

ST. THOMAS à BECKET CHURCH  
Care for Our Common Home Ministry  
September 5, 2023  
10:00am – Parish Room 5

**PRESENT:**

Lori Brady Neuman, MaryBeth Collins, Helen Dickey, Carol Even, Barbara Ewalt, Harriet Hanlon, Patti Kaiser., Lauren Smith, Betty Sullivan

Carol read the Opening Prayer from the Catholic Climate Covenant

We have a printed Creation Care Team T-shirt and a brochure from our ministry for Fr Dyer. Good reports are coming in about our new pastor's commitment to caring for creation, particularly regarding Season of Creation with a bulletin announcements and related homily on Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>, the World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation.

Progress on beating the heat in our church building has begun with workers installing a special film on the skylight windows.

Of all the 70 parishes in the Diocese, only 12 have Creation Care teams at present.

**SEASON OF CREATION EVENTS**

Our biannual roadside clean-up for the Adopt-A-Highway program is due, and we want to schedule the fall event during the Season of Creation. Patti will be sending out a sign-up inquiry to determine what dates will allow us to form a small team for the task. The later in the Season the better as we hope it will be cooler.

Thursday, Sept 21<sup>st</sup>, World Day of Peace is the day that Fr. Dyer is saying a Senior Mass at 11:00am, followed by a potluck luncheon. He will also give a presentation on his 2016 pilgrimage. We have offered to wash dishes for the potluck (to Connie Fiorito) and some of us will wear our T-shirts and/or aprons.

We are hoping to start collecting clean and empty RX pill bottles to send to Matthew 25, an active ecumenical organization that focuses on social justice issues. They collect the bottles and send them to areas of the world where medical clinics have no sealable bottles for dispensing prescription medicines. Sue Bomar of Nativity Parish shared a trifold brochure they developed and some hints about the success they have enjoyed with this program over some time. Helen was asked to create a suitable collection box and Patti will confirm the requirements with Matthew 25 Ministries. Additionally, [Matthew 25: Ministries - HOME | Matthew 25: Ministries \(m25m.org\)](#) is doing a collection of hand knit and crocheted hats and scarves to send children of Appalachia this winter. We might ask people to also take up this small and helpful task.

**RECYCLING**

On the subject of medicines, the question arose of where to dispose of RX meds that are unused. We ought to include in our bottle request the details of medicine disposal, dangers and safe practices. Our local Reston Police Station at 1801 Cameron Glen Drive has a green disposal box for pills, just inside the lobby.

A few of our members attended the Season of Creation Opening Prayer and reception at St. John Neumann. There, Janet Broderick showed us how their Creation ministry offers recycling of electronics and textiles. They provide large, decorated plastic boxes labeled informatively for parishioners to deposit items. We also learned that SJN's Creation Team has no budget through the parish, but they earn their expense money from a percentage of their annual Fair Trade Winds sales receipts.

We have recently learned of a new electronics recycling center in Home Depot plaza in Reston. It is a PayMore store, part of a chain on the East Coast and in Washington State. They claim to pay more for usable electronics, and to professionally clean off data from drives. They also accept items that cannot be repaired but can be scavenged for recyclable materials.

There are several places where one can recycle clothing. The Closet in Herndon continues to accept usable clothing, although it is unclear whether all these clothes are recycled as saleable items or not. For higher end clothing, Barb pitched <http://WomenGivingBack.org> on Export Drive in Sterling. Their mission is to help women and children in crisis.

Our next Tailgate Give/Take Away will be for Winter Clothing and for Holiday/winter Decorations. We would like to try for the first weekend in November, Saturday, the 4<sup>th</sup> or Sunday, the 5<sup>th</sup>. Carol will seek permission and contact Ken Grube from the Hebrew Congregation's Green Team to see if we can pair up for the event.

## NEWS TO USE

Just a reminder, current STB Bulletins are available at the <https://stbchurch.com/>, and our ministry website is at <https://cch.familyce.org/>.

Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative update – The Sierra Club, among other environmental groups, is suing the Virginia government about the plan to withdraw from RGGI. This initiative has so far been very successful at raising funds to help in conservation efforts.

Good news! – the Parish Library will be re-opening.

Patti shared some thoughts about a possible study group for the Parish, based on Laudato Si, using the program Creation at a Crossroads, from Renew International, the Catholic Climate Covenant, and the Loka Initiative at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. It's not just for Catholics.

Harriet shared with the group some important information about Al Gore's Climate Leadership program. There are currently 50,000 Climate Reality leaders, and their new strategy involves a global campaign to release new ideas to 109 countries simultaneously. The actions will be based on justice, especially in the 'global south'. The major focuses will be on transportation and sources of energy, e.g. who is making the electricity? It will aim to work from the bottom up, listening to 'the cry of the poor'.

Solar panels and charging stations were the topic as our meeting drew to a close. The Parish has looked into Catholic Energies a while ago. What might they offer us now? Carol reminded us that Bishop Burbidge has stated that any new building or renovation in the Diocese will need to be solar.

Next month we will meet at a different time, to try to accommodate more members. Those present agreed that 1:00pm on the first Tuesday afternoon would be a good choice. That would make our next meeting at 1:00pm on Tuesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, the day before Pope Francis releases his new Apostolic Exhortation.

## CLOSING POEM

"Apache Prayer"

May the sun bring you new energy by day  
May the moon softly restore you by night  
May the rain wash away your worries  
May the breeze blow new strength into your being  
May you walk gently through the world and know its beauty  
All the days of your life.