

CARING FOR CREATION TEAM
(Aka C4C)



***“This is my Father’s World, And
to my listening ears, All nature
sings and round me rings”***

The **Caring for Creation** team is happy to report that Oxford Presbyterian Church congregation is now officially recognized as an Earth Care Congregation!! This April in *Worship* we will be celebrating Earth Day with a Creation Care service on April 25th, in *Education* we are offering copies and analysis of Rebecca Barnes-Davies’ Book (see below), in *Facilities* we have acquired a 12 person set of trash grabbers to facilitate community litter cleanup, and in mission we will be giving away native trees.

50 WAYS TO HELP SAVE THE EARTH

As part of OPC’s Earth Care Congregation work, our Caring for Creation Team will use part of our space in the newsletter to introduce and encourage you to read alongside us as we dig into a single book-- “50 Ways to Help Save the Earth How You and Your Church Can Make a Difference” by Rebecca Barnes-Davies. OPC has purchased copies of this book, and we encourage you to contact the church office at 513.523.6364 to pick up your copy. For those that are busy, we help structure your voyage through this book by introducing a chapter each month this year. This month, we will introduce the book and its structure.

We are delving into “50 Ways to Help Save the Earth How You and Your Church Can Make a Difference” in part because of a personal connection to our congregation-- it was authored by Mark and Barbara Barnes' daughter, Rebecca, who is the coordinator of the Presbyterian Hunger Program. In January, Rebecca spoke at our congregational retreat-- you can watch the video of her discussion [here](#). We are also recommending the book on its own merits. It is a very practical guide how we, as individuals, or as a group, can make a difference in healing our planet Earth. It's a relatively small paperback filled with suggestions for things that we can do to fulfill our responsibilities as God's children. As Dick Munson says,

“If you were to see my copy of the book, you'd see that I've underlined, circled, or otherwise marked something on just about every page! All of which I can do, or we can do as a congregation. Many of her suggestions speak directly to me as a

nature lover, a part-time nurseryman, scientist, and as an individual who cares deeply for our environment.”

We are hoping that by introducing you to a chapter each month, you'll see where you fit in.

From the introduction to the book:

“This book focuses on climate change as a lens to see the ways human activity is degrading the earth. While there are certainly more than fifty ways to care for creation, Scripture holds out the image of the fiftieth year as the jubilee year, a time when justice and Sabbath benefit the whole community. While we try to curb global climate change, we need to keep in mind this jubilee as our calling-- the jubilee of restored relationships between people and God, between each other, and between people and all the inhabitants of creation.”

Barnes' book breaks the fifty actions into seven chapters of seven steps, with each seventh step focusing on the theme of Sabbath-- and the fiftieth step focusing on jubilee. We will be focusing on one step from each of the seven chapters this year-- and if there is interest-- we may continue with all fifty as part of our congregational mission. Please walk with us as we take a transformative journey through this wonderful book in 2021.

Upcoming opportunity to discuss “**Faith and the Climate Crisis**” with Presbyterian Climate Advocates: Sundays from April 11-May 2, 4-5:15 pm. We are hoping to have multiple attendees from OPC. Register [here](#). You can see an inspiring presentation from Dr. Tull about her efforts to make her home “Net Zero” [at this link](#)

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In Honor of Earth Day on April 25th and Arbor Day on April 30th Dick Munson is preparing a “Great Tree Giveaway”. Dates for this event will be advertised in the Voice.

From “**The Hidden Life of Trees**” By Peter Wohlleben we learn:

Trees are social beings and help each other out. They share food with their own species and sometimes even go so far as to nourish their competitors. There are advantages of working together. Many trees working together create an ecosystem. If every tree were looking out only for itself, then quite a few of them would never reach old age.

The wood wide web: Trees release scent compounds quickly into the air to warn other trees of insect attack. Trees communicate with each other through their root systems and the fungi network. News bulletins are sent through roots

by chemical compounds and electrical impulses. The fungi act like fiber optic cables transmitting signals through their filaments from one tree to another and exchange news about insects, drought, and other dangers.

Every day in summer, trees release about 29 tons of oxygen into the air per square mile of forest. A person breathes in nearly 3 pounds of oxygen a day so that's the daily requirement for about ten thousand people.

When I Am Among The Trees
Mary Oliver

When I am among the trees,
especially the willows and the honey locust,
equally the beech, the oaks and the pines,
they give off such hints of gladness.
I would almost say that they save me, and daily.
I am so distant from the hope of myself,
in which I have goodness, and discernment,
and never hurry through the world
but walk slowly and bow often.
Around me the trees stir in their leaves
and call out, "Stay awhile."
The light flows from their branches.
And they call again, "It's simple," they say,
"and you too have come
into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled with light, and to shine."

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EARTH DAY 2021

By Sue Wilson

As we view our Earth from outer Space
We see our Planet is a special place.
From a distance our Planet is a sparkling Blue.
Our oceans showcase beauty from the satellite's view.
We raise our Hands in Celebration
To acknowledge God's Creation.

We recognize that our Trees give life and synergy
In photosynthesis to create oxygen and energy.
In thanksgiving for this Nature's gift
We must plant more trees to provide a lift.
Some trees live for hundreds of years.

We must preserve them for our grandchildren's cheers.

We must reuse, reduce, and recycle, with haste-
Or we will be buried in heaps of plastic and waste.
We each have a social responsibility
For our own Carbon Footprint utility.
It is time for our efforts in conservation
To preserve our Nature for the future generation.

Now global warming is causing concern.
The climate is changing and we're going to learn.
The ice sheets are melting, the oceans are rising.
When we begin to float away It won't be surprising.
The Scientists are warning us to take action now.
It is time to retreat from our fossil fuel cow.

Indigenous people remind us we are part of the Circle of Life.
We cannot forget those most vulnerable to strife.
Jesus teaches us we must care for the "Least of these"
Therefore, we must remediate pollution's damage to Alevé.
Let's remember our duties for reconciliation.
Let's not forget to praise God for Creation!