

## Meeting Notes, 4/17/16, 3:30 pm

### First United Methodist Church Environmental Care/Natural Step Ministry Team

**Attending:** Robin Comforto, Valerie White, Rebecca Marti, Ann Bateman, Marge Stevens, Leslie Chartier, Marian Veley, Bill Proebsting

Absent members, send minutes to: LoErna Simpson, Rev. Barbara Nixon, Corinne Butzin, Karen Bloom, Sheri Puckette, Sara Power, Kris Graves, Matt Gregory (FUMC web master)

**Church Grounds report** - Bill Proebsting presented information on the transformation of the areas of grass lawn into native plants prairie. This provides habitat for pollinators, greatly reduces the use of water, and lawn mowing. Regarding concerns on the use of Round Up to kill the grass, Bill reported he only uses the smallest amount needed to prepare the areas for the prairie plantings and keep the grass from coming back. There were several suggestions about publicizing this project: garden tours, constant comments, newsletter articles. OSU grad students may be using the prairie gardens as a research site. This is a community connection ministry for our church.

**Edible Garden Project** – some plantings are in place. Karen is heading up the watering crew management

**Update on Blue Sky funding** - Robin, Marge –There is a deficit this year, and this year's budget is fixed. We requested representation at the 2017 budget planning process to place the Blue Sky expenditure into the general utility budget for 2017. Appeals have gone to the congregation to help pay the current accumulated costs for this year, and the business manager may put a special pledge appeal into a Sunday bulletin in the future. (See Church Council item below)

**Water Bottle project** – Rebecca – has contacted Susan Westcott and they have not yet met

**Carolyn Raab grant** – Marge – none of the requested projects this year for Seeds for the Sol or Habitat were accepted (edible garden project award from 2015 will carry forward. There is around \$800 still available.)

**Budget Report** – Marge: So far, from an annual budget of \$300, we have spent \$150 contribution to the Sustainability Coalition, \$60 for publicity for the April 22 Food Event, and \$60 to print the 2016 Unusual Recyclables flyers. We have \$908 in our reserve fund, earmarked for several projects: edible garden, water bottles, MissionU tuition, etc. Revenue from football parking has been diminishing.

**Earth Day activities** – Ann and Valerie will be tabling at LBCC on April 21 at noon with Albany Methodist Church to distribute Unusual Recyclables flyers; Robin and others will put on an event with films and speakers on April 22 at 7 in the FUMC Community Center called “Are We Eating Away Our Own Future” on plant based eating, snacks provided

**Earth Sunday worship** - report back from Leslie – the service went well this morning, including Karen and Ann with Leslie preaching, and Dick Waring presenting the Green Now Testament. Ann brought a thank you card for Dick for us to sign. Leslie donated take-home seed infused earth circles for those attending.

**Litter Patrol** - Scotty and Youth - April 30 8:30 a.m.- helpers welcome, meet at gravel parking lot on the left after you turn onto Airport Rd off of Hwy 99 South. More information at <http://corvallisfumc.org/content/adopt-highway-project>

**Church Council questions** from Bob Lewis – Marge: We received two questions from church council. Here is a summary of our brainstormed responses:

Hi Bob, The Environmental Care/Natural Step Ministry Team met today and discussed your requests. Here are responses that were generated from general brainstorming at the Environmental Care/Natural Step Ministry Team meeting of April 17:

1) We would appreciate support from the church council to:

a) Incorporate the expenditures for Blue Sky energy into the general utilities budget of the church. The support of Blue Sky at the current level is a 'place holder' to indicate our commitment to caring for creation until such time as we are able to install solar photo voltaic panels on our facilities' rooftops. We encourage placing the savings which are realized from the conversion to LED and other low energy lighting, the insulation/sealing of the Martha Room doors and windows, and decreased water consumption coupled with the native prairie landscaping be directed toward covering the Blue Sky election costs.

b) Place signage in the Community Center which identifies the facility as being affiliated with the First United Methodist Church, a Christian organization. We would like for groups which use that facility to know the connection between the beneficial community events which are held there and the church which facilitates and supports the facility.

2) Updates to the council regarding our work:

a) We want the church council to be aware of the strong connection between the Environmental Care/ Natural Step Ministry Team's work and the greater community. These community connections include: Corvallis Sustainability Coalition, Earth Day activities (LBCC and Food events this year), 350 Corvallis, the Camanata walk for No LNG and climate justice, the Gift Economy Quarterly Clothing Swap, and more.

b) Intergenerational work involving the Youth in Natural Step projects continues with the Litter Patrol project on our stretch of Airport Road at: <http://corvallisfumc.org/content/adopt-highway-project>

c) We encourage anyone interested in learning more about what we do and what we have done to look at all the archived minutes and other information on our page in the church web site at: <http://corvallisfumc.org/content/natural-step-committee>

Thank you for asking! Marge Stevens and the Environmental Care/Natural Step Ministry Team

**Camanata report-back** and LNG petition request - Leslie, Marge – the group appreciated staying at our church on their walk for climate justice and no LNG pipeline in Southern Oregon. They did not get to meet with the Governor in Salem as hoped.

**Letter on No LNG to FERC request** – Marge received an appeal from the statewide organization opposed to the LNG pipeline proposed for southern Oregon to sign on in support of the decision to deny the siting and to continue with that position. There was consensus agreement to do so.

**Clothing Swap** – Marge. The second time we hosted this event in March was again very well attended by members of the community, especially families with children. Our custodian, Jay, reported the event was well run and the building taken care of. We are likely to be able to host this event each quarter on a regular basis.

**Solar Panel Project** - future - with Jim Swinyard

**Upcoming events:**

Thursday, 4/21 at noon, LBCC Albany – Earth Day Fair booth – Ann and Valerie

Friday, 4/22 at 7 pm, Community Center – film and discussion and snacks “Are We Eating Away Our Own Future?”

Tuesday, April 26, noon-1:30 pm City Library, Sustainability Coalition Quarterly Meeting

Saturday, April 30, 8:30 am Litter Patrol, Scottie and youth and adult volunteers

Sunday, June 19, 3:30 room 106b, Natural Step/Environmental Care meeting (Ann has an excused absence for her 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary!)