

Church recognized for amazing green efforts

10 tons of compostable waste!

That's how much Binkley Baptist Church in Chapel Hill, N.C., diverted from its landfill in 2018. That equates to 1.18 metric tons/month of avoided CO2 emission. Incredible.

In fact, it's so spectacular that the Alliance congregational partner was selected by Interfaith Power & Light (IPL) as one of its five winners nationwide of IPL's "Cool Congregations Challenge." It is an effort by congregations across the United States to address global warming by reducing their carbon footprint, thereby modeling sustainability for members and communities.

Binkley and the other four congregations selected "are casting a vision for the kind of world in which they want to live, and then carrying out that vision with practical actions that make a real difference in creating lasting solutions to climate change," said Susan Hendershot, president of Interfaith Power & Light.

IPL works to mobilize a religious response to global warming in congregations through the promotion of energy conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy.

In April of 2018 Binkley members adopted a "Proclamation of Sustainability," which was crafted by its earth ministry committee. Then a green team was created to explore waste reduction and diversion. The team's task: to address the large amounts of landfill waste the church and its user groups produced by focusing on three areas – eliminating single-use items, better recycling and composting.

"By the end of 2018, as a congregation, Binkley had eliminated almost all single-use items by stocking our kitchen with reusable plates, napkins, tablecloths, cups, glasses and cutlery," said Karin Mills and Linda Bourne, co-leaders in the initiative.

"The kitchen pantry is stocked with only compostable materials to be used when reusables are not feasible," they said.

Binkley collects on average 2,700 pounds/month of compostable materials and 1,664 gallons by volume/month of recyclable materials. This collection rate is expected to increase by about 20 percent in 2019.

View a short video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_9Y5Oeovms&t=8s) created by Binkley to highlight its work.