

# Getting Buy-In for Sustainable Facilities

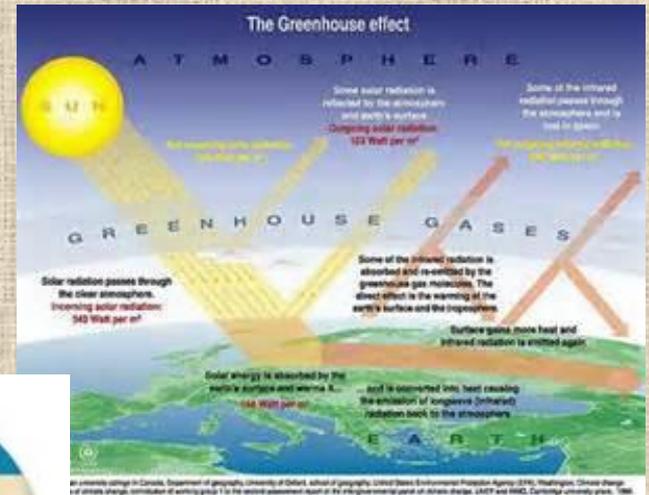
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SUSTAINABLE SANCTUARY  
coalition

# Why It's Hard to Comprehend and Act on Environmental Realities

- We're facing an unprecedented risk
- It's overwhelming
- Hard to see connections
- Fatalism has set in
- The opposition is mighty
- Confusion about the science
- It's not been a values conversation



# Why should you make your facilities as sustainable as possible?

- **Save energy to help reduce greenhouse gases that harm the Earth**
- **Good stewardship of the financial resources of the congregation**
- **It's a matter of social justice and care for the poor who are most affected by climate change**
- **National religious leaders are urging greater Earth care**
- **One of the ways we obey the scriptural command to care for creation**



# Benefits of an Environmental Emphasis for a Congregation

- Can be a way of attracting young people
- Way to attract new people who think churches & synagogues are irrelevant, or who are looking for new purpose
- Can help energize a congregation around a common cause
- Can help members get involved, feel like they are doing something worthwhile, and be part of solutions, which gives hope
- The congregation can be a beacon and role model for the community and other congregations; proud to be a vanguard
- Could increase donations and funding
- Money saved can be used for spiritual purposes



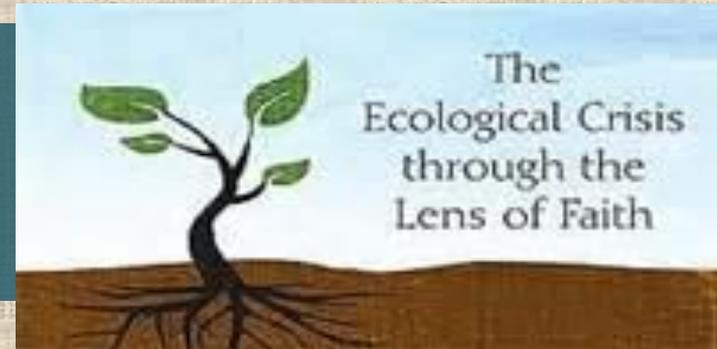
# Countering Objections



1. Costs too much money
2. Don't have the staff or time
3. Don't want to inconvenience people
4. Might alienate some people and cause conflict
5. Donations might go down
6. People are resistant to change
7. Won't make that much difference
8. People are attached to the look of the facility as it is
9. Some things are risky and unproven

1. Perhaps in the short run only. If things are important, we find the money for them.
2. We can get volunteers. Perhaps we need to stop doing lesser important things.
3. Doing the right thing is more important than convenience.
4. Not if we do it right. We can work through conflict if it occurs.
5. Donations might go up too.
6. People get used to change
7. Every little thing counts
8. Saving the Earth may be more important than aesthetics
9. Playing it safe isn't always the way of faith

# Ways to Get Buy-In



- **Hold up what other congregations or the wider community are doing**
- **Create a groundswell or a perception of one to get leaders on board**
- **Get an associate pastor or someone on the staff to support this**
- **Tie it into caring for people, a universal religious value**
- **Visit groups within the congregation and give information and ask for their support**
- **Maintain good communication and the positives**
- **Focus on solutions along with the problems**
- **Do things gradually**
- **Always frame things in a religious context: The statements of leadership, the Bible, or credible persons.**

# The Psychology of Environmental Communication



- **Know your audience:** discover misconceptions and their mental models and replace erroneous perceptions with facts
- **Get your audience's attention**
  - Frame issue from multiple perspectives
  - Highlight LOCAL environmental impact
  - Focus on losses more than gains
  - Frame your message to what people already care about
  - Frame the environment as a *concrete, personal* concern for all
- **Be aware of the finite pool of worry; acknowledge other concerns**
- **Counter the *single action bias* and give other options and incremental action ideas**
- **Tap into social identities and affiliations; enlist the help of a person people trust and follow**
- **Encourage group participation:** include stakeholders in decisions, so they support the outcome
- **Make behavior change easier:** default option and near-term incentives

# Ideas from the book SWITCH

## **Direct the rational side.**

**Script the critical behavior**

**Follow the bright spots.**

**Make the destination clear.**

## **Motivate the feeling side.**

**Stir people's emotions**

**Shrink the change**

**Help people change their identity**

## **Shape the path.**

**Tweak the environment to make it easier for people to change.**

**Shape the habits of people.**

**Build on the group mentality**

