

Meeting Notes, 3/25/12
First United Methodist Church
Natural Step Ministry Team

Attending: Marge Stevens, Robin Proebsting, Valerie White, Corinne Butzin, Rev. Bonnie Parr-Phillipson

Absent members, send minutes to: Sara Power, LoErna Simpson, Marian Veley, Kris Graves, Jeanie Goul, Pat Smythe, Kim Burnap (church office), Maureen Beezhold (Natural Step), Matt Gregory (FUMC web master)

Next meetings: May 20, 2012, Round Table Room, 3:30 to 5 p.m; Summer gathering TBA

Fifth Sunday Potluck –We had two new Blue Sky sign ups, and no Smart Energy sign-up that we know of. Marge has asked Ken for an accounting of funds raised from the potluck for the Natural Step budget and for the Renewable Energy fund. Will report back at next meeting.

Landscape: Robin summarized the project. It has been passed off to trustees to develop a rock garden at the site where we have had a vegetable garden. Marge put an article into the April newsletter and sign up sheets out in the library lounge to solicit interested parties in working on moving and planning and maintaining a new garden space in the parking strip on Jackson St. If there is no interest, some other suggestions were put out by Robin and Corinne including a butterfly and insect attracting garden with flowers and other low maintenance native plants, with educational signage. Ken Hilton has Mason bees we can obtain. Bonnie wanted us to be aware of people sensitive to stings. We might employ some of the homeless workers in the HELP program for garden maintenance, using football parking funds.

Robin offered to prepare an article that can be put onto the church website about landscape changes, from a Natural Step prespective.

Waste Management/Composting/Recycling: The trustees have removed the dumpster and replaced it with three 90 gallon roll carts. This results in a savings of about \$400 per year in the church budget, and less landfill trash. People are using the compost buckets in the community center kitchen and coffee prep area. Marge is educating and orienting the coffee volunteers. At the recent That's My Farmer breakfast, practically no landfill waste was generated, but compost and recycling were used.

Earth Sunday is April 22 – also American Indian Sunday and Festival of God's Creation. The Children's choir and bells are practicing "All Things Bright and Beautiful". Bonnie will generate a list of 'interview' questions to bring out information about our church's story of being a Natural Step Congregation. Marge suggested holding up poster boards to illustrate and celebrate some of our various accomplishments over the past six years. Corinne knows of some recycled cardboard we might use, and has artistic talent to help. They will work on these projects and be in email contact with others for planning. We scheduled a rehearsal on Saturday, April 21 at 10 a.m. We'd like for all folks affiliated with Natural Step to take part, in some capacity.

That's My Farmer Update – St Patrick's Day breakfast was well attended, with volunteers from several churches. We raised \$1500, and could use more for the SNAP 6 supplement program.

Corinne will contact the Ten Rivers Food Web administrators to get information to make up a flyer to put on the Sharing Table. Marge will find out about future fund raising and congregational connection ideas.

Corinne is interested in helping with a **Sharing Table** again this season. It will probably get started in May, and in addition to plant starts and produce will have flyers/poster about the That's My Farmer/SNAP 6 incentive program, seed starts from the cedar tree that was taken down from the courtyard, and a donation box for SNAP 6 program. Corinne offered to write an article for the May newsletter about this.

Litter Pick-Up - Shauna Holt, the youth director, has scheduled this on April 22 as a spring activity.

New topics: A Master Recycler has contacted us about putting together a “**Quirky Recycling**” pamphlet to list oddball items and how to recycle them. The intended audience is church congregations, and may be expanded. We offered to help with printing costs. The **Energize Corvallis** group contacted us about a new initiative to involve congregations more fully with taking energy conservation measures. Marge will continue to meet with this group and help connect it with our congregation

Dreaming Dreams about **investing locally**, Marge brought up some possibilities for redirecting some of our Foundation Board investments. There was interest from the group, and discussion. Marge will follow up with a subcommittee of the board.

Leadership of Natural Step Ministry Team: Marge is ready to turn over leadership of the Natural Step team. It is good for the organization's creativity and energy to have a change of leadership from time to time. *****If you are interested in becoming the Ministry Team leader, please contact Marge or Rev. Bonnie for more information.*****

Mark your calendar:

Anytime – write articles on Natural Step for church newsletter

Anytime – lead the litter patrol on Airport Road

April 22, 2012 – Earth Sunday

May 20, 2012 – Natural Step Meeting

Anytime – contact Marge that you are willing to take over leadership of Natural Step Ministry Team