Oregon, Portland	
Bethel New Life	4	Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns	12
Indianapolis, Indiana		Pennsylvania, Philadelphia	
New Humanity of the Focolare	5	Forty- Sixth Street Baptist Church	12
Indianapolis, Michigan City		Tennessee, Chattanooga	
Bethany Bible Baptist Church	6	Reviving Faith Outreach Ministry, Inc.	13
Kansas, Atchison		Texas, Hereford	
Sophia Center	6	The Promised Land Network	13
Louisiana, Houma		Texas, Houston	
Catholic Social Services, Diocese of Houma- Thibodaux	7	Sagemont Presbyterian Church	14
Massachusetts, Dedham		Texas, West Dallas	
St. Paul's Episcopal Church Environmental Coalition	7	New Waverly Baptist Church	14
Michigan, Detroit		Virginia, Sterling	
Hope Takes Root	8	Community Lutheran Church	15
Minnesota, Minneapolis		Washington, Seattle	
Jewish Community Action	8	Institute for Washington's Future - Coalition for a Livable Washington	15
		Washington, Vancouver	
		Green Cross	16

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

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### **Lebanon Baptist Church**

860 County Road 209  
Collinsville, AL 35961

### **Contact: Rev. Ralph Jelks**

Phone: 205-845-1841 (w)  
Fax: 205-845-7768  
Alt. Phone: h-845-1552 ch-845-6800 (205)

### **Protestant National Baptist**

Lebanon Baptist Church has been working to prevent the construction of a privately-backed landfill which would further pollute an already polluted community that has 3 landfills nearby. The struggle is now in court, where citizens are seeking to repeal a permit for the landfill which was granted by the county commission. Over the course of 5 years, culminating in the fall of 1996, Rev. Ralph Jelks has been leading his church's involvement in the issue, working hand in hand with Concerned Citizens for a Better Environment. They have also collaborated with the Southern Christian Leadership Council and the Alabama Department of Environment and Management. Church members have been protesting at the site, doing community education on the danger of landfills, and speaking regularly at hearings. Rev. Jelks spoke at one hearing wearing wrist and ankle shackles to demonstrate how the landfill would mentally and physically shackle the community. Referring to his African American heritage, he told the commission: "Now I know what my forefathers felt like in chains. We have had our rights taken away and that is slavery" (Quote: Times Journal, Fort Payne)

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### **St. Mary's Church Social Action Committee**

6101 Dr. Martin Luther King Dr.  
Fairfield, AL 35064

### **Contact: John Meehan**

Title: Chairman  
Phone: 205-787-8830 (h)  
Fax: 205-923-5166  
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### **Catholic**

A committed group of St. Mary's parishioners is developing programs for education and action, to address local environmental justice issues. Brownfields, former industrial sites that require clean-up; high lead levels; and frequent flooding that carries toxic substances into low-income communities, are among the areas of concern. The Social Action Committee is surveying local residents to determine what environmental problems most affect them, and working to form coalitions with other groups.

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

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### **Redwood Rabbis**

P.O. Box 274  
Carlotta, CA 95528

### **Contact: Naomi Steinberg**

Title: Student Rabbi  
Phone: 707-768-3189  
E-mail: stein@humboldt1.com

### **Jewish**

Redwood Rabbis is an informal group that came together to protect Headwaters Forest in Northern California, the last unprotected old growth redwood forest. The group has joined with others in keeping vigil and protesting Pacific lumber's excessive logging practices, which threaten the regeneration capacity of the forest, jeopardizing its long-term ecological health and economic stability. Redwood Rabbis, along with other Jewish leaders, are urging Charles Hurwitz, a fellow Jew whose takeover of Headwaters in 1985 resulted in the accelerated logging practices, to preserve the old growth forest, log only the second growth areas, and to enact a restoration plan to allow for the recovery of the endangered species of this forest. The company is rapidly liquidating old growth, threatening the endangered species that thrive in that ecosystem, and leaving future timber jobs in question. The goal is appropriate and steady employment, not subject to boom and bust cycles. To celebrate Tu B'Shvat, the Jewish New Year for Trees, the Redwood Rabbis held a traditional seder meal at an old growth park near Headwaters Forest on January 26th. This was part of an all day event for 250 people, and included scientific and religious presentations, an afternoon worship service, and the planting of redwood seedlings on Pacific Lumber property. All of the Jewish religious leaders of rural northern California and southern Oregon signed-on to a letter to Vice President Al Gore on Headwaters to be delivered at the meeting of senior leaders in Washington on February 6th.

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### **Environmental Ministries**

7528 Garden Grove Avenue  
Reseda, CA 91335

### **Contact: Rev. Peter Moore-Kochlacs**

Title: Director  
Phone: 818-344-7870 (h)  
Fax: 818-344-3701  
Alt. Phone: 310-208-6869 (w)  
E-mail:

### **Protestant**

### **United Methodist**

Environmental Ministries and the United Methodists in Southern California have helped coordinate religious voices as a crucial addition to other environmental and native groups' efforts to prevent the Ward Valley Native American sacred land in the Mohave Desert from becoming a nuclear dump site. This would potentially affect the Colorado River, a source of drinking water for millions of people on both sides of the border. In addition, last year Environmental Ministries gathered over 500 people from 50 congregations for education and action programs that connect faith and environment. In workshop series and community forums, participants analyzed issues related to biodiversity, transportation and over consumption, and will continue to do such things in 1997.

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

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### **World Stewardship Institute**

409 Mendocino Ave., Suite A  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

### **Contact: Rick Coates**

Phone: 707-573-3160  
Fax: 707-578-7702  
E-mail: rick@ecostewards.org

### **Interfaith**

Protecting the Headwaters Forest in Northern California is galvanizing churches, synagogues, and religious organizations. Last year over 300 people were arrested in a demonstration to control logging in this 60,000 acre, privately owned ancient forest. With trees 300 feet high surrounded by 10 foot ferns, the forest is home to many species that also need protection. Charles Hurwitz negotiated a leveraged buyout for the forest lands, and therefore logs excessively to make a profit. A broad coalition of groups is advocating justice for the forests and protected species, but also for the loggers whose livelihood depends upon measured, select cutting of trees, rather than quick disposal of irreplaceable forest. The World Stewardship Institute is designing a trust for eventual ownership of Headwaters with the help of land trust managers, endowment trust managers, and Headwaters legal experts, many of whom are also clergy. The Rose Foundation has initiated a fundraising campaign and has received a \$5 million pledge as seed money.

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### **Pearly Gate Full Gospel Baptist Church**

P.O. Box 1493  
Washington, DC 20013

### **Contact: Rev. Imogene B. Stewart**

Title: Pastor  
Phone: 202-797-7460 (best)  
Fax: 202-512-1657  
Alt. Phone: 202-512-1708 x30279

### **Protestant Baptist**

Rev. Imogene Stewart is a pastor and community educator, doing teach-ins with inner city storefront churches on issues of solid waste management, recycling, and environmental health. The workshops address the environment through residents' health concerns, including lead contamination and asthma.

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### **Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church**

2535 Friar Lane  
Augusta, GA 30906

### **Contact: Rev. Bobby L. Truitt**

Title: Pastor  
Phone: 706-793-1589 (h)  
Fax: 706-771-4746

### **Protestant National Baptist Convention, USA**

Toxic chemical residue from the former Piedmont wood processing plant, owned by International Telephone and Telegraph, has seeped into the ground, and while some clean-up is occurring, the congregation at Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church says it's not enough. Rev. Bobby Truitt has been leading members, working with a local community organization to establish

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

liability and aid clean-up and health care. But despite attention from Leon Panetta and Henry Cisneros, the goals of clean-up, relocation, and adequate health care have not been met. Although in November, 1996 the community finally won free health screening, residents continue to suffer from the effects of dioxin poisoning, including skin rashes, miscarriages, circulatory and respiratory ailments, birth defects, and tumors. Residents continue to be responsible for paying for their own health care. Mount Olive has been helping to sponsor marches, quarterly meetings, media outreach, and connections with neighboring communities in similar circumstances.

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### **St. John Missionary Baptist Church**

P.O. Box 1994  
Brunswick, GA 31520

### **Contact: Rev. Zack Lyde**

Title: Associate Pastor  
Phone: 912-262-1244 (office)  
Fax: 912-267-4857  
Alt. Phone: 912-265-1275 (h)

**Protestant  
Missionary Baptist**

Reverend Zack Lyde is a founder of Save the People, an organization which provides "courage training" and toxics education for the African American neighborhoods of Brunswick, which is distinguished as being the most polluted zip code in the state of Georgia. The region also has people of great wealth living in close proximity to the very poor. Rev. Lyde's efforts in his community are a model for combining leadership training and Christian teachings in an effort to address the erosion of public health caused by local chemical plants. Save the People, along with the Glynn Environmental Coalition, will be holding a March to the Hercules Chemical plant and a Rally, on Saturday, February 8th. They will be educating the community about the continued presence of toxaphene, a highly toxic substance now banned by the EPA, which effects human health and was manufactured at the plant.

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### **Bethel New Life**

367 N. Karlov  
Chicago, IL 60624-1898

### **Contact: Rev. Mary Nelson**

Title: President  
Phone: 773-826-5540  
Fax: 773-826-5728  
E-mail: mnelson367@aol.com

**Protestant  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

Bethel New Life, founded by Bethel Lutheran Church, is implementing a "technology transfer" with Argonne National Laboratory, reclaiming abandoned industrial buildings in the neighborhood, and creating livable wage jobs in recycling and other environmental fields. This partnership is also training local residents for jobs in lead abatement. In a further effort to promote a healthy, sustainable community, The Westside Isaiah Plan, staffed by Bethel, is bringing together 20 local churches to build 250 affordable homes on the West Side. Bethel's range of services and economic, self-help programs are revitalizing West Garfield Park. Their vision arises from Isaiah 58: "You will be known as the people who rebuilt the walls, who restored the ruined houses"

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

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### **Metropolitan Alliance of Congregations**

203 North Wabash Avenue  
Suite 808  
Chicago, IL 60601

### **Contact: Mary Gonzales**

Title: Director  
Phone: 312-357-2639 (w)  
Fax: 312-357-6735  
Alt. Phone: 773-890-1445 (h)

### **Interfaith**

Through the Metropolitan Alliance of Congregations, 112 congregations are participating in the development of a 25 year, \$650 billion transportation plan for Chicago. The project is working to control sprawl and the flow of development money to outer suburbs at the expense of the inner cities. Part of a network of organizations in 8 midwest states, the Alliance is building another voice to counter the religious right. They are fostering partnerships with schools, unions, and advocacy and policy groups to facilitate dialogue, research, and connections. Extensive leadership training takes place regularly with church members, as the Alliance builds the involvement of congregations in public land use decisions.

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### **New Humanity of the Focolare Movement**

c/o Mundell & Assoc., Inc.  
429 East Vermont Street  
Suite 200  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3688

### **Contact: John Mundell**

Title: Midwest Environmental Liason  
Phone: 317-630-9060  
Fax: 317-630-9065  
E-mail: mundell@indy.net

### **Catholic**

A July 1996 Environmental Justice and Brownfields Forum supported by the United States Catholic Conference and New Humanity, a Catholic Gospel-based movement to renew society contributed to raising awareness in Indianapolis about the need for community participation in the process of redeveloping brownfields, former commercial and industrial sites with actual or perceived environmental impacts, requiring clean-up. The Forum organizer will serve on a new local advisory board focused on including community participation in implementing a \$200,000 federal brownfields grant. Environmental justice through brownfields redevelopment is a new vehicle for urban revitalization; a sign of hope.

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

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### **Bethany Bible Baptist Church**

415 Holliday St. (parsonage)  
PO Box 9183 (46361)  
Michigan City, IN 46360-2525

### **Contact: Rev. Albert Isbell**

Title: Pastor  
Phone: 219-872-0058  
Alt. Phone: 219-872-7364 (h)

### **Evangelical Baptist**

The Bethany Bible Baptist Church, located only one-quarter mile from a Superfund site, is fighting many battles in its polluted neighborhood. Led by Pastor Albert Isbell, the church has protested the dredging, transporting and dumping of toxics in a local creek. In 1996, the historic church building, which was part of the Underground Railroad and a former repository of official documents and studies on the local toxic situation, was demolished to make way for a riverboat casino. The construction of the casino threatens to unearth toxins buried in the contaminated soil. Some local industries refuse to pay any of the clean-up fines levied by the EPA against their dumping of toxic waste.

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### **Sophia Center**

751 South 8th Street  
Atchison, KS 66002

### **Contact: Sr. Johnette Putnam, OSB**

Title: Director  
Phone: 913-367-6110  
Fax: 913-367-3866

### **Catholic**

The Benedictine sisters of the Sophia Center organize an annual workshop series for Catholics from throughout the diocese of Kansas City. The first conference in 1995 discussed the U.S. bishop's pastoral letter *Renewing the Earth*. The gathering offered a scriptural perspective on environmental issues as well as regional planning sessions to encourage action. In 1996, the focus was on water and its scriptural significance as a sign of life and death. Two religious scholars trained as scientists reviewed local water conditions and the ethical considerations related to protecting the water in northeast Kansas, which is affected by increased population, irrigation concerns, and farming techniques. The annual conferences end with a ritual of commitment to continued action.

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

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**Catholic Social Services**  
**Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux**  
PO Box 3894  
Houma, LA 70361

**Contact: Rob Gorman**  
Title: Assistant Director  
Phone: 504-876-0490  
Fax: 504-876-7751  
Alt. Phone: 504-446-9361 (h)

### **Catholic**

Catholic Social Services in the diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, works with the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana to support federal - state - local projects to restore wetlands. "If we lose our wetlands," says Rob Gorman, Assistant Director of Catholic Social Services "we lose jobs, homes, health and a way of life."

Mr. Gorman also staffs the Tri-City Interfaith Stewardship Initiative, which is announcing its Protect Lake Palourde Campaign on Thursday, February 6th, in conjunction with the national meeting of religious leaders in Washington. The largest city, Morgan City, is below sea level, so rainwater must be pumped. Catholic, mainline Protestant, and evangelical congregations will each adopt a storm drain, working to keep the drains, the pumps, and the lake, free from clogging trash. These Protecting god's Creation Congregations are agreeing to worship, educate, and act on an ongoing basis. Lake Palourde is a source of drinking water for Morgan City, located in the parish (county) with the 2nd highest toxic air emissions in Louisiana according to the Toxic Release Inventory.

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**St. Paul's Episcopal Church**  
**Episcopal Environmental Coalition**  
121 Sandy Valley Road  
Dedham, MA 02026

**Contact: Steve MacAusland**  
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### **Protestant** **Episcopal**

Steve MacAusland works with the Episcopal Environmental Coalition and has assisted the local bishop in organizing the diocese of Massachusetts around its 12 watersheds. Mr. MacAusland has brought together Episcopalian young people of different cultural, racial, and economic backgrounds by leading canoeing trips to explore their local diocesan watershed. Teaching Christian youth that they are all connected by water, and through baptism, consecrated by the same water that Jesus was baptized in, leads them to take their water stewardship role more seriously. The Episcopal Environmental Coalition plans to develop a watershed outreach program across the country, helping other dioceses to bring their youth and their churches together around water.

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

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### **Hope Takes Root Project**

1664 Church Street  
Detroit, MI 48216

### **Catholic**

### **Contact: Elizabeth Walters IHM**

Title:  
Phone: 313-831-2787 (w) or 822-4441  
Fax: 313-831-0261  
Alt. Phone: 313-961-4263 (h)

A former crack house turned community garden is an inspiration in this inner-city Detroit neighborhood. Sr. Elizabeth Walters coordinates the Hope Takes Root project, in which 25 families who live in public housing tend an organic garden. A small grant from the United States Catholic Conference was matched by local donations to hire people who were homeless to do the initial clearing and cultivation. The project is faith based, raising awareness of the earth by staying close to the earth. An additional 120 nearby lots have been cleared for plantings of trees, flowers, and shrubs. Sr. Elizabeth's order, Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, is sponsoring a spring conference in Detroit on the relationship between racial inequality and ecological practices.

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### **Jewish Community Action**

2324 Emerson Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55405

### **Jewish**

### **Contact: Frank Hornstein**

Title: Co-Coordinator  
Phone: 612-374-0344  
Fax: 612-377-6630  
Alt. Phone: 612-926-3406

Jewish Community Action is providing tools and assistance to catalyze Jews throughout Minnesota to address the roots of social, economic, and environmental problems by honoring Judaism's ethical, cultural, and spiritual commitments. A new organization, Jewish Community Action has been working in coalition with congregation-based organizing projects in Minneapolis - St. Paul, focusing on reclaiming polluted land for job creation, and on transportation and other environmental issues related to urban sprawl.

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### **Minnesota Catholic Conference**

475 University Ave. West  
St. Paul, MN 55103-1996

### **Catholic**

### **Contact: Tim Rudnicki**

Title: Director of Social Concerns Dept.  
Phone: 612-227-8777  
Fax: 612-227-2675  
Alt. Phone:  
E-mail: [mmmm@connectinc.com](mailto:mmmm@connectinc.com)

The Minnesota Catholic Conference (the public policy office of the Catholic Bishops from the 6 dioceses of Minnesota) is voicing concern about the impact electric industry deregulation or restructuring might have on low-income households and the environment. In cooperation with other low-income advocacy and environmental groups, the Minnesota Catholic Conference has embarked on a campaign to educate consumers and legislators about the potential short and long term impacts of electric industry deregulation: increased energy burdens on the poor, increased

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

resource consumption to realize the generating capacity of fossil fuel and nuclear power plants and the accompanying emissions and waste storage issues. The Conference distributes regular fax alerts to invite people to become engaged in shaping public policy consistent with Catholic social justice teachings.

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### **First Presbyterian Church**

100 E. Adams Avenue  
Kirkwood, MO 63122

### **Protestant Presbyterian USA**

### **Contact: Cathy Yost**

Title: Co-Chair  
Phone: 314-965-0326 (am - office)  
Fax: 314-965-3861 (office)  
Alt. Phone: 314-965-4608 (late pm-home)  
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home: [yostdj@aol.com](mailto:yostdj@aol.com)

Engaging the relationship between environmental awareness and social justice has been a turning point for the congregation at First Presbyterian. Their Third Annual Eco-Justice Award went to an interracial ecumenical group that works at solving community problems. The church is starting a community garden that donates all its produce to local food kitchens, and inviting urban Kirkwood residents to share in the garden. The Eco-Justice Committee also got signatures on an international climate change petition circulated in cooperation with the National Council of Churches of Christ. Moderator Committee Co-Chair, Cathy Yost, is the head of Presbyterians for Restoring Creation, a national project of the Presbyterian Church USA to recruit and train dozens of locally based environmental organizers.

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### **Jesus People Against Pollution**

PO Box 765  
Columbia, MS 39429

### **Contact: Charlotte Keys**

Title: Executive Director  
Phone: 601-736-0686  
Fax: 601-736-7811

### **Interfaith**

Since 1992, Jesus People Against Pollution has surveyed 20,000 people affected by agent orange ingredients, dioxin, and illegal dumping by Reichold Chemical. After two decades of increasing illness, founder Charlotte Keys says she felt called by God: "To fight this battle -- knock on doors, note the health problems in every house" In her high school chemistry text, Ms. Keys compared a list of 179 chemicals manufactured locally with their effects on humans, and found that they matched what she was hearing from her neighbors. Today, Jesus People Against Pollution is demanding medical testing and treatment. In 1981-82, following a 1977 explosion, federal dollars through HUD and FHA - Farmers Home Administration, were used to build public housing over the site. Since then people have died prematurely and at least one woman's eyelids split apart. Only 81 out of 101 acres of a Superfund site are fenced in, leaving neighborhoods exposed. The struggle continues for lifetime health benefits, relocation, and investigation of botched cleanup efforts and transporting of chemicals to other communities. A coalition of at least 16 community based organizations is now active throughout the Mississippi Delta.

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

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### **St. John's Episcopal Church**

61 Broad Street  
Elizabeth, NJ 07201-2205

**Contact: Rev. Joseph R. Parrish, Jr.**

Title: Rector

Phone: 908-760-3901 (beeper)

Fax: 212-593-0418/908-352-1218

Alt. Phone: 212-593-0418 (church)

### **Protestant Episcopal**

Members of this Elizabeth Episcopal church situated in an area with high rates of asthma and cancer, engage in pro-active, coalition-building activities to ban the planned construction and current operation of incinerators and hazardous waste facilities throughout the region. Actions have included attending community meetings, signing petitions, writing letters of protest, praying at interfaith worship services and demonstrating. St. John's rector, Rev. Joe Parrish, trained as a biochemist, has led congregants to throw blessed ashes on one of the incinerators and to oppose using incinerator ash as road paving material. Rev. Parrish's regular church mailings to congregants and supporters include environmental updates educating people about local issues, and urging phone calls and letters to elected officials.

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### **El Puente**

211 South Fourth Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11211

**Contact: John Fleming**

Title: Organizer

Phone: 718-387-0404

Fax: 718-387-6816

### **Interfaith**

A unique partnership among the Latino, Hasidic, and African-American communities, through a wide range of religious and other institutions was critical in defeating a 55-story incinerator at the former Brooklyn Navy Yard in 1996. A Latino community development organization, El Puente, and the United Jewish Organizations, an umbrella group for a wide range of Hasidic organizations, in the wake of their recent victory, are exploring new relationships with other communities and working together to document the cumulative health effects of traffic congestion, diesel fumes, and toxic contamination from petro chemical and industrial plants in Greenpoint-Williamsburg, the last industrial center in New York City. These partners are working to educate community residents, compile and share facts about cancer and asthma in their neighborhood, and to mobilize around issues, like the incinerator, to protect Greenpoint-Williamsburg from further environmental damage.

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

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### **Temple Beth El**

20 Moorfields Ct  
East Amherst, NY 14051

### **Contact: Elinor Weiss**

Title: Social Action Committee Chair  
Phone: 716-688-6686 (h)  
Alt. Phone: 716-688-5300 (w)

### **Jewish**

Elinor Weiss, chair of the Social Action Committee at Temple Beth El in upstate New York, is linking breast cancer and environmental concerns, organizing legislative meetings in support of pesticide registry and protecting environmental regulations for air and water.

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### **Interfaith Center for Environmental Stewardship**

3331 Wallace Drive  
Grand Island, NY 14072

### **Contact: Joann Hale**

Title: Chairperson  
Phone: 716-884-4800 (w)  
Fax: 716-884-6117 (fax at work)  
Alt. Phone: 716-773-7935 (h)  
E-mail:

### **Interfaith**

The Interfaith Center for Environmental Stewardship engages in environmental education and advocacy from a faith-based perspective. Chairperson Joann Hale is a disaster relief specialist with Church World Services, training local religious leaders in disaster relief skills and helping communities to understand the relationship between natural and technological disasters. The Interfaith Center has worked with the Times Beach, MO community, where flooding and the discovery of dioxin were connected. Ms. Hale has trained and advised religious and other community leaders nationwide, including in South Florida and Love Canal. The Interfaith Center maintains a resource library at the University of Buffalo, and serves as a model for facilitating religious involvement in environmental issues, such as promoting partnerships between labor and environmental organizations.

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### **Church of the Intercession**

550 W. 155 St.  
New York, NY 10032

### **Contact: Rev. Earl Kooperkamp**

Title: Assistant Minister  
Phone: 212-283-6200 (church)  
Fax: 212-283-6202  
Alt. Phone: 212-289-6354 (h)  
E-mail:

### **Protestant Episcopal**

A campaign for cleaner buses is underway among the Episcopal churches in New York and New Jersey. Launched at an October, 1996 assembly in the New York State capital, the campaign is working to bring buses with cleaner emissions into communities with high rates of pediatric asthma. Rev. Earl Kooperkamp, whose Harlem parish is the burial place for John Audubon, is

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

active in this effort. He also sits on the Board of the West Harlem Environmental Action, working to alleviate environmental illnesses that include widespread asthma in the community.

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### **Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon**

2325 NE 44th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97213

### **Contact: Jenny Holmes**

Title: Chair  
Phone: 503-281-8175 (h)  
Fax: 503-460-0964  
Alt. Phone: 503-695-3739 (w)  
E-mail: JennyJohn@worldnet.att.net

### **Interfaith**

As urban sprawl threatens livability in the Portland, Oregon region, the Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns is working in coalition with social justice and environmental groups to involve congregations in regional planning issues. Church members are convening forums to connect faith and the interrelated issues of affordable housing, transportation, watershed protection, urban decay, air quality, and farmland protection. The Interfaith Network provides input to the Metro regional government's planning process. This innovative program - Metro 2040 - is designing a blueprint for the region's development over the next 50 years. A Clergy Statement on the Metropolitan Common Good is being presented in a press conference on February 7th.

In addition, in Spring, 1996 Network coordinator Jenny Holmes spearheaded a statewide drive to generate letters in support of the Endangered Species Act, to public officials and editorial departments. Over 65 pastors, rabbis and other religious leaders signed a letter in support of the Act. Nearly 100 people from 11 churches and 3 organizations also worked on restoring the urbanized Fanno Creek by removing invasive ivy and blackberries and planting native species. Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt participated.

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### **Forty-Sixth Street Baptist Church**

1261 S. 46th Street  
PO Box 5580  
Philadelphia, PA 19143

### **Contact: Rev. Theophilus Wright**

Title: Pastor  
Phone: 215-386-8150 (church)  
Alt. Phone: 215-471-7297 (h)

### **Protestant Baptist**

Reverend Theophilus Wright and the Forty-Sixth Street Baptist Church are engaged in an uphill struggle in their South Philadelphia neighborhood, where cancer and respiratory illness are on the rise. Pollutants used by Sun Refineries and other industries, as well as illegal dumping and the proposed construction of hazardous waste facilities, moved the church into action in 1994. The church has served as a catalyst for community action, organizing demonstrations and meetings with local and federal officials. These advocacy efforts halted construction of the waste facilities and led to the establishment of a local Environmental Cabinet and Citizen's Advisory Committee. Reverend Wright continues to preach about the issues, but the economic needs of the congregation demand that people struggle to put food on the table while fighting the powerful

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

polluters. Unemployment is high, the church mortgage looms, and health concerns affect many families.

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### **Reviving Faith Outreach Ministry, Inc.**

P.O. Box 2539  
Chattanooga, TN 37410

### **Contact: Evangelist Brenda Millsaps**

Phone: 423-821-1299  
Fax: 423-821-3283  
Alt. Phone: 423-821-9348 (h)

### **Evangelical Missionary Baptist**

Radio preacher Brenda Millsaps says she knows God called her to get involved with the needs of her Chattanooga neighborhoods. In the Alton Park and Piney Woods communities, where 82% of the residents live below the poverty line, there are several Superfund sites. Rev. Millsaps and many other local leaders fight an uphill battle to get local and national governments to respond to the deteriorating health of the residents and to cleanup the EPA sites.

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### **The Promised Land Network**

PO Box 1844  
Hereford, TX 79045

### **Contact: Lydia Villanueva**

Title: Lead Organizer  
Phone: 806-364-4445  
Fax: 806-364-4445  
E-mail: pln1@wtrt.net

### **Catholic**

The Promised Land Network, a rural outreach ministry, is organizing the El Hormiguero Project. The project builds community organizing, leadership, and empowerment skills with Mexican-Americans who live in colonias, unincorporated agrarian villages where families live and work on 5 -10 acres. Hormiguero is a Spanish word meaning anthill, a powerful image of achieving great outcomes through small actions. Participants' indigenous knowledge of agriculture is enhanced, preserved and sustained. The project includes an organic community garden, which is blessed on Christian feast days. The Promised Land Network also facilitates programs in sustainable agriculture and microenterprise development. Annual public education conferences for over 200 people focus on topics such as food systems, recycling, farm management, community and economic development, and soil conservation. A quarterly newspaper reaches 15,000 households with articles on ethical issues surrounding land stewardship, rural spirituality, and Mexican-American farmworker culture.

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

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### **Sagemont Presbyterian Church**

11303 Hughes Road  
Houston, TX 77089

**Protestant**

**Presbyterian Church USA**

**Contact: Reverend Susan Quinn Bryan**

Title: Pastor

Phone: 713-481-1692

Fax:

Alt. Phone:

E-mail:

Sagemont Presbyterian is working toward a long range vision of addressing hunger issues through reducing consumption and using self-sustaining agriculture. Church members are planting and harvesting 5 acres on their suburban grounds, using permaculture techniques that take into consideration all aspects of the land; what it needs, what it can produce, and how it is laid out. The garden yields hundreds of pounds of fresh produce for a local soup kitchen and food pantry. Church dinners rely on food from the garden, as the congregation encourages self-sustaining land use over cultivation of wasteful, environmentally damaging lawns. Their use of permaculture is a part of a full program that encourages grace, a welcoming spirit, and an economically diverse congregation and ministry.

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### **New Waverly Baptist Church**

3431 Morris Street  
West Dallas, TX 75212

**Protestant**

**Baptist**

**Contact: Rev. R.T. Conley**

Title: Pastor

Phone: 214-631-4373 (w)

Fax: 214-631-2523

Alt. Phone: 214-638-8794 (h)

New Waverly Baptist is a stronghold in their West Dallas community, organizing neighbors and advocating with the EPA to address the toxic effects of a local lead smelting plant, now closed through the efforts of the community. Excessive air and soil pollution devastated the health of community residents, causing bleeding gums, chronic rashes, cancer, headaches, mental disorders and learning disabilities, and forcing many to have their limbs amputated. Church members, led by Pastor R.T. Conley, educated themselves about the tragedy, organizing letter writing and call-in campaigns, protesting and holding public meetings. They traveled to Washington to testify and hosted a visit from Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros who has supported the church's efforts to bring in adequate health facilities and to clean-up the area. Rev. Conley and New Waverly have succeeded in acquiring short-term clinic facilities, financial settlements for people affected by the toxins, closure of the lead smelting plant, and major clean-up. Partners in these efforts include homeowners and citizens associations, and the West Dallas Coalition for a Better Environment.

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

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### **Community Lutheran Church**

P.O. Box 1363  
Sterling, VA 20167

### **Contact: Suse Greenstone**

Title: Coordinator, Hedgerow Habitat Trail  
Phone: 703-777-5632  
Fax: 703-777-5632  
E-mail: [jsgreen@worldnet.att.net](mailto:jsgreen@worldnet.att.net)

### **Protestant**

### **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

Community Lutheran's Hedgerow Habitat Trail is a landscape featuring over 300 plants native to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Hedgerow is landscaped according to Bayscape standards, a regional effort to reduce pollution in the Bay, which used to be one of the world's most productive Blue Crab fisheries. The church land is also a backyard habitat, as certified by the National Wildlife Federation. Hedgerow provides a hands-on opportunity to teach educators, homeowners, civic groups, business professionals, and students of all ages about sustainable land use, horticulture, and wildlife conservation. Plantings are suited to the natural fertility of the site, support wildlife and do not require pesticides. New efforts include youth gardening, connecting young people to creation and to local and world hunger issues, sustainable agriculture, and expanded conservation campaigns to link adjoining green spaces with the Trail.

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### **Institute for Washington's Future - Coalition for a Livable Washington**

2111 East Union  
Seattle, WA 98122

### **Contact: Donald Hopps**

Title: Director  
Phone: 206-324-7324  
Fax: 206-324-6279  
Alt. Phone: 206-324-3628  
E-mail: [instwafut@aol.com](mailto:instwafut@aol.com)

### **Interfaith**

The Coalition for a Livable Washington is working with the Washington Association of Churches to disseminate Principles of Civility to address the climate of intimidation and harassment in rural Washington, particularly as it affects the environmental community. During the election season, project members issued a pledge to all candidates for office, calling on them to adapt civility principles in their campaigning. An interfaith group is fostering congregational action projects and working with the staff of World Vision to promote partnerships with and among members of the evangelical community. Efforts are underway to establish a statewide model for religious and environmental groups working together and to expand such partnerships throughout the Pacific Northwest.

## Model Environmental Justice Projects

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### **Willapa Alliance**

500 West Robert Bush Drive  
South Bend, WA 98586

### **Contact: Dan'l Markham**

Title: Executive Director  
Phone: 360-875-5195  
Fax: 360-875-5198  
Alt. Phone: 360-642-3784 (home office)

### **Evangelical**

### **Non-denominational**

In southwest Washington State, the Willapa Alliance is at work building bridges among such diverse and conflicting groups as industry, environmentalists and government agencies. The Willapa Bay/Watershed is the most productive and clean large estuary and watershed in the continental United States. It has been threatened in recent years by local economic and ecological trends toward unemployment and population shifts. Rev. Markham, an evangelical pastor and the director of the Willapa Alliance, is also working with Youth With a Mission to develop a Creation Care Institute International, to provide training for local churches, Christian organizations and various secular groups.

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### **Green Cross**

6308 NE 88th Street  
Vancouver, WA 98665

### **Contact: Rev. Peter Illyn**

Title: Pacific Northwest Director  
Phone: 360-574-8230 (w)  
Fax: 360-574-8230  
Alt. Phone: 360-573-4019 (h)  
E-mail: ces@worldaccess.com

### **Evangelical**

### **Non-denominational**

A 1,000 mile llama trek across the Pacific Northwest led Rev. Peter Illyn to call for a "wisest use" movement. "When species go extinct because of human behavior" Rev. Illyn says, "we are bouncing checks in the trust fund God called us to manage." As the Pacific Northwest Director of Green Cross, he engages evangelical pastors and Christian school teachers in wilderness experiences and Bible studies. Where environmental issues are reduced to slogans such as jobs vs. owls, Rev. Illyn invites them to look at the issue as greed vs. stewardship. This summer, in addition to llama pack trips, he will lead church groups in habitat restoration projects such as fish planting in alpine lakes and the renewal of ancient Native American wild huckleberry fields. "We don't worship nature" says Illyn, "but we worship with nature."