2026 Annual Report of the Creation Care Committee

The Creation Care Committee launched the Habitat Restoration program “Grants for Native Plants.” This program had an excellent response and also raised awareness of the Creation Care Committee throughout the Diocese. Applicants were encouraged to include an educational component where parishioners, children, and youth would learn about the importance of using native plants. Nineteen DOVA congregations were awarded $500 each for replacing or adding landscaping of native plants.

The Creation Care Committee evaluated and planned ways to increase its relationship with Shrine Mont. We created and stocked a Nature Nook library with field guides, worship and creation care resources, placed in the Reception Room of Virginia House in April. This was well received and well used.

The Habitat Restoration working group (under the leadership of Elaine Sevy) worked with Shrine Mont 2026 camp counselors to offer nature journaling instruction to campers. The Creation Care Committee provided the necessary art supplies for campers.

The Committee offered a webinar by Rev. Pete Nunnally of the Water and Wilderness Church where he discussed his recent book, “Catching Hope.”

Three members of the Creation Care Committee actively participated in the new Chesapeake Watershed Eco-Region, along with other dioceses in Virginia, Maryland, Washington, DC, and Delaware. This included a retreat in Chestertown, Maryland. Work on this Eco-Region continues.

Recognizing climate change anxiety, several Creation Care Committee members received training to offer Climate Cafes around the diocese. This will be advertised and offered in 2027 and we are seeking others to take the training and lead the Climate Cafes in their own churches.

Late in the year, the Creation Care Committee launched a pilot grant project with the goal of awarding a small number of grants for parishes to undergo an Energy Audit, using an outside firm that has performed this for other churches. The application window is still open at the time of this report. Awards are expected in 2026, though some audits may occur in early 2027.

The Creation Care Committee held a retreat in September at Shrine Mont with Rev. Canon Ricardo Sheppard. Nine people attended.