

Charge for the Climate Action Committee

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church

Purpose

The Climate Action Committee is charged with leading and supporting St. Bart's in responding faithfully and effectively to the climate crisis and the needs of our planet. The Committee's primary goal is to aid and advise the Vestry so that it may make informed and environmentally sound decisions about our facilities and grounds and to engage the congregation in eco-justice efforts within the wider community, guided by our faith commitment to stewardship, justice, and care for creation as expressed in our baptismal covenant which calls upon us to "cherish the wondrous works of God, and protect the beauty and integrity of all creation."

Scope of Work

1. Facility Sustainability

- Assess the church's environmental footprint (e.g., energy use, water, waste, grounds).
- Recommend and help implement sustainability practices (e.g., energy efficiency, renewable energy, composting, sustainable landscaping).
- Collaborate with other committees (e.g., Buildings & Grounds, Finance) to integrate sustainability into church operations and planning.

2. Congregational Engagement

- Educate and inspire the congregation about climate change, environmental justice, and sustainable living through worship, study, and action.
- Encourage individual and collective practices that reduce environmental impact and align with our faith values.
- Serve as the Earth Keeper and liaise between the congregation and the Earth Keeper initiative(s) of the Episcopal Diocese in Maine.

3. Eco-Justice and Community Outreach

- Partner with local organizations and initiatives addressing environmental and climate justice.
- Advocate for policies and practices that promote ecological sustainability and equity, particularly for frontline and marginalized communities.
- Organize service and advocacy opportunities for the congregation to engage in eco-justice locally and beyond.

Values and Approach

The Committee's work will be rooted in:

- **Faith and Theology:** Grounding our climate work in our baptismal call to love creation and seek justice for all.
- **Collaboration:** Working with church leadership, ministries, and the broader community.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Centering the voices and experiences of those most affected by environmental harm.
- **Hope and Action:** Fostering a spirit of hope through tangible action and resilient community.

Membership and Structure

- The Committee will consist of at least 3 members, including one liaison to the Vestry.
- The Committee will appoint a chair or co-chairs and may form subgroups as needed.
- It shall provide regular updates to the congregation and an annual report to the Vestry, including goals, accomplishments, and recommendations for future action.