

Menu for Action

FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY CONGREGATIONS

All congregations in Montgomery County are encouraged to choose one or more of these actions to put their learning into action. Actions could also be incorporated into your religious education program. For help see our step-by-step Action Kits here: www.InterfaithChesapeake.org/action_kit



Forming

1. Coordinate a spiritual outdoor experience/ nature walk ☐
2. Host an environmental movie night ☐
3. Host a workshop on the intersection of faith and environment ☐
4. Offer a Creation Care study based upon your faith ☐
5. Offer a sermon on environmental issues ☐
6. Organize an environmental book study group ☐
7. Organize an "Inspirational Tour" looking at existing green projects ☐
8. Host or attend an educational event about one of Montgomery County's environmental issues ☐
9. Host an educational event about waste reduction, including bottled water and plastic bags ☐
10. Educate about gardening and healthy lawn care for the environment ☐

Caring

1. Organize recycling at your congregation ☐
2. Install rain barrels, a cistern, conservation landscaping, or a rain garden ☐
3. Organize and participate in a tree planting ☐
4. Coordinate a congregational stream cleanup or neighborhood trash pickup ☐
5. Remove invasive plant species ☐
6. Install a community garden on congregation grounds to benefit your congregants or to donate the food ☐
7. Design and install conservation landscaping ☐
8. Conduct an audit of chemicals at the congregation and properly dispose of them ☐

Going Forth

1. Involve other congregations, the neighborhood, or general public in any Forming or Caring activities ☐
2. Coordinate a community rain barrel workshop ☐
3. Hold a native tree/plant training and sale ☐
4. Spearhead and participate in multi-congregational storm drain stenciling /labeling ☐
5. Spearhead a multi-congregation stream cleanup or neighborhood trash cleanup ☐
6. Join or attend a city committee or Mayor and City Council or County Council meeting ☐
7. Spearhead an inspirational outdoor experience with other congregations or community ☐
8. Take action to advocate for clean water. Contact your state or local representative and/or write a letter to the editor ☐
9. Explore how to reduce energy use at your congregation and home or solar/community energy ☐



For more information contact Sarah Redden at
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www.InterfaithChesapeake.org 410-609-6952



CARING

1. Organize recycling at your congregation.

How can our congregation participate in recycling?

Contact: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/sws/>

2. Install rain barrels, a cistern, or conservation landscaping.

Contact: **Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection RainScapes Program** | RainScapes@montgomerycountymd.gov

More information and available rebates can be found at:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/water/rainscapes/index.html>

3. Organize and participate in a tree planting or host an "Arbor Day Every Day" event.

Where can we get trees to plant and learn how to plant them?

Contact: **Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/green/trees/plant-a-tree/index.html>

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/green/trees/treemontgomery.html>

Also contact tree montgomery or the Planning dept Leaves for Neighborhoods program.

Contact: **Arbor Day Foundation** |

<https://www.arborday.org/takeaction/volunteer/organize.cfm>

Contact: **Maryland Department of Natural Resources** | Marylanders Plant Trees Program

| <http://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/MarylandersPlantTrees/Introduction.aspx>

4. Schedule a stream clean up or neighborhood trash pickup.

Contact: **Montgomery Department of Natural Resources**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/water/volunteer/>

Contact: **Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay**

Register for a Project Clean Stream cleanup here:

<https://www.allianceforthebay.org/our-work/key-program-focuses/building-stewardship/project-clean-stream/>

Contact: **Alice Ferguson Foundation**

Register your congregation, park, or neighborhood for the annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup

<http://trashnetwork.fergusonfoundation.org/>

5. Remove invasive plant species.

Contact: **Montgomery Parks**

Montgomery Parks offers Weed Warrior training for volunteers

<https://www.montgomeryparks.org/caring-for-our-parks/natural-spaces/weed-warriors/>

Contact: **Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/water/volunteer/>

Contact the Stream Stewards Program if you are interested in removing invasive species from your local creek.

Contact: **Muddy Branch Alliance**

Local watershed group that hosts invasive species removal and other environmental events. Check their calendar for opportunities.

<https://muddybranch.org/>

6. Install a community garden on church grounds to benefit your congregants, or to donate the food.

Contact: **Master Gardeners** <https://extension.umd.edu/mg/locations/montgomery-county-master-gardeners> - <https://extension.umd.edu/mg>

Master Gardeners offer gardening help, landscape planning, workshops, and educational events.

Contact: **Manna Food Center**

www.mannafood.org | info@mannafood.org

7. Design and install conservation landscaping at your congregation or home.

Contact: **Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection**

RainScapes@montgomerycountymd.gov

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/water/rainscapes/index.html>

8. Conduct an audit of chemicals at the congregation and properly dispose of them.

Survey your congregation building and grounds for cleaning materials and lawn chemicals. Properly dispose of them during household hazardous waste drop-off days. How many of these materials could be eliminated or changed to environmentally-friendly ones?

Contact: **Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/sws/programs/>

Contact: **Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection**

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/hazardouswaste

GOING FORTH

1. Involve other congregations, the neighborhood, or general public in any *Forming* or *Caring* activities.

2. Coordinate a community rain barrel workshop.

Host a community event that trains people how to install rain barrels on their property.

Contact: **Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection**

RainScapes@montgomerycountymd.gov

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/water/rainscapes/index.html>

3. Hold a native tree/plant training and sale.

Contact: **Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/green/trees/plant-a-tree/index.html>

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/green/trees/treemontgomery.html>

Rainscapes Program - Rainscapes resources, including suggestions for native plants:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/water/rainscapes/resources.html>

Contact: **Maryland Native Plant Society** | <https://mdflora.org>

Contact: **University of Maryland Extension and Master Gardeners**

<https://extension.umd.edu/tags/plant-sale>

<http://extension.umd.edu/mg>

4. Spearhead multi-congregational storm drain stenciling/labeling.

Labels storm drains to inform public that water flowing into them goes to the nearest river or stream and does not go to a water treatment facility.

Contact: **Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/water/volunteer/>

5. Spearhead a multi-congregation stream cleanup/neighborhood trash cleanup.

Contact: **Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/water/volunteer/>

Contact: **Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay**

Register for a Project Clean Stream cleanup here:

<https://www.allianceforthebay.org/our-work/key-program-focuses/building-stewardship/project-clean-stream/>

Contact: **Alice Ferguson Foundation**

Register your congregation, park, or neighborhood for the annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup

<http://trashnetwork.fergusonfoundation.org/>

6. Join or attend a city committee or Mayor and City or County Council meeting.

Contact: **Montgomery County Council**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council>

7. Spearhead an interfaith nature walk or inspirational community outdoor experience in Montgomery County Parks with other congregations or communities:

- **Bohrer Park**

Bohrer Park at Summit Hall Farm is a great location to spend time outdoors. The park contains several open fields, two ponds, playground area, horseshoe pit, and a volleyball net. Paved paths great for walking, jogging, in-line skating, and biking, circle the park. Bohrer Park also contains the oldest standing building in the City of Gaithersburg, the log Smokehouse, as well as the Maryland State Champion Royal Paulownia tree. Bohrer Park is the perfect location for hosting a congregational event.

<http://www.gaithersburgmd.gov/leisure/parks-and-fields/bohrer-park-at-summit-hall-farm>

- **Malcom King Park**

Malcolm King Park is the largest City park and includes an extensive network of trails and streams. A majority of the park remains in its natural wooded state, which makes it a great location for nature walks and wildlife enthusiasts. Park visitors can enjoy bird watching, plant identification, and seasonal changes to the natural landscape. The park is named for Malcolm King who was the head of the local Izaak Walton League and a naturalist advocate. Malcolm King Park is a great destination for local congregations to find inspiration from our local environment.

<http://www.gaithersburgmd.gov/leisure/parks-and-fields/malcolm-king-park>

- **Muddy Branch Greenway Trail**

The 9 miles of natural surface trail are accessible to most users, but they aren't flat or boring by any means. The trail traverses varied terrain and ecosystems including rocky upland forest, streambanks and meadows, passes by rich vernal pools, and earthen mill remnants. The trail passes The Potomac Horse Center on its way from the Lakelands Community and Darnestown Road in Gaithersburg down to historic Blockhouse Point Conservation Park. A bridge now allows users to cross over to Pennyfield Lock and the C&O Canal.

Link: <https://www.montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/muddy-branch-greenway-trail/>

Seneca Creek State Park

Located just outside the City the park comprises of 6,300 acres, extends along 14 scenic miles of Seneca Creek, as it winds its way to the Potomac River. Hiking and biking trails, playgrounds, boating and boat rental, fishing, flatwater canoeing and kayaking, orienteering, picnicking, historic sites and much more.

Link: <http://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/central/seneca.aspx>

Brighton Dam

Established in 1959, Brighton Dam's Azalea Garden is home to over 22,000 azalea bushes over 5 acres in a hardwood forest. Kousa dogwood trees were added in the 1990's and the garden is also home to Montgomery County's champion fringe tree. Brighton Dam (Triadelphia Reservoir) is a great way to experience natural beauty and stormwater in action.

Link: <https://www.wsscwater.com/azaleas>

Great Falls

At Great Falls, the Potomac River builds up speed and force as it falls over a series of steep, jagged rocks and flows through the narrow Mather Gorge. The Potomac Canal offers a glimpse into the early history of this country. Great Falls Park has many opportunities to explore history and nature, all in a beautiful 800-acre park only 22 miles from the City of Gaithersburg.

Link: <https://www.nps.gov/grfa/index.htm>

Black Hills Regional Park

Black Hill Regional Park has more than 2,000 acres of land for outdoor recreation and family gatherings. Come enjoy spectacular views of Little Seneca Lake from the many picnic shelters, volleyball courts, playgrounds, and trails. Or, rent a canoe, kayak, or rowboat from Black Hill Boats and explore the natural beauty of the lake by following the Black Hill Water Trail.

Rock Creek Park

Rock Creek Regional Park stretches across approximately 1,800 acres and includes the beautiful 75-acre Lake Needwood and the picturesque 55-acre Lake Frank. Enjoy all the the park has to offer by meandering along 13 miles of trails through woodlands and along the lake shores, or go picnicking, fishing, or boating while viewing the many species of resident wildlife. You can reserve picnic shelters by contacting the Park Permits Office. Other park amenities include playgrounds, Needwood Boat Rental and Snack Bar, Meadowside Nature Center, and lake tours on the Needwood Queen.

Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park

The Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park runs along Sligo Creek and hosts the Sligo Creek Trail. This roughly 10.2-hard surface trail is one of the oldest in the County. The trail is the heaviest-used facility in the stream valley park and provides recreation for persons of all ages and abilities. Several paved, and a few unpaved, trails are scattered



throughout the park and connect other park facilities, schools, and neighborhoods to the main trail.

8. Advocate: Take action for clean water.

Contact your state or local representative and/or write a letter to the editor regarding specific environmental issues. IPC can help identify the issues and provide sample letters.

Link: <http://www.interfaithchesapeake.org/advocacy>

Additional Information: Learn how your congregation reduces its Stormwater Fee

- **Montgomery County Water Quality Protection Charge**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/water/wqpc/index.html>

- **Chesapeake Bay Trust Outreach and Restoration Grant Program**

This grant program encourages outreach and community engagement activities that increase stewardship ethic of natural resources and on-the-ground restoration activities that demonstrate restoration techniques and engage County residents in the restoration and protection of our local streams and the Chesapeake Bay.

<https://cbtrust.org/grants/outreach-and-restoration/>

9. Explore how to reduce energy use at your congregation and home or find solar/ community energy

- Host a light bulb exchange:
- Host a solar co-op presentation:
<https://mygreenmontgomery.org/2021/capital-area-solar-co-op/>
- Encourage congregants to switch to clean energy:
<https://mygreenmontgomery.org/2019/buying-green-electricity-2/>
- Participate in community solar:
<https://cs.solarunitedneighbors.org/states/MD/show>
- Schedule a Quick Home Energy Checkup or Home Performance Energy Audit or Assessment: <https://montgomeryenergyconnection.org/lower-my-bill/>
- Apply for Tax Credits – Find Ways to Pay:
<https://montgomeryenergyconnection.org/lower-my-bill/>

Contact: **Montgomery County Energy, Climate, & Compliance Division**
Department of Environmental Protection

Residential Energy Program Manager, Larissa Johnson, MPA

Office: 240-777-7711 | Mobile: 202-281-7173

Visit [Montgomery Energy Connection](#), Sign up for [Energy News](#)