

# Living by Principles Saves Money for Unitarians on Energy Bills

By ANGIE BUGG

SES ENERGY CONSERVATION COORDINATOR



One of the Unitarian Universalist Principles is “Respect for the interdependent web of all existence, of which we are a part.” The Unitarian Congregation of Saskatoon’s (UCS) most recent commitment to this principle has been to focus on reaching the status of a Green Sanctuary. A Green Sanctuary congregation requires understanding Sustainable Living, which is the need to treat the world gently by using fewer resources and by becoming mindful of our choices. UCS has embraced this, in part by ensuring that energy efficiency stays top of mind when managing their building.

When UCS bought an old church in 2005, the congregation started making changes to reduce energy and water consumption. They have now:

- added insulation to the attic and the crawl space;
- sealed duct work;
- replaced furnaces with high efficiency models, and added programmable thermostats;
- repaired or replaced windows, or added storm windows;
- removed an unused and drafty fireplace;
- upgraded to efficient lighting; and
- installed low flow toilets.

Their work has paid off. An energy audit by the SES shows a reduction in gas consumption by 27% and electricity consumption by 23%, in spite of increased activity in the building.

In order to become a Green Sanctuary congregation the UCS needs to actively guide projects in the areas of: Sustainable Living, Religious Education, Worship and Celebration, and Environmental Justice. By ensuring their actions are congruent with their Principles, the Unitarians are making a difference in the life of their congregation and in the health of the planet.

Honouring the wisdom and truths found in a wide range of spiritual and secular sources, the Unitarian Congregation of Saskatoon is a nurturing and diverse community in which people of all ages gather to search for meaning, experience wonder, and be a positive influence in the world. Find meaning. Experience wonder. Live ethically.

For more information on how your business or non-profit organization can save energy and water, contact SES Energy Conservation Coordinator Angie Bugg at [angieb@environmentalsociety.ca](mailto:angieb@environmentalsociety.ca) or call 306.665.1915.

*(Photo above: UCS Permaculture Garden)*



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