FAITH EFFICIENCIES PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Delaware Interfaith Power & Light (DeIPL) is partners with Energize Delaware to administer an energy audit, remediation and education program geared to faith communities throughout the state of Delaware. That program is titled Faith Efficiencies.

The mandate of Energize Delaware is to foster a sustainable energy future for the state of Delaware; reducing energy costs, improving natural environments and ensuring energy independence for the generations to come.

The mission of the DeIPL is to rally faith communities to address causes and impacts of climate change. Our shared goal is to empower religious institutions and their individual members to adopt creative, effective and affordable energy conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy strategies.

To that end, religious institutions are offered a comprehensive energy audit, with 90% of the cost being covered by the SEU. Due to increased financial strains as a result of COVID-19, 100% of that cost is be covered through the end of March 2021. DeIPL coordinates the process, offering consultation on repair and upgrade strategies and available financial incentives to the religious institution, as well are home energy and Earth Care resources to its members.

Program Outline:
- DeIPL meets with the faith community team to review the Faith Efficiencies program, services, resources and costs and secure a signed agreement.
- DeIPL works with the faith community to schedule an energy audit with a certified energy auditor/assessor.
- DeIPL works with faith community to identify or enlist an Earth Care/Stewardship team. This team will assist in data collection on historic utility usage (bills), facility use, and lay-out information to inform the energy audit and determine the cost.
- DeIPL will invoice the faith community for 10% of the cost of the audit (when applicable), to be paid upon receipt.
- DeIPL coordinates with the faith community to schedule a home energy presentation for members to share energy conservation tips, tools and financial resources.
- Energy audit is performed on-site in the company of faith community staff and/or available team members familiar with the facility.
- Auditor provides an electronic report, including suggested remediation priorities, projected costs, anticipated savings and return on investment. An additional copy of the report becomes the property of Energize Delaware.
- Audit report is reviewed together to ensure comprehension of recommendations and financial incentives.
- Faith Community agrees to share information on energy usage and completed repairs/upgrades, for a minimum of one year, to help track effectiveness of program.
Earth Care Display

DelIPL is able to offer an additional service: design and establishment of an Energy/Earth Care display and coordination of the systems to support it. **Virtual versions are being explored.** There is no charge for this service.

Participants in the Faith Efficiencies program are encouraged to identify a location within their facility for a “permanent” Energy/Environment/Earth Care display. This would require not only commitment of space but some minimal financial and/or creative resources to construct and equip the display, as well as a team to maintain it. It would serve as a focal point to 1) inform and engage the membership in the energy and environmental initiatives undertaken by the institution; 2) provide ongoing education and resources to the membership to reduce their own energy use, expand the use of renewable energy systems, and inspire environmental stewardship; 3) make energy education, resources and referral information available to community members and 4) share news, activities, events and wish lists of other participating faith communities and partners; expanding the potential impact and building a shared sense of mission and accomplishment.

Our experience has been that a growing number of faith communities are establishing formal Earth Care/Creation Care/Green Teams, reflecting a shared commitment to addressing issues of energy, environment and climate change. While economic factors contribute to this interest, both from personal and institutional perspectives, we’ve also seen an increasing concern for the broader implications relating to the health of families and communities and the natural world.

To support such a project within the faith community, DelIPL would offer to:

- introduce and champion the display concept.
- help identify a team to take ownership of the project.
- offer guidance on location and design of the display, reflecting the unique character and resources of the institution.
- provide an ongoing supply of educational materials on issues related to energy efficiency, conservation and renewable energy and updates on activities, programs and resources to support taking action.
- collaborate with partners and service providers to access updated program information, resource materials and community events.
- explore community outreach strategies.
- connect participating faith communities to foster sharing of experiences and collaboration.
- collectively evaluate the value and effectiveness of the project.

If you are interested in exploring these opportunities, please contact Lisa Locke at llocke@delawareipl.org or 616.914.1597.