Pilgrim Lutheran Church  
Phone 651.699.6886  
Email pilgrim@pilgrimstpaul.org  
Website www.pilgrimstpaul.org

"A Home for Hungry Minds and Souls"  
"A Caring for Creation Congregation"

WHAT WE'RE DISCOVERING WORKS FOR US

WE WORK BETTER WHEN:

➢ We remind one another that this is a godly, sacred endeavor  
   We may use prayers, songs, and poetry, sometimes contributing to worship.

➢ We’re varied, Pilgrim people  
   - Variety of backgrounds—lay, staff, poetry, custodial, writing, business, environment, education, more  
   - Enthusiastic about the themes—topics are current, relevant, interesting  
   - Each failing and succeeding in our own attempts—accepting of everyone else in theirs

➢ We insist on one rule in & out of the group (related to behavior change)  
   Behave non-judgmentally. Everyone sits acceptably on the continuum of sustainable behaviors. All ideas are  
   acceptable and encouraged in our group, which makes it a safe group.

➢ We have a mission & goals & plan  
   Which is focused. Grant, theme, assignment... We update as we go. Sometimes very short-term. But, a year-  
   long plan worked great for us. It’s intense at the outset, but nice in the long run.

➢ We work hard to integrate into all parts of the church  
   Use existing programs (Congregational Life & Care events, Children, Worship Group)  
   Use existing events (Annual Picnic, Social Hours, Education Hour, Films on Fridays)  
   We contribute some "grunt" work—if we think something should change, we try to help. It’s easy to look like we’re  
   just commenting on everyone else. Combat that.

➢ We don’t limit our audience; we try to respect “where they are”  
   Target all generations and many motivations for action. Acknowledge obstacles!! Tell stories of where the group  
   members find them and how they’re managing.

➢ We (mostly) give reasons to the audience about behavior change  
   This can be a good motivator. Remember that sometimes the reasons are just as legitimate when almost  
   unspoken.

➢ We teach skills and, if possible, give tools; and let people practice their changes  
   In every theme, we try to do all these things—it's probably the most important thing we do; we give this the most  
   thought. We think about the continuum of behaviors related to the theme and what people could change a little  
   and a lot. Give information, give them the tools, and give them a chance to practice what they could do  
   differently. Sometimes practice isn't practical, but storytelling is. That can be enough.

➢ We try really hard to teach and acknowledge options/choices on the continuum of behaviors  
   Compost or Vermicompost? Sewn holiday bag or Recycled wrap or Reusable covered box? No-waste event or  
   Low-waste event or Less-waste event?

• Acknowledge the Good Work... Every Step of the Way  
• Be patient!
Pilgrim Lutheran Church
Pilgrims Caring for Creation

PCC’s self assessment:  We are a dynamic, good-humored, fun group of Pilgrims and friends that has undertaken the goal of caring for God’s Green Earth starting right here at home!  We believe that the choices of each individual can and do make a difference, with an understanding that many competing priorities and opportunities affect those choices.  We seek to maintain a supportive community where stories are told, skills are taught, and grace abounds.  We feel that the best way to foster priority for creation among ourselves and others is to help each other find opportunities to practice it.

We are pilgrims on a journey, having heartfelt conversations, passionate disagreements, giving gentle encouragement—in a safe environment.  We usually plan specific events and activities around themes, and try to intentionally keep some ideas in mind.

We try, throughout planning and execution, to remember what makes us different from other entities working on sustainability and working toward more sustainable behaviors—for us as Lutheran Christians, we remember for example, Worship, Grace, Liturgy, Word, Prayer, and Ritual.

In planning and introducing the theme, we try to remember these things:

- Other groups at church may be interested in co-sponsoring or leading activities centered on the theme.
- Much is being done already, by individuals and groups in our congregation, as well as in their homes, and at their work.  We want to acknowledge, appreciate and benefit from that throughout.
- Some people’s opinions will be different or conflicting and we need to anticipate that.  People may disagree about a particular change’s importance, or its priority within the range of changes.

Events centered on the theme may:
- Give people opportunities to learn and practice the new behaviors/skills we’re offering
- Provide people opportunities to tell stories
- Build community
- Make a connection to God and our relationship with the Creator

When introducing new (or old!) information, behaviors and skills, we try to remember to welcome everyone.  We try to teach to include:

- All ages
- All learning styles
- All previous and current levels of knowledge

Since we’re trying to change our behaviors here, try to keep in mind:

- There are many different motivations/incentives to change.
- There are lots of different obstacles/impediments to change.
- Individuals and groups have different levels of commitment to different changes.
- Changes are made in different increments by different people and groups.

Our goal is to help people along their own journey toward sustainable care for God’s creation rather than appraise how far they get.