

From the Pastor...

In Worship this month we will again celebrate the Seasons of Creation. This shared liturgical celebration unites us with churches around the world seeking reconnection to God's creation. Using the themes of Earth, Humanity, Sky, and Mountains we will liturgically remember our vocation to care for the creation that supports and sustains us.

Living in the city, it is easy to feel far away from creation. We are often a long way from breathing deeply in the woods or on the prairie. Surrounded by concrete and construction, with small yards and limited garden space most of us rely on the big grocery stores for our daily bread. And, if you have been paying attention you know that those grocery stores are not on everybody's corner. Food deserts are real, and feeling confident that everyone can buy fresh good food is dwindling.

In a past life, while in seminary I worked as a distributor for a small farming business near Beloit, WI. Julie and I would pick up frozen beef, pork, chicken, and lamb and assorted fresh vegetables for Chicago folks seeking a more direct connection to their food. This CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) used a subscription service to fill folks' refrigerators. People get to feel good about reducing the transportation costs of their groceries and keep small farmers in business.

I loved being able connect Jackie (the farmer) with Joe and Anne (the CSA member) in Lincoln Park. Generally, we don't know where our food comes from, we don't know how it is grown, or if our money that buys it supports a family or a large multinational corporation. Over the years, I have learned that there are many more such organizations and opportunities here in Chicago. Surprisingly there are a lot of such places.

Places that are working to challenge the idea that city folk can't grow good and healthy food here. Places like Metropolitan Farms at 4250 W Chicago Avenue,

Chicago Lights Urban Farm at 444 W Chicago Avenue, The Farm on Ogden at 3555 W Ogden, City Farm at 550 W Division. Community gardens, some in CPS elementary and middle schools allow us to have our own plots. There are places that provide advice and training to get good at using small spaces for big harvests. Windy City Harvest is a program of the Chicago Botanical Garden. And the Chicago Park

District also has numerous classes.

This month we are planning to visit a few of these places and learn more about urban farming that may be just celebrating God's abundance around the corner or behind a tall fence. I hope that you can join us. Stay tuned in worship for these urban field trips.

Pr. Jeanie