

Creation Care “Actions”

**A sampling of the variety
of initiatives
taken by TWKUMC congregations**



1) Increase energy efficiency by retrofitting to LED lighting.

Why this matters...

LED lighting uses less energy to produce the same task.

It also reduces the heat given off by lighting an indoor space, which eventually requires cooling.



Emmanuel UMC Memphis

The completed upgrade to LED lighting included their Sanctuary, the hallways, classrooms, office spaces, and preschool - with funding assistance from a significant TVA grant and a small Creation Care Ministry Project Fund grant.



TWK Churches with recent LED lighting upgrades

who also received small grants from the
Creation Care Ministry Project Fund to complete the work:

Mt. Pisgah UMC

Nashville, TN

Mt.Carmel UMC

Benton, KY

Leeville UMC

Lebanon, TN

Seay Hubbard UMC

Nashville, TN

Mullins UMC

Memphis, TN

Emmanuel UMC

Memphis, TN

Calvert City UMC

Calvert City, KY

Calvert City UMC

“An Enlightening Situation!

Over the years our Fellowship Hall and Kitchen had lost a few florescent lights here and there and it was time for a rework, so we just installed new all-new lighting in both.

The new bulbs and ballasts will not only give us better lighting, but also save a significant amount of energy, thus being both “greener” and less expensive!”



2) Educate the church & organize community to address the justice imperative of creation care

As the conference creation care ministry, we embrace the inseparable link between love of God, love of neighbor as ourselves, and the flourishing of all creation;

We affirm the mission of our denomination “to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” and we undertake the work of creation care and **commitment to its related justice issues as a crucial aspect of our discipleship (environmental justice, climate justice, creation justice, and racial justice).**

- Dan Joranko has taken the lead for the Creation Care Ministry in joining with the Memphis chapter of Tennessee Interfaith Power & Light, and numerous clergy and community groups in the Memphis area to **strengthen a Memphis area ministry organized around environmental and racial justice.**
- **In terms of environmental justice advocacy,** the Memphis area ministry has participated in grassroots efforts to limit a large natural gas buildout in South Memphis, which is one of the most polluted communities in the United States. Much of that buildout is because of new and expanding data center facilities.

This Memphis area ministry provides

- educational workshops such as the most recent one focused on food justice.
- conferences such as Rooted in Peace
- co-hosts an ongoing “Environmental Justice Film Series” with Tennessee Interfaith Power and Light.

The most recent film presentations were

- Seed: Untold Story
<https://www.seedthemovie.com/>
- Our Movement Starts Here
<https://southdocs.org/our-movement-starts-here/>



ROOTED
IN PEACE
NONVIOLENCE IN THE TRADITION OF GANDHI AND KING

With keynote speaker: Emily Yellen
*Collaborating author on "Nonviolent"
- James Lawson's new memoir*

SATURDAY, MAY 30TH
9:00 AM TO 2:30 PM
Centenary United Methodist Church
584 E. McLemore Ave, Memphis


SCAN HERE TO REGISTER

*Hosted in partnership with MICA, Young Gifted and Green,
and Tennessee Interfaith Power and Light*

WORKSHOPS OFFERED:

- NONVIOLENT
NONRESISTANCE AND
DIRECT ACTION
- MUTUAL AID
- STORYTELLING IN A
STRATEGIC MANNER
- YOUTH ORGANIZING
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

3) Establish & maintain food gardens



Scott's Chapel UMC, serving Shelbyville, TN and Bedford Co., enters its fourth year of growing food for others.

“What began as a simple act of planting has continued to blossom into a ministry of nourishment, connection, and care for neighbors throughout the area. Volunteers not only grow fresh produce, but also cultivate relationships and a spirit of generosity within the community.

Thanks to the gift of new metal raised garden beds provided by the Tennessee Department of Health, the garden has expanded...”

(TWK UMC Newsletter article: *Scott's Chapel UMC Community Garden Continues to Grow in Service to the Community*, May, 27, 2026)

Scott's Chapel UMC Community Garden Continues to Grow in Service to the Community

May 2026 – With hands in the soil and hearts rooted in service, members and volunteers at Scott's Chapel United Methodist Church recently gathered for the first day of planting [...]

4) Use available church land to plant native plants and native pollinator gardens

Why this matters...

Our native plants, trees and shrubs have evolved in our region, our unique ecosystem. They have adapted to the specific range of seasonal conditions: soil types, moisture levels, sun & shade exposure, climate weather patterns, and the relationships with the other plants and animals of the ecological community.

When planted in their natural conditions, native species require almost no maintenance once established.

Native wildflowers in particular tend to be drought tolerant, have deep root systems, sequester water efficiently, and help to maintain healthy soil.

Native wildflower gardens provide food for pollinator insects and birds, as well as habitat for resting, mating, laying eggs and hibernating.

Grace UMC and Wesley Chapel UMC

Jackson, TN

Grace UMC planted a memorial garden with plants left over from their Easter flowers. They made the decision to move from Easter Lilies to other perennial flowers to build up their garden with plants that would return each year.



Grace and Wesley Chapel working together, grow their own native plants as well as other seasonal plants that many folks enjoy. They started this venture to support native pollinators, animals, and the soil and it grew into something amazing.

They now have community members come and help out at their garden and help with handing out plants that others take home and plant on their property.



Aldersgate UMC, Nashville TN

supports 800 sq ft of pollinator gardens on the front lawn (built by TN Environmental Council), which collects water runoff from the street, and provides food and habitat for pollinator insects and birds.



Edgehill UMC, Nashville TN

Deep roots anchor new native plants growing at the edge of the church lawn, and flowers attract pollinators.

5) Plant the right trees in the right places

Why this matters....

Native trees are important members of our communities...

- They provide home and habitat for birds and for fellow wildlife,
- clean/filter and cool the surrounding air through transpiration and gentle movements,
- sequester water by their root system, important in heavy rain conditions,
- give off oxygen and water,
- capture carbon dioxide,
- provide shade and a palpable sense of well-being.
- The amount of tree canopy in a given community determines the degree of benefit from those trees, and that highlights justice issues.

(TN Environmental Council)

Belle Meade UMC

Nashville, TN



With grant support from the Nashville Tree Foundation, Belle Meade UMC planted native trees on their campus in the fall of 2024 and 2025, focusing on grass islands in their parking lot, and adding to the canopy of mature trees.

This grant also benefited the neighboring elementary school, adding young trees to their grounds.



6) Recycle all that is possible

Why this matters....

Paper and cardboard can be used to make new paper products, including toilet paper; saving some trees.

Recycling plastics is complicated, but committing to recycle many more of the single-use plastic bottles and jugs (#1& 2) will decrease the volume of waste in landfills and the polluting presence of degrading micro-plastics in our water, soil, food, and our bodies.

Aluminum cans can be recycled into new aluminum cans countless times, saving significant energy!

Start small, but start!



**Caney
Spring UMC
Lewisburg, TN**



Annual Recycle Day at West End UMC



The Creation Care Ministry coordinates a group of like-minded houses of worship in Nashville, with their volunteers, to sponsor an annual event to collect items that are very difficult to recycle or donate: electronics, paper to be shredded, prescription medications, household items or craft items in good condition, etc. West End UMC in Nashville, with its large shaded downtown parking lot has hosted the event for years.

The May 2026 event served 206 cars unloading items, resulting in thousands of pounds diverted from the landfill.



You can contact Tennessee Environmental Council, a state wide non-profit, for a schedule of their hard -to-recycle roundups... or for information specific to your TN county.

<https://www.tectn.org/recyclingroundup.html>

7) Commercial Composting when available

Some churches are able to compost a few non-meat food items (coffee grounds, fruit peels, etc) or grass cuttings in a corner container on church property.

That decreases the amount of organic material that is dumped into our landfills, which in turn decreases the amount of methane gas that is emitted by the landfill into our atmosphere.

When commercial composting is available and utilized, it allows composting of all food scraps, specific food containers, and yard cuttings.

This enhanced process prevents even greater amounts of methane generation. It also streamlines food and kitchen waste management.

West End UMC has made the decision to fund a monthly commercial composting service.

8) Facilitate reuse of items in good condition



Spring Cleaning for a Good Cause

Brentwood UMC

- BUMC partners with ThriftSmart to collect gently used items. ThriftSmart loads \$1 on a ThriftSmart gift card for each 10 pounds of donated items.
- ThriftSmart brings a collection truck to BUMC on a designated Sunday morning to make it convenient for people to bring items to donate with them to church.
- For the event volunteers are present in the parking lot to assist with donations.
- The 2026 BUMC collection was held on Sunday April 26 with additional availability for people to drop off items for donation at BUMC both the week before and after Sunday collection.
- During the 2026 BUMC Spring Cleaning for a Good Cause, 8,900 pounds of gently used material were donated resulting in \$900 dollars in ThriftSmart gift cards being donated to a charity designated by BUMC.



9) Habitat restoration, protecting stream/ water quality, creating sacred natural spaces – on church land

Why this matters –

These restoration endeavors are long term projects of great value.

In the short term, the benefits include

- places for people to gather, worship, and learn more about their natural surroundings,
- the low areas near streams, act as temporary wetlands, decreasing soil erosion and increasing the absorption of rain water; both so important to our current context of increasingly heavy rain storms with potential flashflooding.

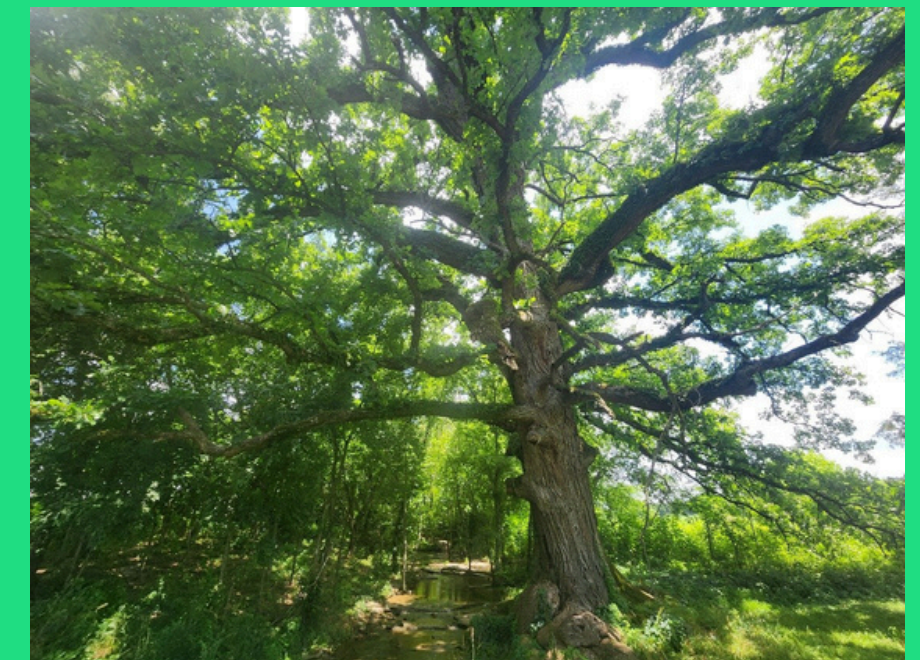


Tami's Trail's at Murfreesboro First UMC

- To offer a tranquil and picturesque setting for personal reflection.
- To foster spiritual rejuvenation and a deeper connection with the divine.
- To heighten the community's recognition and gratitude for the wonders of God's creation.

Use this link to see a PowerPoint of Tami's Trail and the work that has been done:
<https://creationcaretwkumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Tamis-Trail2.pdf>

Read the transition story of the 107 acres of which now comprises the Main Campus of **Franklin First UMC** in the May 2026 newsletter of The TWKUMC Creation Care Ministry.
<https://mailchi.mp/926954a77bb8/may-newsletter-nice-to-meet-you?e=748d49750f>



10) Expanding to renewable energy sources

Forest Hills UMC, Brentwood TN

Why this matters...

Solar power decreases the amount of fossil fuels used, which emit heat trapping gases.

In our current context, most congregations may want to start with evaluating how to reduce the amount of energy required to run the facility. This could include implementing a host of energy saving strategies. Start with the things your church can do.



11) Upgrade fixtures or appliances when replacement is required



When water fountains reach the end of their usable life, Brentwood UMC upgrades water fountains to those that also refill water bottles.

As of May 2026, the counter on this water fountain in the choir area lists 11,502 bottles saved.

It encourages the use of refillable bottles rather than single-use plastic bottles!

12) Allow a natural setting to shape the worship and sacred rituals we practice



Sabbath Life
at
Green Hill Farm

The Journey of Lent as
Pilgrimage

Saturday
Feb 21
10am-12pm

Lunch provided!

HORTICONS
A
6 KGS



Being taught to more fully appreciate and understand the wonder, the beauty, and the complexity of God's creation, we come to see it as a sacred gift.

What we come to understand as a sacred gift, we value as that which requires our reverent care.

ADVENT LANTERN WALK AT GREEN HILL FARM

Friday, December 5
4:30–7:30 PM

Green Hill Farm
257 Taylor Road, Fulton, KY 42041

Join us for an evening of:

- Lantern walk through the farm
- Soup and community
- Prayers and Advent liturgy
- Advent wreath reflection

CONTACT

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**Share what Creation Care “Actions”
your congregation has undertaken.**

It will inform and inspire others!