

Hello,

The Hudson River Presbytery's 2020 Fund—launched in 2010—asked for groups to submit ideas for creative ways of doing ministry that live into the vision of the 21st century church. It asked groups to serve their community's hopes and needs and to invite non-believers into the journey.

South Church responded with an idea called Roots & Wings . . .

tapping into the *roots* of our spiritual and agricultural traditions
giving *wings* to a sustainable future for our children and our planet

We wrote in our proposal: “We want a path into a less energy-intensive lifestyle—a life that would bring greater intimacy with the natural world and its Creator—which could actually be richer and more enjoyable than what we have now. We want to meet our era's threats with the gospel's spirit of joy, rather than the guilt and anger behind most environmental activism.”

We also wrote that Roots & Wings would follow the principles of permaculture—people care, earth care, and fair share—by working as a community, using materials and energy wisely and in a way that replenishes, and using our harvest to supplement the dry/canned staples available in the Dobbs Ferry Food Pantry.

What did we know about permaculture? Basically, little more than what a member of our grant cohort Alex Orlowski reported from the ashram in the Catskills where he had taken a four-week Permaculture Design Certificate course the year before.

“It has had a tremendous positive impact on my journey,” he told us recently, “teaching me a more sustainable, holistic way of life right here in the suburbs by practicing everyday energy conservation, food production, resources sharing and community building.”

Flash-forward to 2018: Roots & Wings' Kitchen Garden, behind South Church, has a community of gardeners who work together most Saturday mornings. Our CSA reaches another arm into the community. It gives neighbors easy access to fresh produce and a relationship with a local farmer. Both initiatives donate fresh vegetables to the Dobbs Ferry Food Pantry. Most participants are not members of South Church: they are new friends, now part of the extended South Church community.

Now the time has come for us to learn more about permaculture—the concept we based an entire grant proposal around.

This fall, Roots & Wings is offering permaculture training at South Presbyterian Church. Accelerated Permaculture Training is a six-session course led by four dynamic practitioners with combined expertise in community gardening and organizing, healing herbs, intentional community, and ecological design.

Permaculture training is traditionally 72 hours or more. This 40 hour Accelerated Permaculture Training presents the core ideas, principles and applications in a simple and accessible format.

Because of the generosity of the Hudson River Presbytery's 2020 Fund, this course is available at \$350 and no one is turned away for lack of funds. Work exchange and scholarships are readily available.

We hope you or someone from your church community will consider attending. Please pass this invitation on to anyone else who might want grounding in active approaches to positive change, using practical knowledge, design and social principles.

All the best,

Roots & Wings steering committee

Chris Cole Olsewski, Gabriela Munoz, Lenore Lelah Person, Mark Pennington, Marcelo Taiano, MJ Wilson

[MORE INFO / REGISTER HERE](#)

Permaculture was founded in the 1970s by Australian ecologists Bill Mollison and David Holmgren and has taken root in communities worldwide. It is a holistic, ecological design system that focuses on the interconnectedness between parts to create a healthy, sustainable and resilient whole. Its guiding principles are to care for the earth, care for people and share the surplus.