



Founded in 1992, GreenFaith is an interfaith environmental coalition which inspires, educates, and mobilizes people of diverse religious backgrounds as environmental leaders. GreenFaith is widely recognized as a leader in the international religious-environmental movement. Through a range of innovative programs, GreenFaith helps diverse religious institutions put their beliefs into action for the earth. From eco-themed worship services and religious education to ‘green’ facility management and environmental justice advocacy, GreenFaith provides a unique variety of resources and opportunities for religious-environmental action.

In December 2014, Immaculate Conception Catholic Church was accepted into the GreenFaith Certification Program and completed certification as a GreenFaith Sanctuary in January 2017. We were the first house of worship in Durham to join this prestigious national program, in which churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples earn recognition as environmental leaders by carrying out over two dozen environmental activities over a two-year period.

### **Immaculate Conception Church Cistern Installed for Rainwater Runoff and Irrigation**

If you look at the southeast corner of Immaculate Conception Church on West Chapel Hill Street, you will notice a large cistern above ground nestled among the azaleas and other greenery. This new cistern was installed to collect storm water runoff from the church roof, keeping it from carrying pollutants into the watershed and rivers. This summer, the water collected will be used to irrigate the front lawn and gardens, instead of the potable (and costly) city water that was used before. This project was possible through the assistance of the NC Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP) and Mr. Michael Dupree, Agribusiness and Environmental Services Manager for Durham County. CCAP is a voluntary, incentive-based program of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services designed to improve water quality through the installation of various best management practices (BMPs) on urban, suburban and rural lands not directly involved with agriculture. As a “Cost Share” program, Immaculate Conception parish was eligible for financial assistance of 75% of the pre-established average cost of installing the cistern, while the parish paid 25%. In the next year, we hope to add another, larger cistern to irrigate the playing fields at Immaculata Catholic School, and one or more rain gardens, also considered a water management best practice.