

## Colleague Sharing

### From Earth Ministry's Colleague Consultation, 11/6/04

*This information is categorized by activity – the same categories found in our Greening Congregations process. We hope that this sharing will inspire you as you envision and carry out creation-honoring efforts in your congregation. If you have questions and/or comments for the Colleagues mentioned below, please contact Tanya at Earth Ministry ([tm Barnett@earthministry.org](mailto:tm Barnett@earthministry.org) or [206] 632-2426) or check the Colleague list for their contact information.*

#### Strategic Plans or Mission Statements

Karen Matheison, Admiral UCC (Seattle): spoke about her involvement on a task force exploring the church's becoming an "open and affirming" congregation. This congregational process has led the congregation to not only be open and affirming of all human beings, but to extend this to God's creation as well. The task force became so committed to this idea that the first sentence of the open and affirming statement speaks of caring for creation. This statement is reflected in events throughout the year and even in the appearance of the worship space itself (e.g., there is a "tree growing out of the communion table").

#### Worship

- Marcia Lagerloef, Grace Episcopal (Bainbridge): worship language is "Earth-friendly" and "creation-oriented." And, specifically, the church is paying more attention to what is in their watershed and naming the creatures, natural features, etc. found there.
- Bruce Shilling, Plymouth Congregational (Seattle): their interim minister is dedicated to weaving creation into worship and that the church had a "big Earth Day service" in 2004, and will do so again in 2005.
- Bill & Roxy Giddings, Christ Church Episcopal (Tacoma): the inclusion of creation in the "prayers of the people" – paying special attention to prayers of lament.
- Jane Ely, St. Benedicts Episcopal (Lacey): Advent "pledge Sunday" with a focus on care for creation. On pledge Sunday, congregants receive a simple form with the words:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pledge Form for Stewardship of God's Creation</b> In Thanksgiving for the life-giving abundance around us, I pledge to be a steward in 2005 by _____.</p>
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During the service, congregants received a blessing over their commitments.

- Sharon Kenyon, Fairwood Community United Methodist (Renton): mentioned the church's monthly practice of simply *recognizing* creation-caring members in their church newsletter. Each month's newsletter features a new member who is taking small and big strides to care for creation (e.g., people who always bike to work, people who work on restoration projects, etc.). This practice celebrates individuals' efforts and make creation care a "normative" part of Christian life.
- Mary Rose, University Congregational UCC (Seattle): church has had an annual Earth Day Sunday service for the past several years, and they plan to do so again in 2005.

#### Education

- Jane Ely, St. Benedicts Episcopal (Lacey): series on Earth care – highlighting waste reduction and recycling, "climate solutions," transportation, and gardening – that preceded "pledge Sunday" (mentioned above).
- Buck McCrone, Calvin (Shoreline) and University Presbyterian (Seattle): spoke of the value of monthly newsletter articles on creation care.

- Mary Rose, University Congregational UCC (Seattle): two educational forums in 2004: (1) a “what’s wrong” series in which she led discussions about ecological crises and theological/practical responses and (2) a series with the church’s children that used Native American Materials to explore the seven days of creation.
- Sharon Kenyon, Fairwood United Methodist (Renton): spoke of teaching children. During a one-week summer course, the children explored creation through the creation of a butterfly garden, exploring a bat cave, and more.
- Rev. Mary Brown, Snoqualmie United Methodist: weekly creation-care articles that appear in their newsletter. She also spoke of their trip to Georgetown Gospel Chapel (a “Greening Congregation” in Seattle) and their retreat to an organic farm.
- Janette Plunkett, First Presbyterian (Bellevue): church’s ongoing “voluntary simplicity” class – a nice group of 10-12 who attend regularly.
- Marcia Lagerloef, Grace Episcopal (Bainbridge): in January of 2005 the church will start “Choices for Sustainable Living” course provided by the NW Earth Institute.
- Bill Aston, First Presbyterian (Seattle): considering offering a winter class on the subject of climate change.

### **Transportation**

- Sharon Kenyon, Fairwood United Methodist (Renton): in 2004, the church celebrated “Car-Free Sunday” using Earth Ministry materials – including “personal action pledges” for people to continue car-free practices in their daily lives.
- Mary Rose, University Congregational (Seattle): As part of their “Car-Free Sunday” event, they hosted an alternative fuel fair, which highlighted fuel-efficient cars, biofuels, and resource tables.

### **Food**

- Jane Ely, St. Benedicts Episcopal (Lacey): recent fellowship hours feature refreshments from local farms.
- Len Elliott, First United Methodist (Auburn): the church now serves shade-grown, FairTrade, organic coffee for fellowship hour.
- Janette Plunkett, First Presbyterian (Bellevue): in 2004, church members started a farmers market in the church parking lot. (Thirty-eight small family farms sold produce at the weekly, Thursday market, and more than 13,000 people visited during the market’s 19-week run. Participating farmers also donated 6,025 pounds of produce to Hopelink’s Bellevue Food Bank.) In addition, four families at the church also subscribe to a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) farm – supporting other local farmers.
- Ruth Mulligan, St. Mark’s Episcopal Cathedral (Seattle): their FairTrade, shade-grown, organic coffee project is going strong and is starting to branch out to broader use in other church events.
- Bruce Shilling, Plymouth Congregational (Seattle): the church also serves and sells this “triple-certified” coffee.
- Rev. Mary Brown, Snoqualmie United Methodist: as a “statement” and a way to grow fresh vegetables, the church gave up one parking space (making a “one-less-car” statement) in order to put in a movable (in a wagon) “p-patch” garden.
- Andrew Burkhalter, Seattle Mennonite: in 2002, the church played key roles (e.g., helping to envision the market, convening community leaders and members, providing publicity, etc.) in helping to bring a farmers market to their neighborhood.

## Recycling and Composting

- Julia Lakey, Church of the Holy Spirit, Episcopal (Vashon): they hosted a worm-bin building event for members to build their own for home use.
- Chris Christensen, Episcopal Diocese of Olympia: the Committee on the Environment recycled waste at their recent, major convention – thus raising consciousness of the presence/work of the committee and providing an environmental “witness.”
- Bill & Roxy Giddings, Christ Church Episcopal (Tacoma): the church recycles paper, the Giddings take home plastics for recycling.
- Rev. Leroy Hedman, Georgetown Gospel Chapel (Seattle): Leroy is a Master Composter and Recycler. He provided a helpful “fall composting at home” fact sheet and is willing to provide other Colleagues with composting demonstrations and tips.

## Energy Conservation

- Bill & Roxy Giddings, Christ Church Episcopal (Tacoma): as part of their monthly power bills, the church also voluntarily pays into a fund that supports green power through the utility. This came about as a result of a Vestry (church governing body) vote to pay this extra premium.
- Len Elliott, First United Methodist (Auburn): the church has installed many compact fluorescent light bulbs in their building.
- Marcia Lagerloef, Grace Episcopal (Bainbridge): Marcia mentioned that her husband, Gary, is the President and Senior Scientist of a local non-profit called Earth & Space Research. Gary is willing (and very able) to speak to local churches on the subject of climate change. (To contact Gary: [lager@esr.org](mailto:lager@esr.org).)
- Kathy Dawson, All Pilgrims Christian (Seattle): the church is going through a major retrofit using compact fluorescent light bulbs.

## Landscaping and Grounds Care

- Julia Lakey, Church of the Holy Spirit, Episcopal (Vashon): Julia mentioned that the church recently did a grounds audit (e.g., assessing wetlands, native plants) with Rev. Terry Hershey (from Vashon). Julia said that the process was very helpful and that Terry is willing to help other churches do the same. To learn more about Terry and to contact him, go to [www.terryhershey.com](http://www.terryhershey.com). Julia also mentioned that the church’s youth have been very active with doing native plantings on their grounds.
- Roxy Giddings, Christ Church Episcopal (Tacoma): Roxy has a strong desire to help the church remove invasive ivy and plant native plants. She is considering asking for volunteers to help do so.

## Green Building and Remodeling

- Ruth Mulligan, St. Mark’s Episcopal Cathedral (Seattle): the church has just purchased an adjacent, large building – the Cornish Center for the Arts. The building will need to be remodeled in the coming years and members of the Ecology/Spirituality Group have already begun introducing “key remodeling players” to green building practices, architects and professionals, and actual projects (e.g., Seattle U’s LEED-certified Student Center).
- Kathy Dawson, All Pilgrims Christian (Seattle): The church owns two church buildings and is tearing down the one no longer in use. As they remove the church, they’re reusing and reselling useful materials.

## Community Outreach

- Len Elliott, First United Methodist (Auburn): Len worked with Dennis Clark (Outreach Coordinator for Green River salmon recovery efforts), to help turn out over thirty church members (plus Girl and Boy Scouts who met at the church) and friends for a hands-on restoration event in October. In all, 117 volunteers planted 175 trees and 565 shrubs. Len helped to publicize the event, over four weeks, through the church's newsletter, bulletins, and during announcements. He also made a display with sign-up sheets, for the narthex, during the four Sundays leading up to the event.
- Rev. Leroy Hedman, Georgetown Gospel Chapel (Seattle): the church is very active with their "Adopt-a-Street" program - keeping it clean and also planting trees.
- Mary Rose, University Congregational (Seattle): the church is active in hands-on restoration projects - especially along the Duwamish River. Mary said that these efforts seem to be "key" for encouraging people to become involved in creation care.
- Bruce Shilling, Plymouth Congregational (Seattle): Plymouth members have also been very active, over the last five years, in helping to restore habitat along the Duwamish River.

## Broader Religious Outreach

Ruth Mulligan and Chris Christensen, Episcopal Diocese of Olympia: at General Conference, the Committee for the Environment was successful in having the diocese pass a resolution encouraging all member parishes to explore the Earth Charter.

## Other Areas

- Rev. Mary Brown, Snoqualmie United Methodist: Mary suggested that joining "Faithful America" ([www.faithfulamerica.org](http://www.faithfulamerica.org)) was an effective way to engage in ongoing advocacy.
- Janette Plunkett, First Presbyterian (Bellevue): the church often hosts a fellowship brunch featuring a "simple meal" (i.e., low-on-the-food-chain meal). She also recommended that people consider the Alternative Gift Market Catalog for holiday giving (to learn more, go to [www.fpcbelleveue.org/missions/community/ministries.asp](http://www.fpcbelleveue.org/missions/community/ministries.asp)). (From their web site: "Because of the generous support of the FPCB congregation the 2003 Alternative Gift Market generated \$61,846.00 that will go directly to our missions in the Puget Sound Region and around the world.")
- Julia Lakey, Church of the Holy Spirit, Episcopal (Vashon): Julia decided that one of the most effective ways to make creation care more visible in her congregation was to join the Stewardship Committee. As a result, the church did a Lenten study using *Simpler Living*, *Compassionate Life* and now their newsletter contains regular Earth stewardship features.
- Karen Sy, Central Lutheran (Seattle): Karen took the time to go to each church committee to talk about what small changes each of them could make in order to be more environmentally conscious.