



Roots & Shoots Insider

May/June 2007

Volume I Issue 4

Bethel Goes Green!

roots&shoots

Join Us For

Wonderful Wednesdays

At Bethel UMC

4:30–6:00pm

4th Grade and Up

For more information, contact

Nan McCarry

roots-shoots@cometobethel.org

- Green Church Initiative
- Amphibian Monitoring
- Monarch Migration Tracking
- “Simple Living” Activities
- Environmental Education
- Stumptown Adopt-a-Road
- Humanitarian Missions
- Heifer Project
- Walking For Water

Earth Day was a big day for Bethel Roots & Shoots this year. We entered into the Green Church Covenant, and sponsored an Earth Day Fair during breakfast.

Many Roots & Shoots members attended the worship ceremony on April 15 and participated in the signing of

the Green Church Covenant, an initiative of the VA Conference of the UMC.

Roots & Shoots also held an environmental fair. This was a chance for us to show the congregation and the community some of the projects we’ve been working on and

to give people a chance to make small contributions.

Every station had three elements: what we’ve been doing; an activity; and an opportunity for the congregation to become more involved.

Among other activities, visitors heard frog calls, sponsored plants for our garden, and calculated their “ecological footprints” - how many “earths” would be needed to provide the resources we are using if everyone on the planet lived as we do. For most: SIX Earths are needed, uh oh!

Together we CAN make a difference!



Spotlight on Local Animals: Honey Bees

Honeybees are the main pollinators for more than ninety of our crops! This includes vegetables such as broccoli, asparagus, and squash; fruit from apples to oranges to a wide variety of berries; nuts; and legumes. In fact, it is estimated that

they perform over \$10 billion worth of work annually in the United States alone!

Among the 25,000 bee species worldwide, only four species produce honey. The one known to us is the Western Honey-bee.

There are three “castes” of honeybees that support the hive: the queen, which is the only fertile female; the male drones, that fertilize the queen; and the sterile female “workers” that perform all the other tasks necessary to maintain and operate the hive.

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Butterfly Garden Emerging from Cocoon

Long before spring weather arrived, Roots & Shoots youth were working in the garden area, hacking away vines and envisioning Sunday school classes taking place under the trees.

Our donors at the environmental fair gave us enough funds to get the plant species we need in order to make the garden a “monarch way-station.” The Fern Jenkins Memorial Garden will become a place where monarchs, the only butterfly that migrates, can stop and feed.

There is a nationwide campaign to make monarch way-stations. As land becomes

more developed there are fewer milkweeds and other “weedy” roadside and old-field plants that the monarchs depend on. Roots & Shoots ordered and planted five of the six species that monarchs in particular require for all stages of their life cycle.

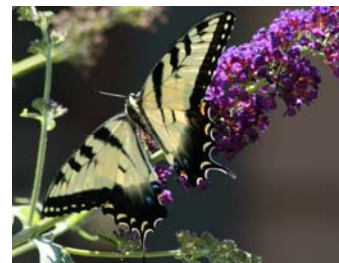
The sixth is Purple Coneflower. We’ve planted one taken as a division from a home garden. When possible, we use cuttings and divisions from our gardens.

We have also planted a few butterfly bushes—these were cut from the tree at the Bills’ house and elsewhere last winter. They sprouted small

rootlets in water, so hopefully they will grow into bushes. Crystal Bills is also going to provide us with several flowering plants from Fern’s own garden, as it is time for her to dig them up and divide them.

A huge thanks to Carl Carnes, as the butterfly garden is quickly creeping beyond Bethel’s borders. He has allowed us to use the woody patch of land right beyond Fern’s “bench.”

We are grateful for the folks who have given us a great start with the garden. Small monetary donations are always appreciated.



Current Wish List

Pruners

Trowels

Gloves

Powdered Drlnk Mix

Snacks

HP97 Color Cartridge



Supporting Local, Independent, Organic Farming Roots & Shoots Visits Potomac Vegetable Farms

On May 2nd, we enjoyed an educational tour of Potomac Vegetable Farms with Ellen Polishuk who manages the facility. First, we visited the nursery where young plants are started and hardened off for life in the fields. Then, we observed a planted field and learned how to effectively water crops using drip irrigation.

We climbed aboard hay wagon and traveled to the composting center. This is the most important part of the farm, because an organic farm depends upon building good soil. There is a large machine for turning compost, because oxygen is the key ingredient in making good compost. The beneficial microorganisms need oxygen to live and do their

work in processing the soil. Putting out commercial fertilizer and pesticides can kill them. We also learned that barley and other cover crops are planted and then tilled into the soil to give microorganisms a “treat”. Being an organic farmer takes extra effort and thinking, but it’s worth it!

**Do YOU know where
YOUR food has been?!**

May 12th — World Fair Trade Day What is it? Why do we participate?

For many farmers and artisans, being able to sell into the fair trade market means the difference between feeding their family or not, sending their children school or not, or having many other basic necessities. Fair Trade addresses one of the root causes of poverty.

Simply put, fair trade enables small farmers to sell their crops for a fair price.



At Bethel, we buy coffee that is fairly traded. Our participation in the UMCOR Coffee Project during fellowship hours supports practices that help farmers in Columbia earn a fairer share of income. This also makes growing coffee more desirable than growing coca, used to make street drugs.



Implementing the Green Church Initiative

Now that we have officially covenanted to support the UMC Green Church Initiative, what does that mean?

Worship: Our worship will motivate us to seek God's reign on earth by cherishing, protecting and healing creation.

Learning and Teaching: We will seek opportunities for ourselves and our children to learn more about God's creation and our role.

Lifestyle: We will reflect, both in our individual and congregational way of life, respect and care for God's creation.

Community, National and Global Involvement: In our community, the nation and the world, we will witness to and participate in God's ongoing work of creation by supporting public efforts and policies that protect and restore the damaged earth. We will open our hearts to God's people around the world who have been adversely affected by our greed.

As United Methodists, we have embraced God's people around the world as our mission. We will broaden that mission to include other parts of God's creation.



Mission Projects Report

Roots & Shoots is involved in a number of projects designed to help our young people become more aware of problems and needs of other people, as well as all of God's creation both locally and globally. At the same time, we hope to Make A Difference through our activities and our giving.

YOU have helped us to make that possible. **YOUR** generous donations have enabled us to send **28 NETS** to African children to reduce the spread of malaria. **YOUR** generous donations have purchased all of the plantings necessary to begin our Fern Jenkins Memorial Garden.

YOUR generous donations will enable us Walk for Water to support the building of wells in West Africa, which in turn, will enhance the total well-being of women and children there.

TOGETHER...

We CAN Make A Difference!



Ask Yourself...

God created the earth in perfect harmony and "the earth is satisfied by the fruit of His Work" (Psalm 104)

How can we give glory to God through responsible stewardship of this earth? What choices can we make and what actions can we take to bring greater harmony to the earth and all members of our human family?

What actions can we take and what investments can we make to build a better world?

"If I spent enough time with the tiniest creature — even a caterpillar — I would never have to prepare a sermon. So full of God is every creature."

— Meister Eckhart



May 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 <i>Roots & Shoots</i>	3	4	5 <i>6:30pm— Mexican Fiesta</i>
6	7	8	9 <i>Roots & Shoots</i>	10	11	12
13 <i>Fellowship Hour</i>	14	15	16 <i>Roots & Shoots</i>	17	18	19 <i>Walk for Water & Yard Sale</i>
20	21	22	23 <i>Roots & Shoots</i>	24	25	26
27 <i>Fellowship Hour</i>	28	29	30 <i>Roots & Shoots</i>	31		



Schedule of Events

- May 2nd — Potomac Farm field trip, leaving Bethel @ 4:15 returning at 6:00pm
- May 5th — Cinco de Mayo Mexican Fiesta Dinner benefiting RESET Berlin ministries @ 6:30 ending at 8:30pm, activities and fireworks for the whole family!
- May 13th — Mothers' Day and Fair Trade Coffee Fellowship after the 11am worship service
- May 19th — Walking for Water in the morning and supporting the Yard Sale with a Roots & Shoots Display in the afternoon
- May 19th — Ham & Turkey Supper from 5:00-7:00pm
- May 27th — Fair Trade Coffee Fellowship after the 11am worship service

Stay tuned for the June Calendar Update. The next newsletter will be published in July.

Visiting the Beekeeper

Continued from page 1...

Roots and Shoots recently visited Mr. Virts, a local beekeeper, at a plum orchard in Lovettsville to learn more about these important and fascinating insects. We saw how the bees are kept in hives designed to promote efficient honey production. Some of our members even donned protective gear to move in for a closer look!

We learned that there are some crops that don't produce fruit at all without the help of the honeybee. This makes the phenomenon of declining populations of honeybees, known as "Colony Collapse Disorder", even more disturbing.

For years, honeybees have been suffering from a mite infestation that has reduced their numbers, but now something is killing off even larger numbers of bees. Scientists are looking at possible culprits as diverse as parasites and cell phones!

Mr. Virts monitors his bees regularly. He provides them with nutrition in the winter and medications to keep them healthy and mite-free. We were able to spot the queens, who are marked with a red dot for visibility. We held the drones, since they do not have stingers. Stingers are only present on the worker bees.

Who says learning can't be fun?!



**See more pictures of us, what we do and where we've been at:
<http://community.webshots.com/user/CopperRidgeFarm>**