



In 2022, the Creation Care team began to fulfill the charge from the 2018 EDRI Convention to establish a task force to address issues of climate change, pollution, environmental justice, water resources and stewardship of church-owned properties. The team received funding from the diocese of \$13,000 to undertake these tasks. The Creation Care Ministry intends to continue this work in 2023.

On September 17, 2022, the Creation Care team mounted the first ever diocesan Conference for Creation Care at St. Mary's, Portsmouth. Attended by fifty members of the diocese, including the Rt. Rev. Nicholas Knisely, those present participated in a three-hour workshop by the Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas entitled *Taking Heart in Troubled Times: From Hope to Action*. In the afternoon, attendees developed ideas for action on individual, parish and diocesan levels. The Creation Care Ministry team will collate the results to aid future planning.

The day concluded with an outdoor liturgy called Wild Worship. The term describes outdoor experiences of environmental education combined with scripture, prayer, song and spiritual reflection. Scott Ruhren, Senior Educator with the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, spoke about the trees, plants and wildlife on the St. Mary's campus. A closing Eucharist used forms offered for use in the Season of Creation. The team plans to make a Conference for Creation Care an annual diocesan event.

During 2022, the Creation Care Ministry offered Wild Worship experiences for children in Middletown and East Greenwich, in cooperation with the Audubon Society. A Wild Worship mini-pilgrimage focusing on wetlands, ponds and the sea took place in Little Compton on September 10, partnering with the Nature Conservancy.

Four parishes and a deanery received Creation Care mini-grants in 2022. The Creation Care Ministry sought applications for projects addressing energy efficiency, climate resilience, food insecurity, environmental stewardship and education. Funded projects included a pollinator garden, the creation of a garden by an urban parish, improving building energy efficiency, fixing water run-off problems and engaging a Rhode Island indigenous speaker to address environmental justice issues. With adequate funding, we plan to offer more mini-grants in 2023, with specific outreach to parishes and missions challenged by low staffing and decreasing numbers.

Work continues on the development of a Rhode Island Episcopal Creation Care Network. The goal of this project is to forge connections between people already committed to or interested in environmental and climate issues. To join the Network, please follow via [this link](#).

With the intention of building partnerships with secular and interfaith environmental groups, the Rev. Norman MacLeod, Co-Chair, serves on the board of Rhode Island Interfaith Power & Light and represents the Diocese as a member of the Rhode Island Environmental Education Association.

Diocesan Council appointed Co-Chairs Chris Schillaci and the Rev. Norman MacLeod in 2021. Emily Skeeahan, a communicant at St. Mary's, Portsmouth, and a marine scientist with a climate change

expertise, and the Rev. Tanya Watt, Priest-in-Charge at Trinity Church, Cranston, came on board in 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Norman MacLeod