

Holy Communion Lutheran Church

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■ Problem:

Holy Communion Lutheran Church in Fallston had a turf lawn that was providing minimal stormwater management and minimal water quality benefits.

■ Solution:

Recognizing the role that trees play in air and water quality protection, carbon uptake, cooling and beautification, Holy Communion determined to convert its lawn to forest. Working with Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, church leaders designed a planting plan comprised entirely of native species.

Roughly 40 volunteers helped with the planting, with guidance from the Alliance. Volunteers also participated in a spirituality-based educational program led by Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake that helped congregants understand the moral imperative to care for Creation, the symbolism and importance of trees in Biblical scripture, and how to relate these faith messages to living sustainably in everyday lives. Church members and staff will conduct ongoing watering and maintenance of the trees.



Planting trees provide root systems which stabilize soils and absorb excess water. They also provide habitat, shade and improved air quality.



Photo Credit: Dave Warren, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Key Project Facts

Type of Project: Tree Planting

Scale: 90+ trees

Funding Sources: Howard County
Storm water Fees

Partners: Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
and Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake

Pollutants Diverted: 4.71 lbs/yr nitrogen;
0.19 lbs/yr phosphorous;
0.0155 tons/yr sediment

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What is Polluted Runoff?

The growth of our cities has resulted in too many paved surfaces, which prevent rain water from being absorbed by the ground. Instead, the water runs off streets and buildings, collecting trash and dangerous chemicals on its way. This contaminated water overflows into our streams and rivers, creating public health hazards and toxic waters.

Storm water projects create safe paths for polluted runoff to be captured and filtered before it reaches our waterways. They keep communities healthy and the environment clean.

When communities and their local governments work together to solve big problems like stormwater runoff, that's a story worth telling!