



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Women Taking the Lead to Save Our Planet

United Methodist Women's Green Team

In 2005, the Women's Division of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries launched a program activating local United Methodist Women members to work on environmental issues in their communities.

After a three-month application process, 24 United Methodist Women members, including one male pastor, were selected for the Green Team program.

The Green Team advocates for environmental justice, the fair treatment and involvement of all people—regardless of race, ethnicity or economic status—in the decision-making process on environmental public policies. For people who are marginalized, Green Team members listen to them and voice their concerns.



United Methodist Women Green Team, 2006.

The Green Team represents people across spectrums of age, race, geographic background and area of expertise. Members come from cities, suburbs and rural areas of the five geographic jurisdictional areas of The United Methodist Church, which cover the United States. Areas of expertise include professions in chemistry, hydrology, geology, sociology and theology.

The greatest asset that this team brings is the presence of United Methodist Women with long-time experience in leadership training; and they clearly come with theological and scriptural grounding for the purpose of this environmental advocacy team.



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The Green Team has two major program initiatives for the 2009-12 quadrennium:

A campaign to enlist colleges/universities and UM annual conferences to commit to adopt certified chlorine-free paper procurement policy. This is to promote a “dioxin-free” environment that the denomination calls for in its *Book of Resolutions*.

United Methodist Women through its Green Team has a priority concern to engage in a climate change advocacy campaign through education and action to amplify our voices on this issue.

Adapted from a UMNS news story

Did you know?

The Women's Division is the national administrative body of the one-million member United Methodist Women organization.

The American Indian Environmental Office (AIEO) coordinates the agency-wide effort to strengthen public health and environmental protection in Indian country, with a special emphasis on helping tribes administer their own environmental programs. <http://www.epa.gov/indian>

The National Tribal Environmental Council (NTEC) was formed in 1991. It is a member organization with 184 tribes. It is dedicated to working with and assisting tribes in the protection and preservation of their tribal environments.

Consumption Statistics*

The real issue is not consumption itself but its patterns and effects. Inequalities in consumption are stark. Globally, the 20% of the world's people in the highest-income countries account for 86% of total private consumption expenditures — the poorest 20% a minuscule 1.3%. **More specifically, the richest fifth:**

- » **Consume 45%** of all meat and fish, the poorest fifth 5%
- » **Consume 58%** of total energy, the poorest fifth less than 4%
- » **Have 74%** of all telephone lines, the poorest fifth 1.5%
- » **Consume 84%** of all paper, the poorest fifth 1.1%
- » **Own 87%** of the world's vehicle fleet, the poorest fifth less than 1%

Runaway growth in consumption in the past 50 years is putting strains on the environment never before seen.

**Statistics from www.fedstats.gov*

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MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH!

For the 2009 Women's History Month project, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women honors women who have taken the lead in the environmental or green movement. As we rethink how we live, we understand more and more that taking care of the earth and reversing some of the damage our civilization has done to the earth is inextricably connected to our commitment to God. It's more than changing light bulbs, switching from paper and plastic to reusable bags, and recycling. It is recognizing that God has entrusted us with the world's resources, with the condition that we use them according to God's directions and to God's glory.

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The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women was established by The United Methodist Church in 1972 to advocate the full inclusion of women in the life of the denomination and to monitor the Church at all levels for gender bias. The Commission offers training at district, annual conference and churchwide events on organizing and empowering women to find their voices and ministries in the Church; works with bishops, superintendents and other church leaders to understand and eradicate institutional sexism; and educates church laity and clergy on dealing with professional sexual misconduct. For more information and resources, visit the Commission's website at www.gcsrw.org, or call (312) 346-4900.



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