

ST. THOMAS à BECKET CHURCH  
Care for Our Common Home Ministry  
September 1, 2021 Minutes

**OPENING PRAYER:**

from the Catholic Climate Covenant

**PRESENT:**

Mary Beth Collins, Helen Dickey, Carol Even, Barbara Ewalt, Harriet Hanlon, Patti Kaiser, Bebee Stroik, Betty Sullivan

**EDUCATION:**

Members were reminded how to get to the CCH website directly – <https://cch.familyce.org>, or through the Parish website, under Parish Life, - <https://stbchurch.com>, where you will find a link to the CCH site, and a link to the ‘Healthy Home, Healthy Planet’ petition. This petition will go to political leaders who will participate in the UN Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity from Oct. 11<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>, prior to the 26<sup>th</sup> UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow in November. Sidenote: The Paris Agreement was a result of COP21, five years ago. Some discussion followed on how to get the petition to the most people. To go to the petition directly, use <https://thecatholicpetition.org/#sign>.

COVID – masking and vaccination requirements were discussed in the light of new variants, as the one from Peru, the Lambda Variant.

**RECYCLING:**

Betty checked with authorities on recycling to learn whether #7 plastic is recyclable. The bottom line is that the numbers stand for different chemicals. Betty provided a sheet with that information. One article said no to #7, but Fairfax County accepts all plastics from #1 to #7 for recycling.

Republic says you can recycle all plastics if they are clean and dry. That is a big problem, since many consumers do not wash their recycling items. # 7 is hardest to recycle, even more than #5, but each recycling company decides if they will take certain items. No-one appears to take Styrofoam.

Different trash pick-up companies apparently have differing requirements for what they accept to recycle.

**RECIPE BOOK:**

Helen is collecting recipes for the cookbook. She is willing to accept recipes in nearly any format, including in a photograph.

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**GARDEN:**

In order to certify as an Audubon at Home Habitat, we need to have someone from Audubon, an ambassador, come to the Church to walk our gardens and make recommendations. Because there are only a few Audubon ambassadors, it may take eight weeks or so before they come to check our gardens. We are still exploring the easier, Kateri certification.

Harriet is doing Audubon at Home with the help of a garden contractor.

**ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY:**

Helen Dickey, Carol Even, John Janega, Patti Kaiser, Betty Sullivan have volunteered to meet this coming Saturday, Sept. 4<sup>th</sup>, to walk our assigned route along Wiehle Avenue collecting litter for VDOT. We might do another walk this year, but it was suggested that we do not do too many close together, especially since our road seems clean already. The matter of safety was addressed, and we are awaiting a decision from VDOT about cleaning the median strips in our given area. Previously we did not have the required permission.

Meeting time at the Church on Saturday, Sept. 4<sup>th</sup>, was changed to 9:30am to accommodate all volunteers.

**FAITH ALLIANCE FOR CLIMATE SOLUTIONS (FACS):**

Harriet is following what FACS is doing and noticed that they are changing their focus for the coming year. She will keep us up to date. Information from FACS is forwarded to all members.

**NEW BOOK:**

Carol shared about the book 'Care for Creation' by Ilia Delio, O.S.F., Keith Douglass Warner, O.F.M., and Pamela Wood. This book is set up for study with reflective action in each of four sections, and it would be a suitable book for the group to read.

**SEASON OF CREATION:**

Each Sunday during this Season, the Parish Bulletin has carried a paragraph about Pope Francis' ecological encyclical, Laudato Si.

A native Virginia tree has been selected for planting on the Church property.

To cap the 2021 Season of Creation activities, Carol Even and Rick Kenney will give a Reader's Theater presentation of The Selfish Giant by Oscar Wilde on Sunday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:45 in the church garden.

**NEWS TO USE:**

The Diocesan Care for Creation group is doing a video series that can be used, especially in bigger parishes that have video capability on several themes like recycling.

Barbara reminded us to request mail-in ballots, as early voting begins Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>. Also, look at the League of Women Voters' Fairfax website for details about voting.

**NEXT MEETING:**

Wednesday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:30am. This new meeting day is now the first Wednesday of each month to allow for the greatest number of members to attend.

**CLOSING POEM:** Goldfinches by Mary Oliver.