



## First Unitarian Church of Victoria One Planet Saanich Action Plan 2024 Report Card

Review completed by: Glenyss Turner

First Unitarian Church of Victoria (FUCV) joined One Planet Saanich (OPS) in 2018, in good part because the 10 principles of One Planet Living (illustrated at right) complement the 8 Principles of Unitarianism. The One Planet Living framework gives our congregation a practical way to live out our principles and collaborate with like-minded organizations and experts in our community. Through agreed-upon actions, the framework holds FUCV accountable as we strive to embody our goals of sustainability and social justice. One Planet Living (OPL) supports our church's mission and its aspiration to nurture a loving community, inclusion, social justice, and care for the environment. This allows us to identify areas within the organization that can be improved upon, while honouring our collective successes in taking steps towards a more sustainable and just future.



This Report Card summarizes our targets and objectives through the 10 One Planet Living principles, assigning an overall grade to each principle as well as a more granular grade which evaluates the success and completeness of the actions and progress on outcomes and indicators in each principle.

## Report Card Highlights and Lowlights:

Important successes highlighted in this Report Card:

- Installation and activation of 60 rooftop solar panels on Sanctuary building by end of 2021.
- ***Climate Ready: Preparing Physically, Emotionally and Spiritually for Climate Change***, a compelling four-part workshop series led by FUCV Ministerial Intern Reilly Yeo, held from April 30 to May 25, 2023 was well attended.
- FUCV ensures a living wage and benefits for ministers and staff as of 2020.
- Hosting a FUCV EcoGames, a fun carbon challenge that ran from October 2019 to May 2020 with 100 participants.

Ways we can grow and areas to improve upon:

- Nurturing volunteerism and fun.
- Making bicycles and e-bikes more welcome and accommodated.
- Considering installing power wall batteries to provide zero carbon energy during hydro outages.
- Offering a program about the spiritual value of nature for all ages.
- Nurturing and supporting FUCV's Environment and Climate Action Committee.

FUCV wishes to express deep gratitude to Consultant Cora Hallsworth (Lead, One Planet Saanich) and to Power to Be (OPS colleague organization) who generously shared their Assessment Rubric and other Report Card ideas.



Developed by Bioregional sustainability consultancy in the UK, there are 5 One Planet Communities around the world:

- Oxfordshire, UK
- Saanich, Canada
- Durban, South Africa
- Tarusa, Russia
- Mariana (Sao Paulo), Brazil


# One Planet Report Card 2024

## One Planet Assessment Guide

### Report Card Grading:


Each outcome, action and indicator has been given a subjective scoring letter grade (A through F or IC) based on progress made from 2018 through April 2024. As point of contact for One Planet Saanich at FUCV, Glenyss Turner undertook to gather information from the Church Board, Ministers and staff, responsible committees, and the numerous volunteers who spent many hours of work on these initiatives.

A=80%+ completion; B=70-79% completion; C=60-69% completion; D=50-59% completion; F=0-49% completion; IC=incomplete or data unavailable.

 <b>Health and Happiness</b>		Grade: A
<b>Outcomes</b>		
A	➤ Caring for the social, mental and emotional health of congregation, Ministers and staff.	
A	➤ Church fosters personal and community growth.	
<b>Actions</b>		
IC	➤ Develop a "Many Hands" volunteer recruitment program.	
A	➤ Consider a program about the spiritual value of nature/reverence for life.	
<b>Indicators</b>		
IC	➤ Number of new volunteers per year.	
A	➤ Number of participants in program.	
<b>Additional Notes</b>		
<p>While a "Many Hands" program never got off the ground, volunteer recruitment is consistently addressed within the congregation. In addition to the stresses of Covid-19, FUCV's congregation experienced a distressing number of deaths and serious illnesses in recent years. Many of these folks were "heavy lifters" in volunteer work and are deeply missed. Despite these challenges, FUCV has gained new members and remains a vibrant congregation. There are fewer in-person events than there were pre-Covid, but all services are now hybrid (both in-person and via Zoom) which improves accessibility and in-person service attendance has rebounded. The congregation is learning to strike a balance between community-building activities (e.g., Unitarian Walkers, musical coffee houses, UU Lunch, etc.) while not overtaxing volunteers.</p>		

In 2023, FUCV hired Unitarian Universalist (UU) Stewardship Consultant Rachel Maxwell to facilitate a comprehensive evaluation of the overall health and outlook of our congregation. This was a big success, helping our congregation understand that many faith communities are struggling after Covid-19 and discover best practices in steering our church towards a vibrant future. Our congregation continues to strive towards the objectives delineated by the Stewardship Report. A great deal of effort has also been made to develop an inspiring new Mission Statement for FUCV, the final draft of which will be revealed on April 28, 2024 and voted on at the AGM on May 26, 2024.

***Climate Ready: Preparing Physically, Emotionally and Spiritually for Climate Change***, an outstanding and compelling four-part workshop series, was developed and led by FUCV Ministerial Intern Reilly Yeo from April 30 to May 25, 2023. The two separate (virtual and in-person) workshops had a strong spiritual component throughout. Topics covered over the four weeks were: Climate Crisis; Climate Emergency; Climate Justice; Climate Change. Participation was capped at 8 each; one workshop was full and the other had 7 participants. Ministers are interested in offering a program for all ages in the future.

 <b>Equity and Local Economy</b>		Grade: A
<b>Outcomes</b>		
A	➤ Social, cultural, economic and environmental justice and diversity prevails.	
A	➤ Ministers and staff are paid a living wage, including benefits.	
<b>Actions</b>		
A	➤ FUCV continues to sponsor refugee families as the congregation is willing and able.	
A	➤ Confirm that the Church’s investments meet Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) criteria.	
A	➤ Ministers and staff are ensured a living wage and benefits package.	
<b>Indicators</b>		
IC	➤ Report from Refugee Committee.	
A	➤ Report on ESG from Finance Committee.	
A	➤ Ministers and staff receive a living wage and benefits.	
<b>Additional Notes</b>		
<p>FUCV Ministers and congregation are actively working on fostering a church community that embraces diversity and inclusion which will be reflected in a forthcoming new Mission Statement, other church communications and outreach. An increasing number of activities and programs for all ages are very successful.</p>		




The congregation continues to have great success sponsoring refugee families coming to Greater Victoria (see photos below).

The church's investments are with Genus Capital Management, Vancouver, who specialize in fossil-free and ESG investments. 70% of the church's portfolio is invested in Fossil Free bond and equity funds. The remainder of the portfolio is in Canadian Treasury Bill, Government Bond and Commercial Mortgage funds.

Ministers and staff continue to receive a living wage and benefits which commenced in 2020.



*Two of our grateful refugee families*

 <b>Culture and Community</b>		Grade: B
<b>Outcomes</b>		
B	➤ A congregation that embodies the Eight Unitarian Principles and One Planet Living.	
B	➤ A vibrant and welcoming community that continues to attract new members.	
<b>Actions</b>		
B	➤ Continue to nurture the church's many successful programs and services.	
B	➤ Promote One Planet Living (OPL).	
A	➤ Run a year-long EcoGames carbon challenge to inspire One Planet Living.	
<b>Indicators</b>		
IC	➤ Inventory of programs and services offered.	

IC	➤ Report from Environment and Climate Action Committee (ECAC) on promoting OPL.
IC	<p>➤ Number of new Members and Supporters; total number of Members and Supporters.</p> <p><b>Additional Notes</b></p> <p>For better and for worse, the Covid pandemic has brought societal change and left its mark on our congregation. FUCV’s upgraded AV system has facilitated the transition to hybrid in-person/Zoom services, which are now <i>de rigueur</i> and require more volunteer work, particularly for the AV team. Attendance and energy are rebounding, both in-person and on Zoom, but there are fewer in-person gatherings, such as monthly “Souper Sunday” soup lunches. While these events were very popular (attendance usually well over 100), they also required a great deal of volunteer effort. While Zoom services have improved accessibility and convenience, they are less effective at fostering community and friendships than in-person contact. New programs and events continue to be developed across the community – including music, fun and community-building events – to foster spiritual development and to strengthen the congregation in the post-Covid era. It is hoped that the new Mission Statement will further inspire the present congregation while attracting new members.</p> <p>Prior to Covid, the Environmental Action Team (EAT) – now renamed the Environment and Climate Action Committee (ECAC) -- was very active at promoting One Planet Living, publishing monthly “Green Corner” articles in the church newsletter, hosting guest speakers who educated on climate change and other topics, contributing to Earth Sunday and other church services, etc. A great deal of the congregation’s sustainability efforts are now being funnelled into the Climate Action Research Team of Greater Victoria Acting Together (GVAT) and the West Coast Climate Action Network (We-CAN). ECAC is rebounding after Covid, thanks to the tireless efforts of Jim Jordan with displays, Green Corner articles, and events held after Sunday service.</p> <p>EAT’s EcoGames, an 8-month carbon challenge provided a friendly competition between individuals and between Neighbourhood Groups from October 2019 to May 2020. A whole host of materials were developed to stimulate interest with weekly updates appearing in the E-Weekly. The flagship component was the <b>Player Scorecard</b> which allocated gold, silver, and bronze virtual “medals” to players in the areas of: calculating your Carbon Footprint; transportation; diet; household; waste; and, consumption.</p> <p>The adult EcoGames had 100 participants, but the children’s games faltered with only one. Parents were enthusiastic, but too busy. The EcoGames was awarded a \$500 grant from VanCity as a climate change awareness program. The grant was used to defray printing expenses as well as award prizes (“Shop Local” gift cards) to the top three individuals and many other participants through a random draw. An EcoGames Celebration event was planned with a display of EVs, etc., but was cancelled due to Covid restrictions.</p>

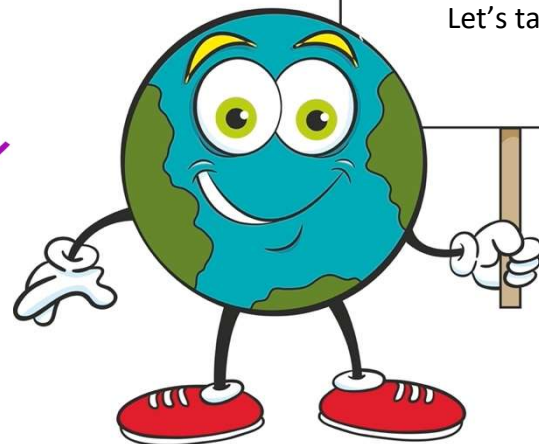
Glenyss Turner made a presentation on the EcoGames to an OPS gathering, which garnered much interest and sharing of EcoGames materials across Saanich.

Marion Pape, Evelyn Peters and Philip Symons have organized a new Outreach Shelf near the church entrance that is proving to be very attractive and popular. The team maintains a monthly schedule so that the shelf remains refreshed and uncluttered. The display shrlg gives the congregation ideas for social action or simply for information. It also promotes the monthly Share the Plate charity and church events/fundraisers.



*EcoGames*

EcoGames logo design by Shannon Oatway





Outcomes

A ➤ Church land and its native biodiversity is optimally stewarded for present and future generations.

Actions

A ➤ Create a grounds and gardens plan.

F ➤ Investigate the feasibility of group composting, whereby members without access to composting at home could bring their compost to church.

Indicators

A ➤ Grounds and Gardens Committee report.

A ➤ Native Plants Garden report.

A ➤ Garden of Eat’N team report.

F ➤ Group composting report.

Additional Notes

Tree management and vegetable gardens are ongoing. A Native Plants Garden was researched and organized by 4 members of the congregation and approved by the Board September 8, 2022. The site was prepared in 2022-2023 and planting took place in fall 2023. The opening ceremony was held on October 1, 2023 with Indigenous speaker Virgil Sampson from the Tsartlip Reserve (pictured below singing the Honour Song).

FUCV’s prodigious vegetable garden, the *Garden of Eat’N*, features an in-season *Sunday Morning Market*, offering fresh produce for sale by donation, but moving forward there will be an increased emphasis on supervised, family-friendly 'U-Pick'. During the month-long church closure in the summer, the emphasis will be placed on cash crops that can be frozen and processed for sale at the winter iteration of the *Sunday Morning Market*, which features juice blends and other preserved products.

In the congregational survey about the actions in FUCV’s OPAP, the group composting project ranked 11 out of 13 actions and also was stymied by the church being closed due to Covid restrictions. Depending on congregants’ housing, municipalities may pick up green bins at their residences. Group composting was deemed to be a dispensable idea, especially given the volunteer shortage, the amount of volunteer work involved and the fact that many congregants now attend church via Zoom rather than in person.





Native Plants Garden




Opening ceremony October 1, 2023 with Indigenous speaker Virgil Sampson from the Tsartlip Reserve singing the Honour Song.



Garden and gardeners of Eat'N




 <b>Sustainable Water</b>		Grade: B
<b>Outcomes</b>		
A	➤ A clean and reliable water supply for our congregation, tenants and land, now and into the future.	
IC	➤ Water is appreciated as a precious resource.	
<b>Actions</b>		
A	➤ Create a water and septic plan.	
<b>Indicators</b>		
A	➤ Five-year Maintenance Plan and the 30-year Replacement Plan.	
<b>Additional Notes</b>		
The domestic water supply for the Church Buildings and Grounds is provided from a well on our property near the upper paved parking lot on the Church property. The well has proven to be a safe and reliable		

water source for over 25 years. Our water supply system is overseen by Allan Dakin, a member of the Church, a Professional Engineer and a practicing consultant on Water Supply and Drainage on Vancouver Island.


The sewage from our buildings is processed in one of two septic tanks and then disposed of in one of our two tile fields. Our septic tanks are pumped out regularly as required by the Municipality of Saanich. Our sewage management system is overseen by Doug McInnis, a member of our Church and a practicing Professional Engineer.

These two systems are included in the Five-year Maintenance Plan and the 30-year Replacement Plan prepared by the Building Maintenance Committee of the Church. The Committee's mandate is delineated in FUCV's Policy Manual, section 3.6.2b of which stipulates that, "all repairs and operations of the buildings be conducted in a manner consistent with prudent environmental practice."

Appreciating water as a precious resource to be addressed as part of promoting One Planet Living.

 <b>Local and Sustainable Food</b>		Grade: B
<b>Outcomes</b>		
A	➤ FUCV contributes to local region's future ability to feed itself.	
C	➤ Plant-based diets are promoted to reduce eco-footprint and improve animal welfare.	
<b>Actions</b>		
B	➤ Investigate the feasibility of offering an FUCV Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) service.	
F	➤ Share favourite vegetarian and vegan recipes on FUCV website.	
<b>Indicators</b>		
IC	➤ FUCV CSA service to be investigated by ECAC.	
F	➤ Recipes featured on website.	
<b>Additional Notes</b>		
<p>At the time of our investigation into offering a CSA service, we were informed that there was not sufficient agricultural supply to offer this. However, it's possible that this is no longer the case, depending on availability of volunteers to undertake this. At this point, congregational energy has been focused on the church's Garden of Eat'N.</p> <p>Promoting plant-based diets has garnered some pushback from the congregation. It can be alienating when people are told what they should or should not eat. It is less alienating when the environmental benefits of</p>		

reducing meat and dairy consumption are addressed as part of promoting One Planet Living to those who have an interest in reducing their eco-footprint. Dietary preferences and restrictions are widely catered to at church events. To conserve volunteer time and effort, recipes are shared informally among the congregation.

 <b>Travel and Transport</b>		Grade: B
<b>Outcomes</b>		
B	➤	Sustaining community within a reduced travel eco-footprint.
B	➤	Low- and zero-carbon vehicles are promoted and accommodated.
<b>Actions</b>		
B	➤	Raise awareness of ecological impact of air travel.
A	➤	Install two Level 2 EV chargers.
IC	➤	Develop church-related transportation policy for FUCV-related business.
A	➤	Reduce FUCV's eco-footprint for transportation.
<b>Indicators</b>		
B	➤	Green Corner articles and EcoGames materials raising awareness of GHG emissions of air travel.
A	➤	Average kWh of energy charged through EV chargers per month with equivalent km driven emissions-free.
IC	➤	Travel expenditures from Ministers' Professional Expenses; frequency of out-of-town meetings versus conferences attended virtually.
A	➤	Virtual attendance at weekly church services, meetings, events, etc.
<b>Additional Notes</b>		
<p>Air travel for pleasure is a personal choice for many and/or is required for business. Going on trips is highly valued by many people who can afford it and there is pent-up demand as Covid restrictions have been lifted. Before Covid, awareness about the GHG emissions of air travel was communicated through <i>Green Corner</i> articles and through the EcoGames carbon challenge. ECAC may choose to continue to address this issue as they promote One Planet Living.</p> <p>Having received approval from the FUCV Board to install two EV chargers in October 2019, the chargers were installed in January 2020. The chargers are well used and charge about 200kWh of energy per month, which is enough to drive about 13,200km per year emissions-free. Users pay a nominal hourly rate to charge their vehicles into a payment jar in the church office through an honour system.</p>		



While the church does not have a policy on travel for church-related business, tight budgets act as a *de facto* restraint on travel. Travel for Ministers are included under Ministers' Professional Expenses (\$11,324 for the 2024 Budget, but expenditures for up to October 31, 2023 were \$0). Many events, including the CUC AGM, are now accessible exclusively by Zoom, obviating the need for travel.

The Covid pandemic and the church's upgraded AV system contributed to reducing the congregation's eco-footprint for transportation. Services are now hybrid (in-person and on Zoom) permanently and both are popular. This reduces emissions and increases accessibility. Most church administrative meetings are done via Zoom which has contributed to shrinking the church's eco-footprint for transportation.

Bicycles and E-bikes are becoming increasingly popular. E-bikes, in particular, are a good option for many, considering the church's rural location. A second, improved, bike rack has been installed under a grove of trees (to be out of view of bike thieves), but it is not secure, not sheltered from the elements, and there is no charging outlet available. The covered shed space was required by the Grounds and Gardens Committees. An online bike route map is being promoted by ECAC.


2 Level 2 EV chargers




A second and improved bike rack





 <b>Materials and Products</b>		Grade: B
<b>Outcomes</b>		
B	➤ A circular, sharing economy is modelled and promoted at church.	
B	➤ Procurement meets sustainability and ethical criteria.	
<b>Actions</b>		
IC	➤ Investigate feasibility of establishing a community tool shed for tool-sharing and/or repair cafe amongst the church community.	
B	➤ Church staff and volunteers are familiarized with sustainable procurement practices.	
<b>Indicators</b>		
C	➤ Tool shed is operational.	
B	➤ 1 or more sustainable products procured.	
<b>Additional Notes</b>		
<p>Eco-friendly products are purchased for the church, but sometimes cost saving is a prioritizing factor. Paper Orders of Service are no longer printed, thereby reducing paper consumption and volunteer effort). Service information appear on the video screens in the Sanctuary, Lion Lounge and on Zoom.</p> <p>ECAC is developing a trial of an ingenious Virtual Tool Shed, a shareable Google document whereby members of the congregation can borrow tools from others on a one-to-one basis.</p>		


 <b>Zero Waste</b>		Grade: B
<b>Outcomes</b>		
B	➤ Reduce waste, ultimately sending zero waste to landfill.	
<b>Actions</b>		
A	➤ Request information on CRD waste reduction and food packaging policies/practices.	
F	➤ Promote and sell by donation reusable produce bags.	
B	➤ Evaluate effectiveness of current waste and recycling procedures.	
<b>Indicators</b>		
A	➤ Tour of Hartland Landfill site.	
F	➤ Reusable produce bags available at church.	
B	➤ Efforts by ECAC to evaluate waste and recycling procedures.	

### Additional Notes

To increase awareness of waste, a group tour of the Hartland Landfill site took place in May 2023, although the tour omitted the biosolids residuals treatment facility which is of great concern to members of our congregation.

There was a lack of volunteer interest and capacity to pursue offering reusable produce bags for sale by donation. However, coffee hour and social functions wash dishes instead of using disposables. Paper towels used in washrooms are put in the green bin. Waste, recyclables and compost are picked up by a private firm and delivered for processing.

Waste and recycling at church were reviewed by members of ECAC with a view to optimizing waste and recycling reduction. Covid necessitated the provision of disposable masks and hand sanitizers which added to waste, but are now optional and available for church attendees. Microphone covers were used to reduce spread of the virus, which also added to waste. With approximately half the attendees attending service in person and half on Zoom, on-site waste is reduced.

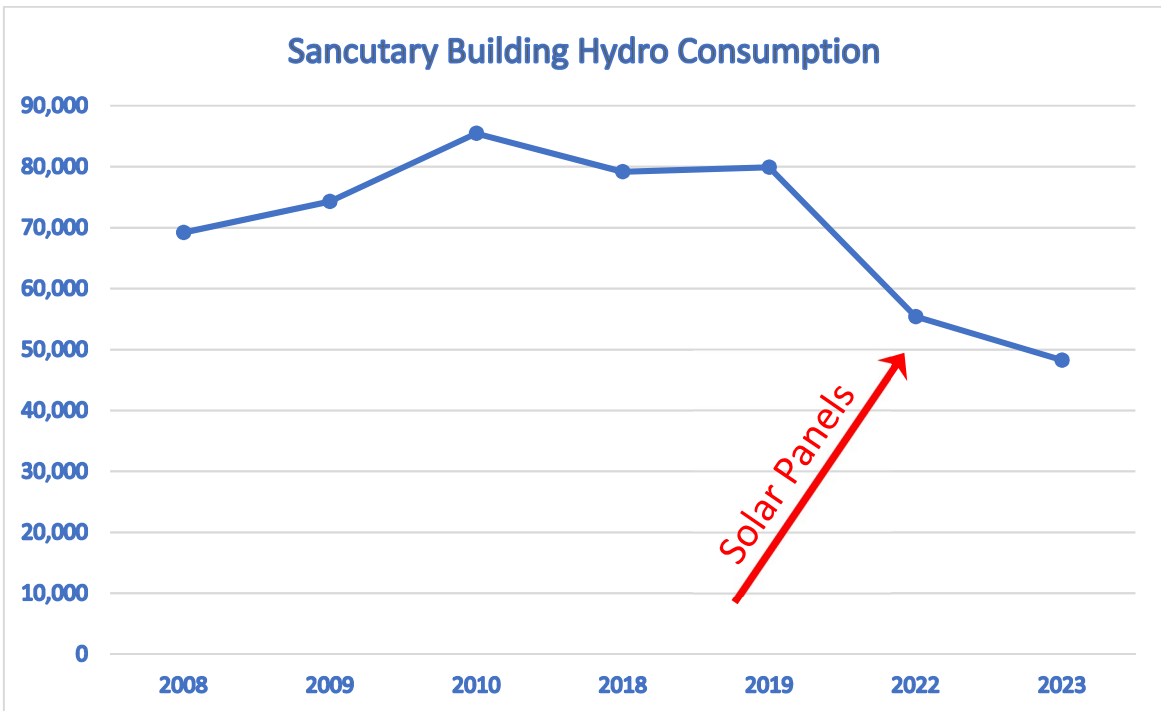
 Zero Carbon Energy		Grade: B
<b>Outcomes</b>		
A	➤ Energy efficiency in buildings is optimized.	
A	➤ Church has adequate, renewable and resilient energy, now and into the future.	
<b>Actions</b>		
A	➤ Investigate the potential for onsite renewable energy.	
IC	➤ Consider a battery power wall system to draw on renewables for use during full or partial power outages.	
A	➤ Review buildings for heat and power cost efficiency.	
A	➤ Upgrade lighting in church buildings to energy efficient LED bulbs.	
A	➤ Conduct an audit of energy use by fuel types being used by buildings.	
F	➤ Investigate replacing propane heat with heat pump(s).	
<b>Indicators</b>		
A	➤ 60 photovoltaic solar panels installed and activated on church roof.	
F	➤ A battery power wall system to draw on renewables for use during full or partial power outages was deemed unaffordable at this time.	
A	➤ Buildings reviewed for heat and power source and cost efficiency.	
B	➤ Energy efficient lighting installed where accessible.	

IC	➤ Wattage saved on efficient lighting.
B	➤ Hydroelectric consumption: 5 years before solar panels, 2 years after solar panels and counting [see graph below].
B	➤ Propane consumption.
IC	➤ Current carbon footprint of church buildings.

**Additional Notes**

With strong support from the congregation, a Solar Panels Task Force was established to consider cost and payback for onsite solar panels as part of a BC Hydro net metering program, and consider a battery power wall system to draw on renewables for use during power outages (there is no running water during outages). Solar panels were approved, but a battery system was deemed too expensive. Solar panels were installed and activated in late 2021. As of February 26, 2024, the solar panels had generated 54,540kWh of energy, roughly equivalent to \$7,090 worth of electricity. The chart below depicts a “before” and “after” solar panels hydro consumption in the Sanctuary building.

One of two church heat pumps was original and was replaced at end of its lifespan in October 2020. Accessible lighting in church buildings was upgraded to energy efficient LED bulbs in Fall 2019 by Bernhard, Matthias and Aaron Spalteholz. The only propane being used is in the rental accommodation on the upper floors of the Farmhouse (total annual propane cost for tenants is \$1,000). The ground floor is heated by heat pump, as is the Sanctuary building. The Board is not considering replacing the propane in the Farmhouse at this time due to other pressing items on their agenda.



## Summary

Like most faith congregations, FUCV has limited resources. Time (for Ministers, staff and volunteers), money, effort, energy, good ideas, and optimism are precious commodities. Throw in a pandemic, a global poly-crisis, and an escalating cost of living and these resources become ever scarcer.

Clearly, FUCV – with the invaluable support from OPS – has done an admirable job of honing their impressive record of living the Principles of Unitarianism and the 10 Principles of One Planet Living. The actions in this report were a “big ask” for mostly volunteers, but kudos are due to the Ministers, staff and congregation as well as the support community of OPS.

Our inspiring colleagues from One Planet Saanich (taken at a Speed Consulting Event)



Our work in this area will never be complete or perfect but, as Leonard Cohen famously wrote:

**There's a crack in everything.**

**That's what lets the light in.**