

Summer 2013

Green Team Update

Mission u 2013

Community Gardens as Mission

This year at Annual Conference there was an additional day of learning for laity at the end of the formal sessions. Many different workshops were offered for attendees. The workshop day was open to any one wishing to attend, not just members of Annual Conference. I decided to attend a workshop on "local mission" little knowing that it would actually be about community gardening!

Rev. Dawn Ramstad and her husband lead our session in English. Rev. Maribel Celiz lead a separate workshop on the same topic in Spanish (want other resources on environmental justice in Spanish? - try <http://www.eco-justicia.blogspot.com/>). All three had started their work in Beloit turning church lawns (did you know that lawn is the number one US crop?) and blighted spaces into gardens. By combining urban renewal with the power of faithful volunteers, a thriving mission outreach

was created.

Empty lots where gangs and drug users lingered were transformed into pumpkin patches. Planted as "Sharing gardens" All of the food was available for any who wished to use it—after all you cannot steal what is being given away.

Food was also collected for canning or for use in the local food pantry allowing for even greater abundant blessings to be shared.

So? Why not trade in that lawn mower for a hoe and start your own mission outreach?



The quadrennial theme for our conference is "Living the Fruit of the Spirit". We must plant new seeds to reap a harvest of mission!

Be sure to read from the 2013 United Methodist Women's reading list!

- [Everyday Justice: The Global Impact of our Daily Choices](#) by Julie Clawson
- [A Hopeful Earth: Faith, Science and the Message of Jesus](#) by Sally Dyck and Sarah Ehrman
- [The Power of Half: One Family's Decision to Stop Taking and Start Giving Back](#) by Kevin Salwen and Hannah Salwen
- Children's book: [The Mangrove Tree: Planting Trees to Feed Families](#) by Susan L. Roth and Cingy Trumbore
- Children's book: [Only the Mountains Do Not Move: A Massai Story of Culture and Conservation](#) by Jan Reynolds
- And many more from previous year's lists!

Healthy Aging for an Abundant Life

The National Council of Churches has a resource "Healthy Aging for an Abundant Life" including a bible study, activities, sermon ideas and letter campaign targeting the challenges of aging. Stop by the Green Team display for a copy or check out the website (www.ncccecojustice.org).

Health, wholeness and holiness is all connect-

ed. As we age, we gain wisdom about how interdependent we are as a community. The health of one impacts the entire family and community.

Take time to learn about the role of diet, chemical exposure, and community lifestyle impact our collective health and choose abundant life!

response Magazine

Have you been reading **response** magazine? Be sure not to miss the many articles related to green topics in there!

February 2013—"A Mining Showdown in the Philippines: Church Activists Side With the Poor and a Threatened Environment", "King Coal and Poverty in Appalachia"

March 2013—"Caring for Creation", Responsively Yours ("For God So Loved the World", "Climate Change: For United Methodists, Environmental Justice is a Moral Cause"

April 2013—"Sustainable and Abundant Life"

May 2013—"Reading Program Sets off 'Green Church' Campaign" and "Choose Abundance"

Some of the Greener Living Tips from Deaconess Pat Hoerth (March issue)

- Recycle
- Start a compost bin
- Cook in a healthier way
- Drive less, use alternatives
- Keep your home cooler in winter, warmer in summer
- Efficient lighting
- Hang clothes to dry



Check out our mission magazine!

State Legislative Action Day: Public Transportation

I was part of the 2013 legislative action day as part of People of Faith United for Justice. This event takes place every two years as the state legislature considers our next budget. One of the proposals we were advocating was for a reverse in cuts made to public transportation funds by the previous 2011-2013 budget. Public transportation enables members of our communities to travel to work (48%), medical appointments (11%), education opportunities (23%) and shop/visit (18%). This is critical for reducing air pollution, reducing traffic congestion and enabling seniors and persons with disabilities and those with limited incomes to live self-sufficient lives. Strong public transit systems

create stronger communities.

When I was a graduate student, I rode the Madison metro bus every day. Although I had a car, I saved money on gas and car maintenance at a time when my income was very low!



Keep the wheels of the buses rolling!

The need to support and advocate for public transportation options continues! Contact your state assembly person and state senator and lift your voice in support of living better together!

Green Team Choice Time

Check it out! During the 4-day Mission u a green team choice time will be offered on "Healthy Kids, Healthy Churches, Healthy Creation". If you miss it, be sure to check out the National Council of Church's Eco-justice website (www.ncccecojustice.org) or the Green Team display table to find out more. Designed as a four session study focusing on Christian perspectives on Environmental Health, Healthy Kids, Healthy Aging and Advocacy, this valuable resource contains activities, biblical reflection, congressional letter, litany of healing and information on disparities of toxic chemical exposure.

This is a valuable resource to help you and your congregation live out a faithful witness of health and wholeness, love of creation and love of neighbor.

Need more resources, speaker or other info? Contact: Laura Pfeffer

608-592-5228 or

pfeffer.umw@gmail.com



"Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has the health of my poor people not been restored? (Jer. 8:22)