



Maryland
Green Registry
MEMBER

The Maryland Green Registry promotes and recognizes sustainable practices at organizations of all types and sizes. Members agree to share at least five environmental practices and one measurable result while striving to continually improve their environmental performance.

Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church



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Severna Park MD 21146

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www.woodschurch.org

Presbyterian Church USA

Member since April 2023

Management and Leadership

Environmental Policy Statement

Woods Church is an Earth Care Congregation. Earth Care Congregations have committed to the "Earth Care Pledge," a four-part pledge that affirms that the earth and all creation are God's, who calls us to be careful, humble stewards of this earth, and to protect and restore it for its own sake, and for the future use and enjoyment of the human family. In committing to this pledge, the congregation agrees to take specific steps in four areas: worship, outreach, education and facilities. Congregations earning 25 points in each of the four categories are certified as Earth Care Congregations and receive various honors.

Environmental Team

Woods Church has two environmental teams – one that focuses on building energy conservation called Rehabbers and the Woods Gardening Team that focuses on restoring native plant habitat and stormwater management using native plants. Both groups meet weekly on Thursday mornings and the combined membership is approximately 30. The Rehabbers perform LED light conversions, insulation upgrades and oversee contractors for HVAC improvements. The Gardening Team replaces non native plants with natives and uses plants to absorb stormwater and parking lot runoff.

Environmentally Preferable Purchasing

Woods purchases paper for the office and Sunday School that contains recycled content and purchases fair trade certified coffee.

Environmental Restoration and Community Environmental Projects

Woods Church hosted a "Reforest the woods at Woods" project where 175 native trees and shrubs were planted on a single day to enhance the stormwater capabilities of our wooded lot. Eighty-five people from the church and the greater community participated, including Boy Scouts, high school environmental clubs, Baywise volunteers and Maryland Master Gardeners. The project was a capstone project for a member of the Anne Arundel County Watershed Stewards Academy.

Woods Church Gardening Team has planted over 1000 native trees, shrubs and perennials on the campus since beginning its Native Plant initiative in 2017. The gardens are now home to a variety of birds, butterflies and other pollinators, providing host plants, habitat and food sources (nectar and berries). This work is ongoing and is a model for local garden clubs and other churches. The Team has installed signs identifying the native plants, created a brochure and offered walks of the gardens for congregational members to promote the planting of native species on home properties.

Waste

Solid Waste Reduction and Reuse

Woods recently replaced all 500 of their sanctuary chairs. The old chairs were refurbished by the Rehabs team including reupholstering the backs and seats and reinforcing the wooden joints. These chairs were gifted to four different needy congregations in Delaware, Baltimore City and two in North Carolina. Reusable desks, tables, cabinets, and other office equipment were donated to Habitat for Humanity's ReStore facility in Glen Burnie. Weekly bulletins are sent by email rather than printed saving paper usage.

Recycling

Woods Church and Preschool recycle paper, cardboard, metal, glass and plastic. We pay to have a dumpster of recyclables picked up weekly. Our copper gutters and downspouts were recycled at a metal recycle facility yielding \$6,200 for Woods. Used lead acid batteries from the emergency lights were recycled at a battery supplier.

Composting

Woods composts the garden waste that does not contain invasive species by putting it in our wooded lot next to our parking lot to help slow down, spread out and soak up the stormwater runoff. Invasive plants and vines are put into the trash dumpster as advised by the Anne Arundel County Weed Warrior Team.

Energy

Energy Efficiency

*Woods Church installed new windows, LED lighting, new/upgraded insulation, retired the steam boiler and replaced it with high efficiency heat pump systems and installed a centralized HVAC management system. These improvements resulted in an annual reduction in gas and electric usage of **52%** and an annual cost savings of \$30,000 dollars.*

Water

Water Conservation

Woods recently upgraded all of the bathrooms including the preschool bathrooms and all facilities were fitted with low flow toilets and auto shutoff taps.

Woods does not have a sprinkler system to irrigate its grounds and waters the gardens only to get the native plants established or during extreme droughts. Native plants save water across our campus because they rarely need to be watered. The native Low-Gro sumac and New Jersey Tea shrubs in the hottest parking lot islands have not been watered since they were planted in July 2017.

Stormwater Management

Woods Church installed a rain garden to capture sheet-flow from the main drive and parking lot. This raingarden is used as a training site for the County Watershed Stewards Academy.

Rooftop rainwater from Fellowship Hall was redirected from the County storm sewer to a grassy field for reabsorption by routing it under the roadway. The replanted "Woods at Woods" now fully absorbs the stormwater from the office and sanctuary roofs on the east side of the complex.

Environmental Certification Programs, Awards, and Other Activities

Woods Church is a member of the following organizations and certification programs:

- *Placed first in the [Interfaith Power and Light](#) national award for [Sacred Grounds](#), 2021.*
- *First runner up for the Interfaith Power and Light [Energy Saver](#) Award, 2022.*
- *Certified by Interfaith Power and Light as a [Cool Congregation](#), 2021.*
The Cool Congregation Challenge is an annual national contest to recognize congregations that are becoming energy efficient and sustainable role models within their communities. The contest is sponsored by Interfaith Power and Light, a

nonprofit organization inspiring and mobilizing people of faith and conscience to take bold and just action on climate.

- Member of [Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake.](#)
- Pledged participation as a Presbyterian Church USA [Earth Care Congregation.](#)
- Designated by the Anne Arundel County Watershed Stewards Academy (WSA) as a [RiverWise Congregation.](#) Has hosted “Faithful Stewards” conferences and working demonstrations for WSA. The RiverWise Congregation Program provides technical, faith-based assistance to help congregations care for God’s creation.
- A leader of Woods Gardening Team is certified by the Anne Arundel County Watershed Stewards Academy as a [Watershed Steward.](#)



[View our video](#) (stormwater tour/native planting)

[View our video](#) (reforestation)



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Learn more at green.maryland.gov

