



Begun in October 2022, Talbot Green Hands (TGH) is the local chapter of Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake (IPC). We are a collaborative group of local faith communities, taking action to restore and protect our shared waterways.

February 2026

THIS MONTH'S TOP STORIES



The winter garden demonstration plot at Presbyterian Church of Easton (PCE) is looking badly bent but not broken by last month's chilly temperatures. All the plants except the radishes are toughing it out for the next few weeks and will be harvested again soon.



Joy Gaddy dumps a bucket of PCE composter worms into Blackwater Rising's new 3 bin composter at their community garden in Cambridge. Mary Yancey, Peg Hughes and Jonathan Williams of TGH helped build it this fall. The worms had been basking in a 78 degree compost pile at our community garden but were recruited to inoculate Blackwater's first pile.

Peg Hughes and Tom Arnold have gotten results for the local environment by connecting with the City of Easton to re-certify with Sustainable Maryland. Sustainable Maryland helps municipalities plan and coordinate ecologically important projects that include helping small local businesses and planting native trees.

TGH supports this bill on organics recycling: HB 429: On-Farm Organics and Wasted Food Reduction and Diversion Grant Programs

The Institute for Local Self-Reliance and other organizations support HB 429 and encourage the committee to pass this bill. We thank Delegate Boyce and the 13 co-sponsors for bringing this legislation forward to establish needed grant programs to reduce, rescue, and divert wasted food from disposal in Maryland.

Maryland's stagnant recycling rate, high landfill emissions, shrinking landfill capacity, and increasing demand for alternatives to food waste disposal indicate the need for widespread investment into wasted food reduction and diversion in a way that benefits local communities, NOW. This bill establishes three grant programs to develop alternatives to food waste and organics disposal, investing in local businesses, rural and urban farms, nonprofits, schools, local governments, and more. Maryland has policies supporting healthy soils, food waste recovery, organics recycling, and composting, but direct support for program infrastructure and implementation remains a crucial obstacle to progress.

It is important to pass this bill now, regardless of presently-available funding sources, as a step toward fully funding the grant programs. HB 429 will codify the grant programs, which include detailed eligibility and priority factors that have been refined in collaboration with a wide array of stakeholders over 5 years.

This bill prioritizes funding for projects that are locally-driven and that provide direct benefits to the community, supporting community engagement and availability of local jobs. It also outlines explicit priority for operations producing high-quality compost, avoiding contamination from microplastics and PFAS, to build local soil health and to grow healthy food. Codifying the detailed grant program structure now will facilitate more straightforward allocation of funding once those sources are established or identified.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ShoreRivers Advocacy in Action, March 5, 5:00-7:00, 114 South Washington Street, Easton. Partnering with Eastern Shore Land Conservancy and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, this free event will spotlight the environmental bills that matter most to our communities.
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- Saturday March 7 and 14, 10:00-2:00. Clean up of gardening plots at the Presbyterian Church of Easton (PCE) in preparation for spring planting. Tools available but bring your own gloves.
- Sunday March 22, 12:30-3:00. Gardener's luncheon and Beginning Garden Presentation at PCE. Learn about planting a spring garden.
- Talbot Green Hands monthly meeting March 19 at 11:00 at Third Haven Meeting and by zoom (email us for a zoom invitation): talbotearthday@gmail.com



Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake (IPC): www.interfaithchesapeake.org

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