**First Congregational’s Earth Flag: What’s it about?**

On January 3rd, our church was presented with an Earth Flag by SCARCE, a Glen Ellyn-based organization that works to inspire people and organizations, through education, to preserve and care for the Earth. The Earth Flag Certification Program was developed by SCARCE to help businesses and organizations to become more environmentally responsible. First Congregational joins organizations such as the Downers Grove Park District, Good Samaritan Hospital, Molex and North Central College who have earned a Earth Flag.

**Here is what we did to earn our Earth Flag:**

***Green Audit***—SCARCE performed a green audit of our organization’s facilities with our B&G and Caring for Creation Team members. A SCARCE consultant toured our church and observed how we manage the building site, energy, water, materials, cleaning products and other potential indoor air hazards. We received a written report with a summary of successfully implemented green initiatives, along with recommendations for important "next steps" to consider.

***Staff Training Presentation***—SCARCE staff came to our church and educated the staff and church members on the Earth Flag Certification program, recycling, energy & water conservation, etc.

***Ongoing recycling program****—*An organization must have a working recycling program in place to qualify for the Earth Flag. We have instituted a recycling program with bins placed throughout our building.

***Sponsor a waste or energy reduction activity***—Our Caring for Creation Team has sponsored a number of recycling collections including batteries, books, crayons and holiday lights. We’ve also worked with Troop 55 to run two gym shoe collection drives.

T 