



## Annual Report June 6, 2021

Green Sanctuary Team Members who attended meetings/work sessions in FY20/21 include – Dick Berndt, Diane Gibbons, Dane Rasmussen, Julie Williams, Harvey Johnson, Linda Lobik, and Jim Fuller. Thank you. All BUUF members or friends are encouraged to attend meetings, work sessions and otherwise provide ideas for becoming and sustaining a Green Sanctuary. Quarterly meetings were considered but only one ZOOM meeting was completed on April 15, 2021. Most communication happened by word of mouth, text and email. We will try for quarterly meetings and work projects in FY21/22.

**History** - At the 2015 annual meeting it was decided to begin the quest to become a Green Sanctuary. The kickoff project was a 6 KV Solar Electric system to generate the majority of our electricity. The Solar Electric system has been making about 80% of our annual electricity since installation by converting solar energy (photons) into electrical energy (electrons). Therefore, we are using an infinite source of energy instead of non-renewable energy sources such as natural gas, coal, and uranium. The four elements of being a Green Sanctuary involve Sustainable Living, Environmental Justice, Worship & Celebration, and Religious Education. Assessments of the four elements were made by team members, action plans were developed, and some have been implemented. Beginning in 2020 the UUA Green Sanctuary goal changed to focus primarily on joining others in climate action and justice.

**Application** - An application for Green Sanctuary candidacy was written by the committee and submitted May 31, 2017 to the Unitarian Universalist Association for review and comments. The application is on the BUUF website ([berrienuu.org](http://berrienuu.org)).

The GS application was reviewed at UUA by Green Sanctuary Manager Rev. Karen Brammer at [kbrammer@uua.org](mailto:kbrammer@uua.org). On July 31, 2017 the BUUF Green Sanctuary Application was affirmed and **BUUF is now a Green Sanctuary Candidate**. This means that we are on the right track to becoming a UUA designated Green Sanctuary. The final step to be designated a UUA Green Sanctuary is for us to document all our activities and submit them to UUA. Harvey has been meaning to do this for some time. It was his goal to make the Green Sanctuary submission this year, but it did not happen. Submitting the report remains the goal for the upcoming year.

### Sustainable Living

The Solar Electric system continues to generate approximately 80% of our needed electricity since the October 2015 installation. This solar system has resulted in BUUF NOT generating tons of Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) greenhouse gas.

An Electric lawn mower has been used to cut the BUUF grass for five summers and continuing into this growing season. The 56-volt battery is mostly charged with the electricity that we are generating. The idea is to reduce the Carbon footprint of BUUF. Volunteers have been recruited for the season and have been cutting grass for weeks. Please let us know if you are willing to give 1 hour per month. It can be whenever is convenient with the volunteer. Building key code can be shared.

We have reduced the area of lawn by adding another Redbud tree and wood chip in the Redbud grove and one Bea Takeuchi memorial tree with wood chip mulch. Additional lawn areas are being covered with cardboard and leaves to convert to garden. Native plants such as Helianthus have been grown in the raised beds and transplanted around the BUUF property.

Suggestions are always welcome for other sustainable living, gardening and lawn maintenance ideas. Please bring them to a meeting or talk to a Green Sanctuary member (is that you?).

### Environmental Justice

An Environmental Justice Film Series presented a monthly film each 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday starting in fall 2016. After the film, a discussion followed on the Stewardship actions that we can take to reduce our impact on our shared home, PLANET EARTH. The monthly films ceased in March 2020 due to COVID-19. The film series will continue July 15, 2021 with *Kiss The Ground*.

The BUUF Green Sanctuary Team has agreed to again partner with the Fresh Start Children's Garden led by Emma Kinnard. The garden is located at the corner of May and Pearl Streets in Benton Harbor (1104 May St.). Some volunteers have begun helping with planting and weeding in 2020. Future work sessions will happen on Saturday mornings. Volunteers are welcome to help at the garden on Saturday mornings from 10am to 12 pm. Help is with fence building, planting, weeding and child mentoring on gardening and food. Further notifications will be made on work times via the weekly Announcements, website and Sunday Services.

### Worship Services

Approximately 20% of our Sunday Services were focused on Green Sanctuary topics of Sustainability, Earth based wisdom or Environmental Justice. This will continue.

### Religious Education

Green Sanctuary topics of Sustainability, Earth based wisdom or Environmental Justice continue to be incorporated into the children's RE programs. This will continue in the coming year.

A Green Sanctuary 5-year plan and goals were submitted to the board as part of BUUF's recent 5 – year plan.

For more information talk to Harvey Johnson 269-470-1470 [johnsonh4@michigan.gov](mailto:johnsonh4@michigan.gov) or co-chair Diane Gibbons [gmad50@comcast.net](mailto:gmad50@comcast.net).