

First Unitarian Church
of Victoria



Growing in Spirit, Living with Compassion,
Inspired to Serve

Plan:

Organisation:

Administrator:

1st Unitarian Victoria One Planet Action Plan

First Unitarian Church of Victoria

Glenyss Turner

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About us

The First Unitarian Church of Victoria serves approximately 300 members. Unitarian Universalism (UU) is a progressive faith characterized by a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. While the roots of UU are found in liberal Christianity, congregations include atheists, agnostics, and people from diverse religious backgrounds. Current practice draws wisdom from many sources; members seek inspiration and insight from all major world religions. UUs come together around shared values (not beliefs) and the search for spiritual growth. "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part" is one of several UU values that align with the 10 principles of One Planet Living, the ideological framework for One Planet Saanich.

Our vision

We are a welcoming community, energized by the diversity of beliefs, identity, and experience, that each person brings.

We encourage our children's curiosity and nurture their open and loving nature.

We gather to explore sacred mysteries, to sing of our longings and our blessings, to be still and listen.

Strengthened in spiritual growth, supported in diverse community, we strive to transform ourselves and heal our world through compassionate action.

Our plan

The 10 principles of One Planet Living align beautifully with the 7 Principles of Unitarian Universalism, especially our 7th Principle: "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." We hope this plan will help us to live our values more completely.



Health and happiness



Outcomes

Caring for social, mental & emotional health of congregation, ministers & staff.

Higher levels of social, mental & emotional health among congregation, ministers & staff; ministers, staff & volunteers are energetic & maintain a sustainable pace.

Church fosters personal & community growth.

Spiritual growth, which gives a sense of meaning to life, is fostered & supported, including appreciation of the natural world; opportunities for personal development, creativity, & participation in social justice or other meaningful work; contributes to physical, mental, emotional, & spiritual health.



Actions

"Many Hands" volunteer recruitment

Spread the workload by recruiting more volunteers for smaller or shorter duration tasks. Improve volunteer recruitment, e.g., an annual campaign similar to ABC, rotate more tasks among NGs, Newsletter monthly feature listing volunteer needs & opportunities in a consistent, appealing format. AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY: Board. STATUS: situation has deteriorated sharply since Covid; volunteer fair scheduled for September 2022, volunteerism on agenda of Board retreat in November. PRIORITY: very high. TIME FRAME: ongoing.

Consider program about spiritual value of nature/reverence for life

Spiritual exploration for children, youth & adults to learn more about nature & our place within it. AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY: Ministers & SELCY with support from EAT; STATUS: paused due to lack of Ministers', SELCY's and EAT's capacity. PRIORITY: very high. TIME FRAME: unknown.



Indicators

Number of new volunteers/yr.

This indicator attempts to reflect lightening the workload on existing volunteers -- many hands make light work.

Number of participants.

How many people participate in the spiritual value of nature/reverence for life program.



Equity and local economy



Outcomes

Ministers & staff are paid a living wage, including benefits.

Social, cultural, economic, & environmental justice & diversity prevails.

Socioeconomic status, health status & diversity across ability, gender, race, age & sexual orientation are not barriers to church participation. Church demonstrates deep respect for, & reconciliation with, indigenous peoples. Local businesses -- & international trade that is conducted fairly & without exploitation -- are supported. Small local, national, & international charities are supported.



Actions

Confirm church's investments meet Environmental, Social & Corporate Governance (ESG) criteria.

AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY: Treasurer. STATUS: awaiting response from Treasurer.

Ministers & staff receive benefits package.

AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY: Human Resources; STATUS: completed 2020.

Support refugee families as congregation is willing & able.

AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY: Refugee Committee; STATUS: very successful ongoing program; Refugee Committee is very active and continues to apply for and support refugee families.



Indicators

Refugee reports in Newsletter & Annual Report.

Already being done by Refugee Committee.

Request report on ESG from Finance Committee.

Benefits included in church budget for 2020.

Approved by congregation January 2020.

Culture and community

Outcomes

A congregation living the 7 UU Principles & One Planet Living

FUCV demonstrates climate justice & ecological leadership to Unitarian & other faith communities. A community with a deep appreciation of the inherent value of nature & its value to human physical, mental, emotional, & spiritual health. A community that appreciates water as a precious resource that should be used efficiently & returned clean to the environment. Water conservation is modelled & threats to water, both now & forecast for the future, are better understood.

A vibrant & welcoming community that continues to attract new members.

A community where people make friends, have fun, & feel they belong. Compelling & effective communication is exchanged amongst a diverse audience. A vibrant presence on social media to engage people of all ages.

Actions

Continue to nurture the church's many successful programs & services.

STATUS: ongoing, subject to capacity of ministers, SELCY, volunteers.

Promote One Planet Living (OPL).

Host guest speakers & workshops on OPL. Write Newsletter articles, post on FUCV website & social media. Environmental & social justice outreach by SRC. STATUS: ongoing.

Run a year-long EcoGames challenge to inspire One Planet Living.

STATUS: completed June 21, 2020.

Indicators

Inventory of programs & services offered.

Number of programs, their descriptions, & number of participants/recipients. Already accomplished through Streamlining Initiative (Jim Willis)?

Report from One Planet Saanich Team.

of presentations/number of attendees.

Also qualitative feedback, number of attendees from community.

of new Members & Friends/total # of Members & Friends.

Land and nature

Outcomes

Church land & its native biodiversity is optimally stewarded for present & future generations.

Carbon sequestration is optimized in the soil & biomass.

Actions

Create a grounds & gardens plan.

Investigate current practices; get expert advice; plan to protect natural habitat in a changing climate & to create more space for biodiversity. Develop tree planting plan. Continue/expand growing food on church land. Promote planting for pollinators. Regularly remove invasive species. AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY: Grounds & Gardens Committee; STATUS: ongoing; plans for a Native Plants Garden formulated by ad hoc group of 4 members of the congregation, approved by the Board September 8, 2022. PRIORITY: very high. TIME FRAME: site preparation: 2022-2023; planting: fall 2023.

Investigate feasibility of group composting at church.

Congregants bring their compost to church & share use of the compost if they wish. STATUS: dormant due to lack of buy-in from congregation and volunteer shortage. PRIORITY: low. TIME FRAME: long-term.



Sustainable water



Outcomes

A clean & reliable water supply for our congregation, tenants & land, now & into the future.

Our water resources (rainfall & well) will be as resilient as possible through power outages, drought, nitrogen infiltration, salination & global warming.

Water is appreciated as a precious resource.

Water conservation is modelled & threats to water, both now & forecast for the future, are better understood.



Actions

Create a water & septic plan.

Get expert advice: investigate the long-term health (e.g., nitrogen infiltration) & supply of church well. How much water is left; how is it being replenished? Investigate the state of the church's septic system & evaluate if it meets FUCV's future needs. Investigate the feasibility of installing a cistern &/or rain barrels to capture rainwater due to increased risk of drought/fire from global heating. STATUS: dormant. PRIORITY: high. TIME FRAME: medium-term.



Local and sustainable food



Outcomes

Church contributes to local region's future ability to feed itself.

Church promotes local, regenerative agriculture which supports biodiversity & builds soil.

Plant based diets are promoted to reduce eco-footprint & improve animal welfare.



Actions

Investigate feasibility of offering a FUCV Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) service.

Local farmer(s) could deliver weekly order of local food to subscribers. Congregation could pick up order at Sunday service. STATUS: dormant due to supply shortage. PRIORITY: low. TIME FRAME: long-term.

Share favourite vegetarian & vegan recipes on FUCV website.

Providing inspiration to those who wish to embrace a more plant-based diet. STATUS: dormant. PRIORITY: medium. TIME FRAME: medium-term.



Indicators

Strategy to be developed by EAT, Communications, & Website Teams.



Travel and transport



Outcomes

Low- & zero-carbon vehicles are promoted & accommodated.

Including bicycles, electric cars & E-bikes.

Sustaining community within a reduced travel eco-footprint.

Understand current eco-footprint of FUCV travel, including car & air travel on church business. Facilitate carpooling, ridesharing, & online (e.g., Zoom) meetings when possible.



Actions

Develop church-related transportation policy for FUCV-related business.

Including air & ground travel for church business. STATUS: ongoing.

Install two Level 2 EV chargers.

Agreement in principle from Board received October 2019. STATUS: EV chargers installed January 2020.

Raise awareness of ecological impact of air travel.

AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY: EAT. STATUS: cancelled due to lack of volunteers.

Reduce FUCV's eco-footprint for transportation.

Facilitate carpooling, ridesharing, & online (e.g., Zoom) meetings when possible, sharing of CUC's Zoom membership. STATUS: ongoing.



Materials and products



Outcomes

A circular, sharing economy is modelled & promoted at church.

Goods & services are created & shared, stimulating creativity & a sense of community. Used goods find new homes.

Procurement meets sustainability & ethical criteria.

Purchases are reviewed against sustainability standards, toxicity, fairness of trade, ethics of supplier, preferring local suppliers.



Actions

Church staff & volunteers are familiarized with sustainable procurement practices.

Review purchases against sustainability standards, toxicity, fairness of trade, ethics of supplier, preferring local suppliers. Increase number of paperless Sunday services. STATUS: dormant. PRIORITY: high. TIME FRAME: medium-term.

Investigate feasibility of establishing a community tool shed for tool-sharing &/or repair cafe amongst the church community.

STATUS: dormant. PRIORITY: medium. TIME FRAME: long-term.



Indicators

1 or more sustainable products procured.

E.g., 100% PCW paper or grain paper; second hand fixtures/furniture.



Zero waste



Outcomes

Reduce waste, ultimately sending zero waste to landfill.

Waste & recycling are optimally handled & disposed of. The Four R's of: Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle (in that order of importance) are promoted. Wasteful consumption is reduced, with an initial emphasis on paper.



Actions

Evaluate effectiveness of current waste & recycling procedures.

Periodic monitoring of quantity & components of waste stream. STATUS: ongoing.

Promote & sell by donation reusable produce bags.

Displacing plastic produce bags. STATUS: dormant. PRIORITY: low. TIME FRAME: long- term.

Request information on CRD waste reduction & food packaging policies/practices.

STATUS: ongoing.



Indicators

Annual waste update.

Zero carbon energy

Outcomes

Church has adequate, renewable & resilient energy, now & into the future

100% of energy consumed is supplied by non-polluting renewable energy, generated onsite or offsite. Church has zero-carbon energy backup in case of power outage or emergency. Church could be a shelter for congregants without power.

Energy efficiency in buildings is optimized.

E.g., walls are insulated, windows are high efficiency, each building is equipped with an air source heat pump. This is likely to be consistent with the forthcoming Retrofit Code.

Actions

Conduct an audit of energy use by fuel types being used by buildings.

Status: completed fall 2019.

Investigate replacing propane heat with heat pump(s).

Propane is used in Farmhouse. STATUS: dormant. PRIORITY: medium. TIME FRAME: medium term.

Investigate the potential for onsite renewable energy.

Consider cost & payback for onsite solar PV as part of a BC Hydro net metering program; also, consider a battery powerwall system to draw on renewables for use during full or partial power outages. STATUS: investigating with stakeholders. PRIORITY: very high. TIME FRAME: commence 2021.

Lighting in church buildings upgraded to energy efficient LED bulbs.

STATUS: completed fall 2019.

Review buildings for heat & power cost-efficiency

Investigate getting an energy audit. 1 of 2 church heat pumps is original & is at end of its lifespan. AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY: Property Management STATUS: COMPLETE, new heat pump installed October 2020.

Indicators

Propane consumption.

2017: 2018: 2019:

Hydroelectric consumption.

2017: 2018: 2019:

Energy efficient lighting installed.

Completed by Bernhard Spalteholz/John Tiffany September 2019.

Wattage saved on efficient lighting.

E-mail from Bernhard Spalteholz September 15, 2019.

Current carbon footprint of church buildings.

Already accomplished by Bernhard Spalteholz?

