

# St. Columba's Episcopal Church – Guidelines for a Zero-Waste Event

(Prepared by the Environment Committee, updated March 17, 2017)

These guidelines cover: planning an event, setup for and cleanup after an event.

## I. ADVANCE PLANNING

Choose the supplies you'll use, balancing your desire to reduce waste with practical matters, such as location and number of volunteers who can help with cleanup. If your event will be catered, tell the caterer not to provide plastic plates, cups, utensils, etc. Instead, use St. Columba's washable dinnerware or compostable disposables.

### A. Washable dinnerware and table cloths:

If possible, use washable dinnerware and serving pieces. They are nicer than disposables and better for the environment. St. Columba's has ceramic dinnerware, platters, bowls, stainless flatware and serving utensils. There are water glasses, wine glasses and champagne flutes. See the instructions for washing on p. 4.

There are a number of table cloths of various sizes and shapes. A volunteer should take the table cloths home to be washed after the event. They do not require ironing.

### B. Disposables:

**Compostable plates and bowls:** St. Columba's stocks compostable plates for the use of ministry groups. Compostable bowls can be ordered when needed. Note: regular paper plates often have a wax or plastic coating and are neither compostable nor recyclable. Inform the office of your needs and confirm there are enough in stock.

**Compostable cups:** St. Columba's stocks compostable hot drink cups and clear plastic cold drink cups (made from sugar cane and with a green stripe and print). Again, you should inform the office and confirm there are enough in stock. If not, please ask the office to order the compostable drink cups for your event.

**Compostable utensils:** St. Columba's stocks compostable sugar-cane or cornstarch-based utensils.

**Containers and packaging:** Plastic caterer plates and packaging can be recycled if they are marked with the recyclable symbol. Take-out containers made from plant fiber, without any wax or plastic coating, are compostable. Styrofoam may not be used in DC.

**If you really must use plastic table cloths,** they are recyclable but must be bagged separately with other plastic bags (not thrown loose into the recycle bins). Plain white paper table cloths and place mats (without any plastic coating) are compostable.

✓ **An inventory of equipment and where it is stored is included on page 5.**

✓ **Compostables have the BPI (Biodegradable Products Institute) symbol:** 

## II. SETTING UP EQUIPMENT

### A. For an Event in the Great Hall or Common:

***For collection of solid disposables:*** There are three permanent zero-waste stations for collecting solids: two in the Common; one in the Great Hall and one in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor “living room”. These include a **green bin with a green bag for compostables** (including small amounts of finger food), a **blue or black bin with a blue bag for recyclables** and a **white bin with a black bag for trash**. For large events in the Great Hall, request that an additional collection station be set up there.

The **tall green bins for collecting compostables must be lined with large green compostable bags**. Large compostable bags are stored in the left side drawer under the microwave in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor kitchen. The bags tear very easily so please use care.

***For a full meal:*** There is normally one **green 14-gallon covered Veteran Compost bin** for collecting food waste in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor kitchen and one in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor kitchen. If it's a large event that may result in a large volume of food waste, ask the office to request one or more additional 14-gallon compost bins from Veteran Compost. **These must be requested two weeks before the event and cost \$15/bin**. Place an empty Veteran Compost bin near the collection station for collecting food. At the end of the event, cover the Veteran Compost bin and place it in the kitchen. Any additional tightly covered Veteran Compost bins may be placed on the outside porches above the parking lot. Please notify the office so the driver will know where to get them.

***For collection of liquids:*** If you are serving drinks, either have waiters take used compostable cups to the kitchen to empty them in the sink or disposal before disposing in the bin for compostables and/or provide a large tray or cart for collecting cups near the waste and compost collection station/s.

✓ **Do not pour liquids, ice, ice cream or yogurt into ANY collection bin.**

### ***For collection of washable dinnerware and utensils:***

If you are using washable dinnerware,

- Provide one or more carts where participants can place their washable plates after removing food.
- Place a plastic dish pan or metal pan half filled with water and detergent on the second shelf of the cart to collect used stainless flatware. (There are two white dish pans in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor kitchen.)
- If necessary, periodically bring an empty cart and dish pan to the collection station and transfer the full cart to the kitchen where volunteers can wash the dinnerware.

## **B. For Meetings or Events in Other locations:**

**“Zero-waste kits”** are available for small events or meetings in rooms that do not have permanent bins for collecting compostables.

The kit includes:

- A **small green bin** to collect small amounts of food waste and compostable dinnerware – good for ministry group gatherings in a meeting room where there is no permanent compost collection bin
- **Compostable green bags** for the small bin
- A small bucket for disposing of liquids. (Please be sure that no liquids, popsicles or ice cream are put in the compost bins.)
- Lists of items that can be composted and items that can be recycled.

***For collection of liquids:*** Ask participants to pour liquids into the bucket before putting cups in the bin.

- ✓ **Do not pour liquids, ice, ice cream or yogurt into ANY collection bin.**

***For collection of washable dinnerware and utensils:*** If you are using washable dinnerware,

- Provide one or more carts where participants can place their washable plates after removing food.
- Place a plastic dish pan half filled with water and detergent on the second shelf of the cart to collect used stainless flatware. (There are two white dish pans in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor kitchen.)
- If necessary, periodically bring an empty cart to the collection station and transfer the full cart to the kitchen where volunteers can wash the dinnerware.

### III. CLEAN UP

**If washable dinnerware and/or stainless flatware were used**, take them to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor kitchen for washing and sanitizing. From left to right along the wall with sinks::

- Sanitizer for items that have been thoroughly rinsed. See instructions below.
- Disposal. Cover the round opening with a pot top to avoid spray. Do NOT turn on the water. The disposal has its own water source. Step back and turn the red knob under the counter in either direction to run the disposal.
- First sink: for washing dishes, pots, pans, etc. Fill ½ with hot water. Press the square white button once to dispense detergent.
- Second sink: for rinsing detergent off washed pans, etc. Fill ½ with hot water.
- Third sink: for sanitizing large pots, pans, drink dispensers, etc. Push and turn the blue button counter-clockwise and fill ½ full. Do not dilute with water. Do not walk away and allow it to overflow! Items must be submerged in fluid for 90 seconds. Do not rinse.

#### **To use the automatic sanitizer:**

- Turn on the sanitizer at least 20 minutes before needed. When no words are visible on the digital display, it is ready to run.
- Wash away all food and beverages from plates, mugs, glassware and utensils.
- Racks and utensil baskets for the sanitizer are on the shelf above the sanitizer.
- Ceramic mugs are stored in their own divided racks that can go into the sanitizer.
- There are special blue divided racks for champagne flutes.
- Use the sanitizer racks with upright rods for plates. Slide the rack into sanitizer.
- Place flatware in green divided baskets inside a flat sanitizer rack before sliding into the sanitizer.
- Close the door and push “wash”. The cycle is complete when there are no words showing on the display. It takes about 2 minutes for the cycle.
- Remove the rack and place it on a CLEAN counter. Items will dry quickly. If necessary use a clean cloth or paper towels to remove any remaining water.
- Return dinner ware and mugs to their storage racks and push into the closet.
- Return stainless flatware to the locked closet near the elevator on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.

**If you used a “zero-waste kit”:** Tie up the **compostable green bag** and place it in the covered Veteran Compost bin in one of the kitchens. Rinse & dry the green bin. Empty the bucket of liquids and wash it. Return the kit with all its contents to the storage closet.

✓ ***Please dry and put away all equipment. Do not leave anything on the drain board or counters. THE NEXT USERS THANK YOU!***

**IV. INVENTORY AND LOCATION OF WASHABLE AND COMPOSTABLE  
DINNERWARE AND ZERO-WASTE EQUIPMENT**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Number / Comments</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>Washables</b>		
Ceramic plates	140	Closet in the Great Hall near the doors from the Common
Ceramic mugs	80	Closet in the Great Hall near the doors from the Common
Small coffee cups	50 - 60	Storage room in southwest corner of the Great Hall
Small juice glasses	100	Closet in the Great Hall near the doors from the Common
Water and wine glasses, champagne flutes		Storage room in southwest corner of the Great Hall
Stainless flatware	450 forks, 120 knives, 120 spoons	Locked closet near the elevator on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> floor
Serving platters, bowls, utensils	Get the key to the closet from the office.	3 <sup>rd</sup> fl. kitchen cabinets and locked closet near the elevator
Beverage dispensers	4	Top of wire shelves in 3 <sup>rd</sup> floor kitchen
Table cloths	Round and rectangular. Check with the operations mgr. to reserve or locate.	Behind the “donuts” sign in northwest corner of Great Hall
<b>Compostable Disposables</b>		
Compostable plates, bowls, cups, napkins, corn-based utensils	Check with operations mgr. to ensure adequate supply 1 or 2 weeks in advance.	Storage closet in the Great Hall (on the parking lot side).
Bamboo utensils	Reserved for the annual picnic and like events	Locked closet near the elevator on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> floor
White paper placemats	Check with the office to ensure adequate supply.	Storage closet in the Great Hall (on the parking lot side).
Large compostable bags		Left drawer under the microwave in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> fl. kitchen.
<b>Zero-Waste Kits (for small meetings and events)</b>		
A small green bin, compostable bags, a bucket for liquids, a copy of these guidelines, a list of compostables and a list of recyclables.	Please inform the operations manager that you plan to use a kit.	Storage room in southwest corner of the Great Hall