

Creation Care Ministry Meeting
July 13, 2020

Present: Edie Weller, Rachel Baker, Betsy Bell, Norman Le Moine, Kylee Krida, Lisa Graumlich, Ruth Mulligan, Carolyn White, Marjorie Ringness, Sue Ratner, David Wagner, Kathy Minsch.

Kylee opened the meeting with a prayer: "God of the sun and moon, of the mountains, deserts and plains, God of the mighty oceans, of rivers, lakes and streams, God of all creatures that live and move on this sacred Earth, we are formed by Christ into your people called to bring the world into your marvelous light. May we know our ecological vocation so that we will care for this earth which you have created. We ask this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen"

Source: <https://www.bne.catholic.edu.au/formationandleadership/prayer/Documents/World+Environment+Day.pdf>

David Wagner, St. Mark's Facilities Manager, reported on work currently being undertaken on the campus to reduce our energy consumption. Some examples included changing many bulbs to LEDs, installation of a bike rack, running new conduit to provide electricity for washer/dryer instead of gas, pricing EV stations, training for David with Energy Star, and many other projects. SOLARC Energy group recently completed an energy assessment of the Cathedral building and Bloedel Hall, the St. Nicholas building, Carriage House, and Leffler House. Their Zero Carbon Master Plan suggested several projects that would reduce our energy consumption significantly in the near future and have a payback period of less than two years. SOLARC's report included options for achieving a net zero carbon footprint by 2030 and 2045. The report is very detailed, and SOLARC will be available as a consultant and liaison as St. Mark's takes on various improvements. The Vestry will receive a report on SOLARC's assessment at their August meeting. More to come.....

Small group reports:

Kylee reported for the *spiritual practices* group. Marjorie, Kylee, and Edie met with Cristi Chapman and Emily Meeks in June about ways to integrate spiritual practices and creation care. Ideas included photography and bird watching; volunteering with the elderly by walking them around outside; art, music, and poetry; listening to the birdnote podcast; practicing sacred reading of verses and scripture; connecting All Souls Day to nature; biking; volunteering through or with organizations like Outdoors for All. Forums in October were tentatively planned, considering 1.) integrating aspects of celebrating creation and its connection to our creative spirit-including ourselves as part of Creation 2.) how to frame this series (or segments of it) to be multi-generational or inter-generational 3.) presenting the series in several longer parts -- fall, Lent, and late spring 4.) developing and offering a resource list to go with the specific focus on parts of the series. 5.) As we suggest activities for participants, consider those who are compromised in terms of physical ability, access to resources, or time-recognize the diversity of our community 6.) potentially include avenues such as art, journaling, yoga, photography, digital resources, music, reading, etc., in addition to directly experiencing creation outside.

Ruth reported for the *carbon measurement* group. The group suggests that we use *Sustaining Earth, Our Island Home* at <https://www.sustainislandhome.org> as a tool for the Saint Mark's households to measure their current carbon emissions, explore specific actions they can take, and track their progress. It is important that we have a sense of doing this collectively. The team explored and discussed options and selected the national Episcopal Church's Carbon Tracker for many reasons. 1.) Approved by acclimation at national General

Convention in 2018 and Bishop Rickel has endorsed it. 2.) Connects us to the Episcopal Creation Pledge which calls us to live “simply, humbly, and gently on the earth.” 3.) Customized by regions, so ours is based on data from King County. 4.) At this point, focuses on 5 basic choices we make in our household activities—electricity, home heating, transportation, food, and waste, which, in the US, activities account for 40% of GHG emissions. 5.) Very accessible, and we have a sheet of step by step instructions that are clear and easy to use. 6.) Suggests possible concrete actions that are affordable and accessible. 7.) Individual progress can be tracked AND we can see our collective progress as a community of Saint Mark’s. **The measurement group encouraged all the Creation Care ministry members to get signed up on the tracker and give feedback at our next meeting.** And then we can ask clergy/staff and vestry to get on board, and then the rest of the congregation. We need to see if and how it fits as a natural tool to combine with our other objectives, so we have one cohesive plan. This is just one small piece. However, as Roberta said, “Measurement makes the whole project hold together.” We’ll need to decide if we think we can make it fun and build a strong sense of community around this. We definitely don’t want this to do something that’s grim and guilt-producing.

Betsy reported for the *carbon offset* group. They researched several projects, both locally and globally, which resulted in several excellent choices. They will continue to dig deeper and present a summary of the projects to encourage parishioners to use at our August meeting.

Kathy reported for the *personal habits* group. Brainstorming this month produced many ideas: Planting of trees, adding greenery to your yard, volunteer at planting parties - removing invasive plants and planting natives, shop farmers markets, gardening and composting at home, meat purchases from local farmers who do rotational grazing, purchase meat products such that we are decreasing the amount of meat we are eating and purchasing from sustainable sources, CSA - Community supported Agriculture subscriptions, build raised beds, organic fertilizers, trade extra items grown at home in a safe way to others in the community, gardening at home decreases the use of fuel to go to the store, bags to bring home produce, eating more salads and cooking items at home, smart thermostat - reduce the amount of carbon usage, support kelp farming, tankless water heater, solar panels for the home and for charging phones, reducing the use of single use plastics, use of Ridwell, cisterns. Meeting time was running short, and so we did not talk about the details of these ideas.

All of the small groups will likely meet again to work out details and next steps and report again at our August meeting.

We watched the 12-minute video “Climate: A New Story with Charles Eisenstein” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IO6Y5baPOQ> which we all found inspiring. And the possibility of a film series in the future was raised. Suggestions included “Ancestral Waters,” and “Condor and the Eagle.” Libby Carr is looking into the possibility of a showing of “2040” at St. Mark’s. Carolyn let us know about an opportunity to view a talk by John Foley “Humans & Nature” on October 21.

Marjorie closed the meeting with a short reading.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 10, at 6:30pm.