



Interfaith
Partners for the
CHESAPEAKE

PLEDGE SIGNING CELEBRATIONS

ACTION KIT



C E L E B R A T I N G



HOW TO USE THIS KIT

Signing the pledge is something to celebrate! Celebrating signing the pledge with the rest of your congregation allows everyone to feel involved and brings visibility to your creation care efforts. Celebrating can also bring energy and momentum to your congregation's creation care work.

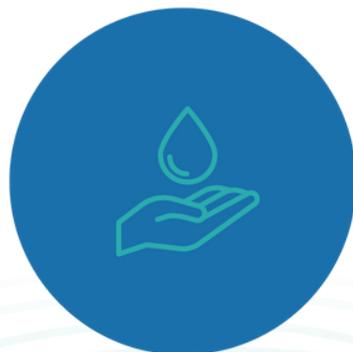
This kit has ideas and resources for three pledge signing celebrating activities:

- Pledge signing ceremony
- Tree planting ceremony
- Liturgy or worship service



THE PARTNER CONGREGATION POSTER

If your congregation has received its Partner Congregation Poster (see above), we encourage you to use it as part of your celebration event and display it in your building. The poster was designed with spaces and lines for people to sign it, so it can be a great addition to your pledge signing ceremony. The poster can also be used to generate interest and excitement around the pledge.



**"The roots of all goodness
lie in the soil of
appreciation for goodness"**

Dalai Lama

PLEDGE SIGNING CEREMONY

Once your Green Team has signed the pledge, invite the rest of your congregation to sign it as well! Hosting a pledge signing ceremony is a simple yet meaningful way to engage your whole congregation in the pledge and encourage them to be actively involved in the creation care efforts at your congregation.

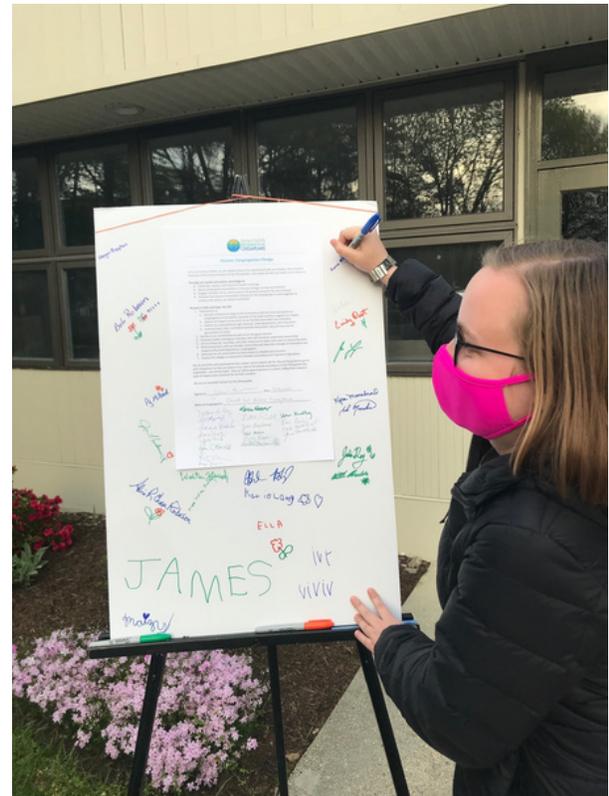
EXAMPLE: CHRIST OUR ANCHOR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

In April of 2021, Christ Our Anchor Presbyterian Church hosted a community focused drive-by pledge signing event.

The scene was simple. A gorgeous day, a folding table with a white tablecloth, plenty of information about being a good environmental steward, and a box of Green Tea with an 'M' added to make it say 'Green Team'! At the far end of the table, on an easel and surrounded by colorful markers, was a large poster board with the IPC pledge in the middle.* The first 30 signers all received a re-usable bag, filled with goodies like seeds, stormwater information, and thoughtful prayers to share, enjoy, and reflect on.

Each member, of any age, had a chance to step up and add their name to the pledge. Together these signatures symbolize Christ Our Anchor's commitment to the environment, the greater community, and our shared waters. It shows that they want to be part of an environmental movement bigger than their congregation.

*This could be swapped with the Partner Congregation Poster





TREE PLANTING CEREMONY

Planting a tree to commemorate your congregation's commitment can be a meaningful way to include everyone in the pledge signing process. Holding a tree planting ceremony allows the whole congregation to participate, and afterwards you will have a beautiful reminder of the commitment your congregation made to care for creation.

See the next page for reflections that you can incorporate into your ceremony, and check out our tree planting activity kit for more specific instructions on planting a tree.

LITURGY OR WORSHIP SERVICE

Taking the pledge is an act rooted in faith. Celebrating signing the pledge during your worship services can help create a meaningful connection between your faith and environmental stewardship for the rest of your congregation.

There is no one way to incorporate the pledge into your worship service. You may want to highlight excerpts from your faith's sacred texts or recite psalms or hymns that relate to environmental stewardship. See the next page for reflections that you can incorporate into your service.

"WE SIGNED THE PLEDGE" CARDS

IPC has printed 2" x 2" cards that make it easy to spread the word that your congregation has signed the pledge! This could be something you hand out during your celebrating event or to families after services or. The card contains a QR code linking to the full pledge. You might even want to hand-write your green team leader's email address on the back in case someone is inspired to join your team! We're happy to mail you 100 cards. If you need more, we can send you the file so that you can print off more through a printer. Contact our office if you would like the cards to hand out.





REFLECTIONS

Below are a reflection to use or adapt as appropriate for your celebration.

PARTNER PLEDGE REFLECTION

COMMUNITY

As people of faith, we are called to be in community. In our journeys with our faith practice - whatever that may be - we are not alone. Whether it is prayer, worship, community service, or other reflection, we are called to do it with others. We are stronger together. In our response to our call to be caretakers of Creation, we aren't alone either. We are creating a movement of faith communities coming together to heal the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed, and we are honored you are part of it.

Let us come together to engage members of our own community - building Green Teams, educating, and bringing about positive change in our own congregations. Our call to community is not limited to this. We must also look outwardly - making connections to the broader community and the world. Knowing that we all live on the same planet means we are intricately connected to one another - not just to other members of our chosen faith communities.

This is where your work with us here at IPC comes in. The movement we are creating - the One Water Partnership - is a response to a calling of community.

We commit ourselves to engaging members of our community, both within and outside of our congregations, working together to protect and restore our shared watershed, preserving it for generations to come. Creator, help us advocate for all Creation, build connections with the broader world, and remember that we are called to care for our neighbors. Dear Creator, be with us as we engage and ignite our own faith communities, and those beyond our congregation, all to honor the blessed gift of water, the sustainer of life.



ANSWERING THE CALL OF CREATION

As we honor our moral responsibility to our Mother Earth, we reflect on our journeys to be good caretakers of what has been entrusted to us. In this process, we hear God's spirit calling out to us through nature. We are being led to seek out the sacred bonds that connect us -and that compel us to care for our Chesapeake Bay and its watershed.

What kind of action are we being called to? Education about environmental issues? Forming a Green Team in our congregation? Signing up for a Learning Labs webinar to further learn how to make a Green Team more efficient and effective? Recruiting another congregation to sign the Partner Congregation Pledge?

Our discernment at IPC has led us to provide programming for you: tools to help you in your care of Creation. We pray that you will join us as we start a movement to empower faith congregations to restore and protect waterways in their own communities. The Divine Spirit reaches out to us in nature. It beckons us to remember our moral bond to Creation - turning us toward restoring and healing the environment all around. Loving and redeeming Creator, we are here to listen to your call to protecting our precious watershed. Putting our faith into action, we promise to heed this in our daily lives.

Listening to nature's call for healing and honoring our sacred bond with our Creator, we pray that our actions will compound together and make the ultimate difference - to preserve our waterways for generations to come. We will answer our Creator's call in nature. Amen.



HEALING / CARETAKING

As people of faith and residents of this planet, we recognize our moral responsibility to take care of the environment around us. We have seen the damage that our actions have caused - sea level rise, climate change, and pollution in our waterways. As people of the Chesapeake watershed, we are drawn to the water, and our faith draws us to care for it. Our calling to this work is not just to reverse previous harmful behaviors, but to actively take part in the healing process.

What can we do to right our wrongs? Many faiths have traditions, sacraments, or holy days (Confession, Ash Wednesday, Yom Kippur, etc) to address our need to name the things we have done wrong - the ways we have caused hurt. This is our first step in healing. Going forward, we name these things, and look for ways to change our behavior in the future. We have been entrusted as caretakers of this Earth, and part of being a good caretaker is constantly working to make things better.

The Partner Congregation Pledge brings you into a movement of faith communities who want to do the right thing by saying to one another: We will heal the Chesapeake. Dear Creator, guide us in our path toward healing the Earth and righting our wrongs. Amen.

GRATITUDE / REVERENCE

For most people, nature brings about feelings of gratitude for the Divine Spirit who created the Earth. As people of faith, we recognize this as the catalyst for our work - the fire that drives us. From a kayak or sailboat or pier, we take one look at our Chesapeake Bay and thank the heavens for the beauty of our natural environment.

Thank you Creator, for blessing us with such glory here on Earth, and entrusting us with the care of it. What a special task: to be a guardian of nature. Not only is it our duty to honor the Earth as we honor our Creator, but it is our duty to honor the Earth as we honor one another. We have roles to play in the community for the sake of our neighbor and this is what we do. We take care of our natural environment for generations to come. Making a commitment to this movement of faith communities working to protect and restore the Chesapeake is one way we get to live into our call as caretakers of the Earth. It is a way that we can honor our Creator and honor each other.



PARTNER PLEDGE LITANY

(Can be inserted into regular worship service or used as a commissioning/blessing service)

We affirm our commitment to protecting and restoring the Chesapeake Bay watershed with these prayers:

Prayer:

(Place Hands Upon Forehead)

Dear Creator, may our minds be one with Creation

(Place hands upon eyes)

With our eyes, may we see the beauty that surrounds us

(Place hands over mouth)

May we only speak from truth, and with love

(Place hands over heart)

May our heart beat in rhythm with Creation

(Place hands palm up in front of us)

And may our hands carry out the work before us in peace and union with you,

Amen



COMMUNITY

We are called to be in community, to do this work and support each other in love.
We are an Interfaith Partner for the Chesapeake.

We will engage our own communities and seek connections with others as we build a movement to protect and restore our local waterways.
We are an Interfaith Partner for the Chesapeake.

CALL OF CREATION

God's (Our Creator's) Spirit calls out to us through Creation, beckoning us to take action.
We will answer the Call of Creation.

As a Partner Congregation, we will discern our call to action.
We will answer the Call of Creation.

HEALING/CARETAKING

We acknowledge the harm we've caused, and promise to right our wrongs.
We are agents of healing.

Oh Divine Spirit, guide us in the ways of justice and truth.
We are agents of healing.

THANKSGIVING

In love and hope, we give thanks for the beauty of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
We honor our sacred bond.

We give thanks for blessing us with such glory here on Earth, and entrusting us with the task of being a guardian of Creation.
We honor our sacred bond.

We go in peace to do the work we are called to do! Amen.