

Earth Notes

A Newsletter for Earth Ministry Colleagues

August 2003

Dear Colleague,

At the height of this summer season, I'm reminded of the words and images of Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179; in the following passages, the "I" refers to her perception of the Holy indwelling creation):

I, the fiery life of divine essence, am aflame beyond the beauty of the meadows, I gleam in the waters, and I burn in the sun ...I awaken everything to life. I am the breeze that nurtures all things green. I encourage blossoms to flourish with ripening fruits.

Hildegard's sense of the Holy was shaped by her lush Rhineland context – with its rich soil, verdant forests, and flourishing orchards and vineyards. It's my hope that you are finding time and peace, this summer, to bask in God's presence in this beautiful region in which we live. In Hildegard's words, may you be "showered with greening refreshment, the vitality to bear fruit" for this creation-care ministry that we share.

Greening blessings,

Tanya Marcovna Barnett

Events for Colleagues and Congregations

Sunday, August 24: "Simplicity: Integrating Sustainability, Social Justice, and Spirit"; 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Seattle University, Campion Ballroom, 1001 E. James St., Seattle. The Simplicity Forum and Seeds for Simplicity will co-host this inspiring and practical conference featuring popular writers and other leaders of the simplicity movement. For more information, call (877) 867-8833 or go to www.seedsofsimplicity.org.

Saturday, September 6: Restoration & Reflection along the Duwamish River; 11:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.; Seattle. As local salmon make their final journey home, we invite you to join with others in our community to help restore vital habitat for these salmon and other creatures. Youth (ages twelve and older) and youth groups are welcome. Please **RSVP**. For location/directions and more information, please contact us.

Friday–Sunday, September 12-14: North Cascades Wilderness Retreat; \$60. Colleague Mary Rose and Karl Ostrom (from University Congregational UCC, Seattle) will host this camping and hiking retreat, as an enriching opportunity "to experience together the magnificence of our earthly home and to heighten our spiritual awareness as we journey together." For information and to register, contact Mary at spiritualpathways@comcast.net or (425) 828-8977.

Monday, September 15: "Simplicity and Sustainability: An Ecological Footprint Workshop"; 7:00-9:00 p.m.; Trinity United Methodist Church, 6512 23rd Ave. NW, Seattle (in Ballard). As part of his annual 1,500-mile,

awareness-building bike tour, Jim Merkel will help workshop participants establish and work toward their own measurable sustainability goals – a great "next step" for those who have engaged in simpler living studies and forums. Merkel is author of *Radical Simplicity* and founder of the Global Living Project. For more information, contact us.

Thursday, September 25, 7:30-9 p.m.; St. Patrick's Catholic Church, 2702 Broadway E., Seattle *and*

Monday, October 6, 7:30-9 p.m.; St. Leo's Catholic Church, 710 S. 13th St., Tacoma

Coffee with a Conscience Workshops. These two gatherings will tell the story of how fair trade, shade-grown, and organic coffee significantly impacts the lives of coffee farmers, their families and communities, and the broader creation. These workshops will include helpful examples and practical information on introducing these coffees to your congregation. For more information and to register, please contact Gary Lazzeroni at (206)-382-4509 or garyl@seattlearch.org.

Saturday, October 4: Celebration of St. Francis: An

Evening of Nature, Spirituality, and the Arts; 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.; Denny Park Lutheran Church, 766 John St, Seattle, suggested donation: \$10 (no one will be turned away). Earth Ministry's annual Celebration will feature the engaging and provocative writings of David James Duncan (author of *The River Why*, *The Brothers K*, and *My Story as Told by Water*) and the words and photography of Subhankar Banerjee (author of *Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: Seasons of Life and Land*). During the Celebration, we will also honor our newest Greening Congregations Partners. Please contact us for more information and tickets, or go to our web site.

Saturday, October 18: Food & Faith Field Trip,

Workshop, and Harvest Celebration; 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Seattle & farmland surrounding Seattle, WA (please see our Monthly Update for meeting location); \$15 to help cover bus and lunch. We'll celebrate the harvest through a tour of our "food-shed," presentations and interactive workshops, and reflection. We'll hop on a bus and visit urban and rural farms to learn more about sustainable-eating opportunities through community gardening/feeding programs, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms and gardens, farmers markets, congregational efforts, and much more. After the tour, we'll come together to learn about practical ways of fostering sustainable eating in our personal lives and/or places of worship. This is an excellent introduction for anyone studying our new resource, Food & Faith. Space is limited. For more information and to **RSVP**, please contact us.

Highlighted Resource

Harvest for the World:

A Worship Anthology on Sharing in the Work of Creation

♦By Geoffrey Duncan (Pilgrim Press, 2003) ♦

A gem of a resource! *Harvest for the World* can be used whenever the worship focus is on creation, harvest, fair trading, relief work, international debt and poverty, the politics of land ownership, and food production. Includes prayers, blessings, graces, and a global selection of recipes for creating a special harvest meal. You can order it online at www.pilgrimpress.com or ask for it in local bookstores.

Stories and News from Congregations

- Various Episcopal congregations (e.g., St. Mark's Cathedral; Emmanuel, Mercer Is.) are now serving and/or selling Episcopal Relief and Development's new "Bishops Blend" coffees: a premium line of Certified Fair Trade, organic, and shade grown coffees from Central American and Indonesia. The proceeds of purchases go to EDR's outreach ministries. To learn more, go to www.er-d.org. Other new coffee-purchasing options include Caffè Appassionato's new "St. Ignatius Gourmet Coffees" -- the proceeds of purchases go to the Jesuits of the Oregon Province. To learn more, go to www.caffeappassionato.com/. In addition, Equal Exchange Coffee has partnerships with the Presbyterian Church, Lutheran World Relief, American Friends Service Committee, and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. To learn more, go to www.equalexchange.org/interfaith/index.html.
- Trinity United Methodist Church (in Ballard) has just completed an extensive energy audit and retrofit project that will save a great deal of money and lessen their dependency on ecologically-impactful energy production. To learn more about this project and how they funded the retrofits, please contact Rev. Rich Lang at oddrev@yahoo.com or call (206) 784-2227. Trinity will also host the Simplicity event on Sept. 15 (see previous page) as well as an evening with Jim Hightower (radio commentator, author, and "a modern-day Johnny Appleseed") on August 26th, at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Rich.

Welcome and blessings to our newest Colleagues:
Kris Freeman – St. John's Lutheran, Seattle
Mary Rose – University Congregational, UCC, Seattle
We're grateful for your partnership in this ministry.

Eco-tip

If you like to put "eco-tips" in your bulletins or newsletters, or on bulletin boards, the Union of Concerned Scientists "Greentips" contain a wealth of creative, do-able ideas. CCS produces them once a month, according to seasonal and broader environmental themes. To check them out, go to www.ucsusa.org and click on "greentips."

Prayer

"The Cycles of Nature"

by William L. Wallace, Aotearoa New Zealand

from *Harvest for the World* (see "Highlighted Resource")

Interwoven web of life

holding as one

stream and song,

sinew and silence,

seedtime and harvest,

how I delight in you

and you in me.

You are the universal face of God

the touch of true divinity,

the infusion and expansion,

the beyond and the within,

the growing and the dying,

the separation and the merging.

In you the threads are woven,

the sea surges,

the sun shines

and the earth nurtures. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Action Alert

Please consider to sharing "action alerts" with others in your congregation. Please also feel free send us alerts that you'd like to share with other Colleagues.

In past action alerts, we've spoken of threats to our country's landmark **Roadless Area Conservation Rule**, adopted in 2001. The Rule recognizes our ability to continue to build strong community economies and protect 58.5 million acres of our last old-growth forests, conserve wildlife habitats, and preserve clean water supplies.

The U.S. Forest Service and our current Administration have consistently refused to implement the Rule and are currently targeting the Tongass and Chugach National Forests (in Alaska) as the first to fell (i.e., they will run forest practices there on a "timber first" basis). These forests are an essential part of the world's largest, intact temperate rainforest. Their centuries-old trees provide critical habitat for wolves, bears, salmon, bald eagles, and other wildlife that have disappeared in many places across the country. Together, these forests account for more than a quarter of the roadless areas that the Rule covers.

In the tradition of being advocates ("voices for the voiceless") in our faith communities, you can send a comment letter to:

Forest Service, Roadless Tongass National Forest
Content Analysis Team, USDA Forest Service
P.O. Box 22810, Salt Lake City UT 84122

You can also email a letter directly from The Wilderness Society's web site at:

http://ga1.org/campaign/tongass2_tws

The new deadline for comments is **September 2, 2003**.