Dear Friends,

Spring and Summer are upon us. So, for the May newsletter, the focus is on gardening, plants and the impact of native plants and sustainable gardening on climate and biodiversity (pollinators such as bees ad butterflies), carbon sequestration, and sustainable foods.

If you know of others who should receive this newsletter, please forward it to them, and let me know who to add to the email list. More up-to-date info can be found on the Sustainable Winchester Facebook page at www.facebook.com/SustainableWinchester. Please like that page and share with others who should know.

In Faith,

Josh

Epiphany Sustainability and Creation Care Group Meetings

The Epiphany Sustainability and Creation Care Group Meetings are held the last Monday of each month from 5:30pm – 6:30pm. Throughout the Summer of 2021 they will be Zoom Meetings.

The next Zoom Meeting is **Monday, June 28.**

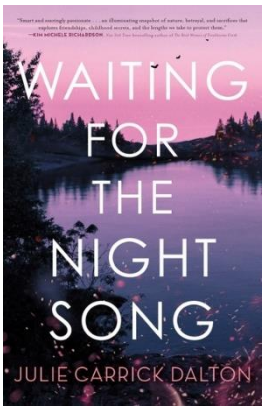
Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8734975675
Meeting ID: 873 497 5675
Dial by Phone at: 929-205-6099

As a group committed to environmental justice, we stand with those calling for racial justice, accountability and an end to violence. We grieve for the loss so many are experiencing in our community, and we stand with those most affected by racist structures and systems.

The Mass. Bishop's Declaration of Climate Emergency drafted this month says: "We recognize that the climate crisis affects low-income communities and communities of color first and hardest. We confess that we, and our churches, have not yet responded with adequate seriousness or urgency to the ongoing, intensifying effects of climate change, and to its underlying causes." It calls on us all to pray, learn, act and advocate for environmental justice reform.

CREATION CARE AT EPIPHANY – JUNE

Julie Carrick Dalton Book Discussion Thursday, June 24, 7:30 pm



On June 24, Epiphany parishioner Julie Carrick Dalton will join a Zoom call to discuss her award-winning Climate Fiction book ***Waiting for the Night Song.***

Part climate fiction, part mystery, Julie's debut novel weaves her love for the New Hampshire lakes and woods into a riveting story. The protagonist, Cadie Kessler works as an entomologist, trying to protect the New Hampshire woods from an invasive species and the ever-present fear of drought that could lead to devastating fire. Through Cadie's eyes, we see her beloved forest as living and breathing, worthy of care.

On June 24th, Julie and Nick Myers will discuss the influence of climate change in her novel, the power of friendship and a call to fight for what we believe in.

You'll want to read the book before the book discussion. It's available at most bookstores. Bookends in Winchester is currently offering a 10% discount.

Check in 3Crowns and on the Sustainability & Creation Care web page for the Zoom link

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Creation Care Challenge June/July 2021

Reducing our Carbon Footprint with the Episcopal Diocese's *"Sustaining our Island Home"* website

The ***Creation Care Challenge*** begins June 1st, and will run through June and July. Two teams have been formed and we're looking for more households to join. The teams will be co-captained by youth members Jessie Miller, Renee Montwieler, and Juliet Hollenbeck.

In the ***Creation Care Challenge*** households use the Episcopal Diocese's "Sustaining our Island Home" carbon tracker website to find new ways to reduce their CO_2e emissions. The site identifies your existing carbon footprint and suggests creative ideas for cutting your emissions. We'll announce the teams' progress in church during June and July.

The winning team is the one that reduces emissions the most. They'll receive a subscription to the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project community- supported agriculture (CSA) program.

For more info on participating contact Josh Reynolds at joshua.reynolds85@gmail.com or call 781-570-9059.

MAY FOCUS – BIODIVERSITY, GARDENING AND PERMACULTURE

Proper soil management and gardening is beneficial in many ways. Healthy soil reduces carbon in the atmosphere by sequestering it in the ground. Permaculture gardening, provides food and a home for bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and other creatures that pollinate other plants and increase biodiversity. And reducing meat consumption reduces production of methane – one of the most potent heat-trapping gasses

May and June are times when many of us get out, enjoy nature and plant new gardens. If you grow a garden this year, consider planting more native plants, planting flowers and plants that attract bees, butterflies and other pollinators and reducing the size of your lawn. Also think about reducing food waste by composting (either in your own garden, or by using composting pick-up services which most towns in Massachusetts provide.

Even if you don't plant a garden, think about supporting local farms by enrolling in a Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, and reduce your carbon footprint by eating less red meat.

This month's articles discuss each of these topics.

Permaculture Gardening – Growing plants that attract pollinators

Birds, bees, butterflies, bats, beetles, and other small mammals that pollinate plants are responsible for bringing us one out of every three bites of food. They also sustain our ecosystems and produce our natural resources by helping plants reproduce. Pollinators provide pollination services to over 180,000 different plant species and more than 1200 crops.

Unfortunately, many pollinator populations are in decline and this decline is attributed most severely to a loss in feeding and nesting habitats. Pollution, the misuse of chemicals, disease, and changes in climatic patterns are all contributing to shrinking and shifting pollinator populations. Research found a nearly 50 percent decline in the areas occupied by bumblebees in North America.

By planting a garden which attracts, feeds and sustains populations of pollinators, you can help to reverse this trend. Here are five helpful resources to learn more about increasing the population of pollinators:

1. **How to create a pollinator-friendly garden** [The David Suzuki Foundation]
   http://bit.ly/Pollinator-friendly-garden

2. **Why are pollinators important?** [The Pollinator Partnership]
   https://www.pollinator.org/pollinators#importance

3. **The Xerces Society Pollinator Program**
   https://www.xerces.org/pollinator-conservation

4. **What is Permaculture and How does it work?**
   https://www.permaculturenews.org/what-is-permaculture/

5. **Selecting Plants for Pollinators in New England** [Pollinator.org]
   http://bit.ly/plants-4-pollinators

What Native Plants should I grow? Where to find native plants in greater Boston

One of the keys to attracting pollinators and maintaining biodiversity is to grow plants that are native to this region. This reinforces the sophisticated ecosystems which already exist.

While a garden often contains many ornamental plants, native plants are not necessarily unattractive – asters, phlox, black-eyed susan, coneflowers, salvia and columbine are all beautiful flowers that are native to Massachusetts, and of course there are many more.

So how do you learn which plants are native and which you'd like to grow? Here are 3 great resources for native plants:

1. **What native plants should you grow?** [Grow Native Massachusette.org] https://www.grownativemass.org/

2. **An A-Z listing of native plants in Massachusetts** [Gardenia.org] https://www.gardenia.net/native-plants/massachusetts

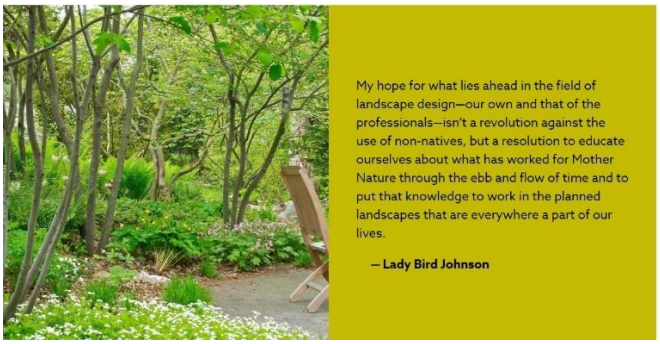
3. **Great articles on native plants** [The Ecological Landscape Alliance] https://www.ecolandscaping.org/

What Garden Centers and nurseries can help you find native plants?
Here are a list of 4 top nurseries for native plants. There are many others.

1. Garden in the Woods (Framingham) http://www.nativeplanttrust.org/visit/garden-woods/
2. Grow Native Massachusetts (Waltham) http://www.grownativemass.org/
3. McCue Garden Center (Woburn) http://www.mccuegardencenter.com/
4. Russell's Garden Center (Wayland) http://russellsgardencenter.com/

Is there a problem with lawns?

Habitat fragmentation leads to declines in bird and pollinator populations



We all love our lawns, but they contribute to "habitat fragmentation". Over the last four centuries, we have fragmented what was once a continuous ecosystem into discontinuous and ever smaller parcels. The impact has been especially profound in the past hundred years. Native woodlands have been replaced by subdivisions and houses with lawns and a few ornamental plants. Almost 90% of land in Massachusetts is privately owned and much of that is in small suburban parcels and lawns.

This habitat fragmentation is resulting in the extinction and decline of ever more plants and animals. More than ½ of eastern North American bird species are in a steep decline. Migrating birds are being hit especially hard. Baltimore orioles, wood thrushes, warblers, and many other species are on a watch list for possible extinction or designated of high conservation concern.

And the loss of native plants and habitat all over the state is greatly affecting butterflies, amphibians, and more, because only certain species of native plants can serve as the hosts for particular species of butterfly larva.

Although it's green, a lawn is essentially a sterile environment for many birds and pollinators, so it contributes to habitat fragmentation. But when we restore native plant landscapes we can do much to rebuild connectivity that supports species diversity. You don't need to eliminate your lawn, but reducing the size and planting a more diverse variety of native plants can significantly increase habitats. And trees, shrubs, and soil are all tremendously important for carbon capture – sequestering carbon in the soil.

Learn more at: https://www.grownativemass.org/Know-Your-Landscape/every-landscape

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How can I start composting?

Composting has a number of benefits. It reduces the waste stream; cuts methane emissions from landfills; improves soil health and reduces personal food waste.

The average American family of four throws out about $150 worth of food per month (a 50% increase since the 1970s). And processing food waste is costly. Over 267 million tons of municipal waste were generated in in the US in 2017, and the average cost to landfill cost is around $55 per ton. In addition, landfills are the 3rd largest source of human-generated methane emissions in the US.

Composting allows us to divert some of that waste from landfills and turn it into something practical for our yards.

Most towns in Massachusetts have curbside pickup or drop-off composting programs. At Winchester you can drop off your food waste at the transfer station. Check with your local town website for more information.

Alternatively, you can compost at home here's some helpful information on how to begin home composting: https://www.nrdc.org/stories/composting-101

How can I join a community-supported agriculture (CSA) program?

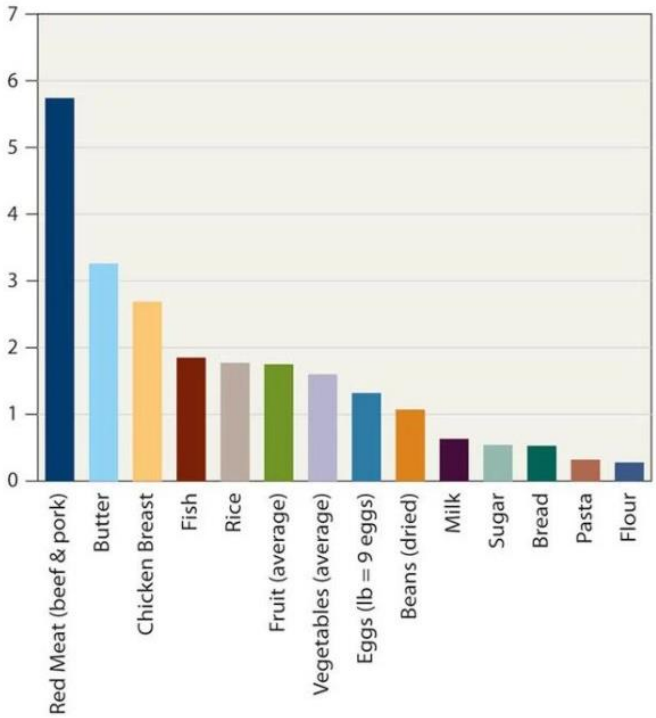
Community-supported agriculture has grown tremendously in the past few years. According to Merriam Webster, some 2,000 farms in the US are now supplying half a million people with fresh, local food each harvest season. After all, who doesn't like the idea of fresh vegetables and fruits just picked that day delivered to your door?

Here are a few examples of Farms with CSA programs in the Winchester area:

Wilson Farm [Lexington] https://shop.wilsonfarm.com/collections/csa-shares
Farmer Dave's [Dracut] local delivery or Pickup in multiple locations: https://farmerdaves.net/site/
New Entry Sustainable Farming Project: [Medford] delivery to Wright-Locke Farm and multiple locations https://nesfp.org/NewEntryCSA
...or visit **your local Farmer's Market**

CLIMATE 101 – FOOD'S IMPACT ON CLIMATE

Comparison of tons of annual CO_2e emissions per household by food type



Food accounts for approximately 14% of the average American's CO_2e emissions. Of course, we must all eat, but if you want to make cuts, your best option is to reduce your consumption of meat, especially beef. That's because beef is responsible for 18 times the emissions of a pound of pasta. An average family of four that decides to cut their meat intake in half could reduce their emission by three tons annually.

If you'd like more information visit: https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/cooler-smarter-geek-out-data

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OTHER RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONS & GROUPS

Here are some additional organizations committed to climate change. This is only a small sample of the many environmental groups. If you have other groups that should be included on this list, please email joshua.reynolds85@gmail.com

350 Mass Action The political action component of 350 Mass: www.betterfutureaction.org
Green Car Reports https://www.greencarreports.com/
Green Energy Consumers Alliance https://www.greenenergyconsumers.org/
Mass Clean Energy Center https://www.masscec.com/
MassSave https://www.masssave.com/en
Mothers Out Front.org https://www.mothersoutfront.org/
Sustainable Winchester www.facebook.com/SustainableWinchester
WinPower Community Choice Electricity www.winpowerma.org
Wright Locke Farm https://www.wlfarm.org