

Dear Colleague,

A fellow Colleague, Elizabeth Winder Noyes, recently wrote, "I'm reminded of a famous poster from the 'sixties' designed by a child: 'War Is Not Good for People and Other Living Things.'" I share this quote with you as a reminder of the importance of your vision and efforts to care for all "living things" in the family of God's creation, especially in these uncertain times. You are helping to strengthen the foundations of justice and peace.

Accompanying this edition of *Earth Notes*, you'll find a bulletin insert for the Lenten season (beginning March 5). You can also download a bulletin insert and flyer for "Car Free Sunday" by going to www.earthministry.org/carfree.htm. We hope that many congregations will choose take part in Car Free Sunday (formerly "Bike to Worship"). Several Colleagues who have introduced the idea to their congregations in the past, comment on what a celebratory and educational event it can be.

We hope that you will be able to attend the **Colleague Consultation** on Saturday, March 8, and that you'll also stay for the **Greening Congregations Workshop** that follows our soup lunch (please see details below). The Consultation will begin with a time of meditation, then move into sharing congregational "goings on," and end with fellowship over a soup lunch at noon. The Greening Congregations Workshop will focus on "greening" congregational worship. Please **RSVP**, for either or both, if you have not already done so.

Peace be with you,

Tanya Marcovna Barnett

Events for Colleagues and Congregations

Thursday, February 20: Citizens Lobby Day in Olympia.

An all-day event; meet at United Churches of Olympia (congregation of Colleagues Rae Verhoef and Yvonne Wilhelmsen), 110 E. 11th St. Sponsored by local environmental groups, advocates will address transportation, water protection, and opposition to cuts in environmental protection. For more information, and to RSVP, contact Pam Johnson at People for Puget Sound, (206) 382-7007 or pjohnson@pugetsound.org.

Saturday, February 22: Reflection & Restoration along the Duwamish River. 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Please RSVP and we'll send you directions.) We'll join with People for Puget Sound to help restore habitat for salmon and other creatures. The day will begin with lunch (please bring your own) and a time of reflection.

Saturday, March 1: "Food & Faith: Toward a More Simple, Sacramental, and Just Way of Life." 9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.; Pacific Lutheran University, \$25; to register, contact Judith Jones at (253) 383-3056, x120;

channel@associatedministries.org. Earth Ministry's Mike Schut will facilitate discussion of the industrialization of agriculture, sharing of practical tools for greater food sustainability, and reflection on the spirituality and sacramentality of food. The workshop will serve as an introduction to our new book: *Food and Faith: Justice, Joy, and Daily Bread*.

Saturday, March 8: Colleague Consultation and Greening Congregations Workshop. Consultation: 10 a.m. – noon, lunch: noon, Workshop: 12:45 – 4 p.m.; University Temple United Methodist Church, 1415 NE 43rd St., Seattle (in the University District); \$5 suggested donation. Our biannual time of sharing and learning with fellow Colleagues will be followed by our first Greening Congregations Workshop. The workshop will highlight a variety of "green" worship experiences and practical, take-home resources. We extend a special invitation to all who help design congregational worship. Please RSVP.

Friday, March 21: "Entering the Heart of the World": An Evening with Joanna Macy. 7 p.m.; Kane Hall, University of Washington, Room 510, Seattle, \$10 general admission, \$5 students and seniors. Dr. Macy is author of several books (e.g., *Widening Circles*) and is a scholar of Buddhism, general systems theory, and deep ecology. Her work brings a new way of seeing the world as our larger living body, freeing us from the assumptions and attitudes that now threaten the continuity of life on Earth. Tickets available at the door. For more information, contact Alan Taylor, (425) 486-7693.

Saturday, March 22: Bread for the World Hunger Workshop with Rev. David Beckman. 8:45 a.m. – 3 p.m.; University UCC Church (congregation of Colleagues Kate Nelson, Liz Gilbert, and Susan Cook), 4545 16th NE, Seattle. This workshop will feature Rev. Beckman, president of Bread for the World, and will prepare attendees to address global hunger and poverty. For more information and to register, call Rachel Gomez Acosta at (206) 624-0093 x113 or email bread4seattle@yahoo.com.

Save the Dates

Saturday, April 19: Earth Day, Reflection & Restoration events along the Duwamish and Cedar Rivers.

Sunday, April 27: Car Free Sunday (please see our web site for details: www.earthministry.org/carfree.htm).

Friday-Monday, June 20-23: The National Churches of Christ's (NCC) Environmental Ministries Conference (at Seattle University; see www.webofcreation.org/ncc/ for details).

Highlighted Resource

The 2003 National Council of Churches (NCC) Earth Day Sunday Resource Packet

The NCC Eco-Justice Working Group's resource is entitled "Waters of Life: Enough for All." It contains a call to worship, prayers, confession, suggested hymns, "sermon starters," and other resources aimed at calling attention to the sacredness, yet scarcity, of water. You can download this packet from the internet at

www.webofcreation.org/ncc/earthday2003/index.html.

Stories and News from Congregations

Please always feel free to email, call in, or send stories and news that you'd like to share with other Colleagues.

Rae Verhoef and Yvonne Wilhelmsen are Colleagues at United Churches of Olympia. They, and other Colleagues from the South Sound, get together on a regular basis to share ideas/resources, stories, and news and plan for events (e.g., reflection/restoration on Mud Bay). At their most recent meeting, Rae spoke of the church's "Wellspring Covenant Ministry" which helps to foster creation awareness and care within every ministry in the church. Rae reported that "the Wellspring Covenant Ministry at the United Churches celebrated their first year with a congregational report of their completed ideas (e.g., supported shade-grown coffee, hosted Alternative Giving Fair, added an Earth flag to worship space), celebrated ongoing ideas (8), and those in progress (8). The presentation was made using 'power point' so no new paper reports were generated." To learn more about the Wellspring Covenant Ministry and S. Sound Colleagues' meetings, contact us.

Mimi Maloney, another S. Sound Colleague, attends St. Michael's Roman Catholic and is a Sister of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. At their recent S. Sound meeting, Mimi spoke of an effort to promote the adoption of the Earth Charter (www.earthcharter.org) by the Olympia City Council. Mimi also said that her religious community of Sisters is considering taking a corporate stand on the Earth Charter as well. (All individuals and groups are welcome to endorse the Earth Charter; go to the web site address above to do so.)

Cindy Klein is a Colleague from Christ the Servant Lutheran Church in Bellingham and works with Whatcom County Land Trust. Cindy was instrumental in hosting a two-session, public forum entitled "Faith, Stewardship, and Community – Living with God's Creation." The purpose of the forums was to "encourage inquiry and dialogue in and among Whatcom County churches and other groups regarding the relationship between religious beliefs and the natural world." The successful series drew an diverse and lively audience.

A hearty welcome to our newest Colleague:
Joseph Arnett, Bothell United Methodist Church
Blessings Joe, on your vision and work!

Eco-tip

In the Puget Sound region, winter is the perfect time to plant/transplant plants that are native to our region. At this time of year, they often get the natural soaking that they'll need to establish themselves. Furthermore, planting a new tree, shrub, or smaller plant can be a perfect Lenten activity – placing in the ground a hope for new life.

Many resources exist for those who would like to learn about selecting, planting, and caring for native plants – the Washington Native Plant Society (WNPS) has several on their web site: www.wnps.org. For example, WNPS is accepting applications through March 7 for their popular (free) native plant stewardship program. Participants learn plant identification, about natural plant communities, and about ways to improve urban plant habitat. For more information, call (206) 527-3210 or email npsp@wnps.org.

Prayer/Meditation

"For the New Year," by Denise Levertov, in Candles in Babylon ©1982.

I have a small grain of hope –
one small crystal that gleams
clear colors out of transparency.
I need more.
I break off a fragment
to send to you.
please take
this grain of hope
so that mine won't shrink.
Please share your fragment
so that yours will grow.
only so, by division,
will hope increase,
like a clump of irises, which will cease to flower
unless you distribute
the clustered roots, unlikely source –
clumsy and earth-covered –
of grace.

Action Alert

Farmers Market Nutrition Programs (FMNPs) provide a direct tie between small-scale agriculture and nutrition. They provide seniors and nutritionally at-risk women and children the opportunity to buy fresh local produce directly from farmers. The federal government is currently on the verge of eliminating funding for this vital program that supports small-scale farmers and the poorest people in our state. You can help to save this program, by contacting your Representative and Senators and asking them to maintain funding for it. To find your Congressman's contact information, go to <http://capwiz.com>.