

Forming Faithful Stewards, Caring for Sacred Waters



Photo Credit: Bill Caldwell

## STORIES OF HOPE FOR THE CHESAPEAKE WATERSHED

*Step into a world where hope meets transformation.* When we embarked on our current strategic plan, we vowed to work hard to carry out our plan and generate hopeful headlines. In the pages that follow, you will be reading headlines from the press that highlight the transformative changes and successes that have occurred with the help of Partner Congregations and green teams.

From collaborating on Creation Care projects to award winners and grant awards, these actual headlines are just the beginning of what we can achieve with your continued commitment! Together, we have the power to write more stories of positive change, to push the boundaries of what is possible, and to leave an indelible mark on the Chesapeake region.

### THE BALTIMORE SUN

**Faith Lutheran Church partners  
with Gunpowder Valley  
Conservancy on green projects**

August 11, 2023

### Newsires

**Sherwood Episcopal Church  
Awarded \$1.7 Million Grant for  
Stormwater Management Project**

September 20, 2023

CHESAPEAKE

### BAY JOURNAL

**Hats off to Watershed Champions  
and Flanigan award winners**

July 13, 2023

### The Christian Century

**Laudato Trees planting program  
enlists Catholic properties to help  
increase DC's canopy**

June 1, 2023

### Anabaptist World

**Sacred endings, beginnings**

April 28, 2023

Let's keep the momentum going! We invite you to lock arms with us as we build a new future in the Chesapeake and create more hopeful headlines in our lifetime.

Scan the QR code or visit [InterfaithChesapeake.org/Donate](https://InterfaithChesapeake.org/Donate) to lend your support.





## Anabaptist World Sacred Endings, Beginnings

Akron Mennonite Church (AMC), an IPC Partner Congregation and trained green team through our Faithful Green Leaders Training Program, answered the call to care for Creation and transformed four acres of their church's property into a breathtaking nature preserve and memory garden.

AMC congregants, the community, and representatives from five sister congregations all came together to plant 450 trees and meadows of native grasses and flowers. The area will be an outdoor classroom for the Diamond Street Early Childhood Center, which serves more than 150 preschool students and the wider community.

The preserve's green burial is what makes the area truly exceptional as it is a testament to honoring both life and death. The first green burial at AMC made headlines, drawing



Photo Credit: Jim Shenk

attention from *Anabaptist World*, a global independent journalistic ministry, and sparking wider conversations about the significance of embracing natural cycles of life and death. Green burials and AMC's project also became the subject of our October Learning Lab, which attracted 150 registrants.



It is so inspiring to see our small efforts as part of something much larger, locally and globally."

— Donna Mack Shenk,  
convener of AMC's green team

Support us through this year's Lancaster ExtraGive on Friday, November 17th!

Search our name on [ExtraGive.org](https://extragive.org) or support IPC directly by visiting [InterfaithChesapeake.org/Donate](https://interfaithchesapeake.org/Donate)

## The Christian Century Laudato Trees Planting Program Enlists Catholic Properties to Help Increase DC's Canopy



Elizabeth Seton High School Planting

IPC is at the forefront of a collective effort to expand tree coverage in urban Maryland through our Trees for Sacred Places Program. With the dedication of volunteers such as Phil Downey, the lay-led "Laudato Trees" team, and a coalition of other organizations, 18 congregations have added trees to their grounds since the program's inception.

Our commitment goes beyond merely planting trees; it encompasses a comprehensive approach to fostering tree health and vitality. IPC hosted a Learning Lab showcasing experts from the One Water Partnership discussing what it truly takes to ensure a tree's long-term health and well-being. We also offer Action Kits to help green team leaders identify native

trees, learn how to plant trees, and lead educational and spiritual programs highlighting how crucial trees are to a healthy and thriving watershed.

Trees are invaluable allies in the climate change fight, capturing carbon, and cleansing the air, while providing habitat for hundreds of insects, birds, and mammals. Maryland's 5 Million Trees legislation is a vital response to the climate crisis, requiring the state to plant five million trees by 2030. IPC is fostering key partnerships with organizations and state agencies to channel funding and resources to congregations eager to plant trees and reforest their properties.

Over the past 10 years, IPC estimates that congregations have planted more than 20,000 trees across the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

If your congregation would like to partner and have trees planted on your grounds or in your surrounding neighborhood, please scan the code or visit [https://bit.ly/tree\\_interest](https://bit.ly/tree_interest)





## Sherwood Episcopal Church Awarded \$1.7 Million Grant for Stormwater Management Project



Sherwood Episcopal Church's Fall Tree Giveaway

Sherwood Episcopal Church in Baltimore County was just awarded a \$1.7M grant from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources! This grant will be transformative in the community, and is an inspiring reminder of what is possible

when congregations are supported with resources and technical assistance. A grant of this magnitude is an incredible feat for a faith-based organization and underscores the role IPC plays in inspiring environmental stewardship. Through IPC's One Water Partnership program, Sherwood Episcopal Church was connected with strategic partners, including the Gunpowder Valley Conservancy and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. This crucial network laid the foundation for their groundbreaking Clean Water Project — a shining example of what can be accomplished when faith and environmental stewardship converge.

This funding will help control stormwater runoff from Sherwood Hill, preventing erosion, protecting the safety of motorists and local businesses along York Road, and safeguarding the nearby

drinking water supply from pollution. IPC will enrich the project by infusing it with a commitment to education and environmental awareness, helping to amplify the project's impact and broaden its reach.



Creation Care is an important pillar of the entire Episcopal Church's mission. We hope to serve as a beacon for faith-based organizations as well as the community as a whole and beyond.

— Rev. Nancy H. Hennessey, Rector of Sherwood

If you're interested in receiving grant funding for your congregation's projects, scan the code or visit [InterfaithChesapeake.org/Resources](https://InterfaithChesapeake.org/Resources)



## THE BALTIMORE SUN

### Faith Lutheran Church Partners with Gunpowder Valley Conservancy on Green Projects



Photo Credit: Susan Meier

As a Partner Congregation of IPC, Faith Lutheran Church in Cockeysville has consistently championed green infrastructure projects to reduce their ecological footprint. In partnership with Gunpowder Valley Conservancy through IPC's One Water Partnership, Faith Lutheran installed a rain garden and micro-bioretenion project; these

natural filters aid runoff absorption. Faith Lutheran's small but mighty green team is committed to Creation Care, undertaking around 30 projects in their time as a partner of IPC. In addition, Faith Lutheran has joined forces with Sherwood Episcopal Church and Basil African Methodist Episcopal Church, forming the Beaverdam

green team to collaboratively reduce stormwater runoff in their community. Their green team's embodiment of these values serves as an inspiration and a reminder of the profound impact we can make when we come together in the spirit of shared responsibility.



All of nature is connected, and we have a responsibility for all creatures.

— Susan Meier, Faith Lutheran's green team leader

Do you want to join a network of congregations working to restore the Chesapeake Bay? Sign IPC's Partner Congregation Pledge: [https://bit.ly/sign\\_pledge](https://bit.ly/sign_pledge)



IPC's Executive Director Jodi Rose was honored as the Maryland Watershed Champion by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay in September. Since Jodi was hired in 2013, IPC has flourished, expanding from just one person (her!) to a dedicated staff of 12, increasing our revenue tenfold, and establishing partnerships with hundreds of congregations. In the past year alone, IPC:

- Supported projects from over 80 congregations that treated 28 acres of faith-owned land to reduce stormwater and increase tree canopy.
- Welcomed 15 new partner congregations that signed the pledge.
- Trained 28 new green teams.
- Hired five new staff and reorganized staffing teams to accelerate impact and outcomes.



Photo Credit: Eric Braker

The board, led by Board Chair Tonya Sanders Thach, spearheaded an intense self-evaluation among board and staff of how to operationalize the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in our strategic plan. The August board retreat focused entirely on this subject and we are developing DEI recommendations to ensure we are reaching those most oppressed by environmental racism.

Jodi's award as the Maryland Watershed Champion challenges us to continue pushing boundaries and striving for equity. It reminds us that, as a collective voice, we have the power to engage even more faith communities in environmental stewardship and make a lasting impact on the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Together, we're driving progress towards a more equitable future.



This award recognizes the incredible achievements of everyone who makes IPC's work possible. From the dedicated board and staff to all the hard-working volunteers on green teams who have made a lasting impact."

— Jodi Rose, IPC Executive Director



We hope these stories encourage you to make an end-of-year gift to support our work and create even more headlines that inspire hope and serve as beacons of progress for generations to come.

This is just a glimpse into IPC's successes — we have received 25 media mentions so far in 2023.

Your donation helps Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake lock arms with Partner Congregations and green teams that are committed to healing the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

- Give online at [InterfaithChesapeake.org/Donate](https://InterfaithChesapeake.org/Donate)
- Donate by check made out to "Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake" and mail to the address below.
- Become a monthly sustaining supporter.



**Interfaith  
Partners for the  
CHESAPEAKE**

**Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake is more than an organization. We are a movement.**

We are a community of dedicated individuals and congregations committed to honoring, protecting, and restoring this shared watershed. IPC has inspired remarkable growth and transformation, but without your financial support and commitment to this movement, none of this would have been possible.

Thank you for your support!

EIN: 46-3399793 • 410-609-6852 • [InterfaithChesapeake.org](https://InterfaithChesapeake.org) • P.O. Box 6791, Annapolis, MD 21401

