

LOAVES AND FISHES

DULUTH, MN

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FREE

Radically Responsible Settler Gardening Practices

by Sarah Holst

This year we witnessed the historic gathering of Water Protectors blocking the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation. People from around the world saw the legacy of colonialism and environmental racism play out before their eyes. We know that the systems of control and extraction that cause environmental degradation, climate change, and the gulf in our relationship to the earth and one another played out at Standing Rock. Fearing what the new administration will continue to mean for tribal sovereignty and water rights, each of us is called to discern how we are to be healing forces in the face of these realities. How do we recover from this: oil companies forcing indigenous residents to accept the destruction of burial sites, the confiscation of eagle feathers and prayer pipes, young men on horses shot with rubber bullets, their horses tazed and dropping to the ground dead?

Ched Myers (chedmyers.org) started me on a journey last spring of exploring the ways settler people like myself can begin the healing work of decolonization in our own watersheds. What exactly does it look like to build community garden space on land that was stolen? What are the practical steps settler people might make to co-create within the story of the land and its original inhabitants and historical caretakers (plant, animal, and human) rather than coming in and enforcing

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The Care of Nature, a Sacred Trust

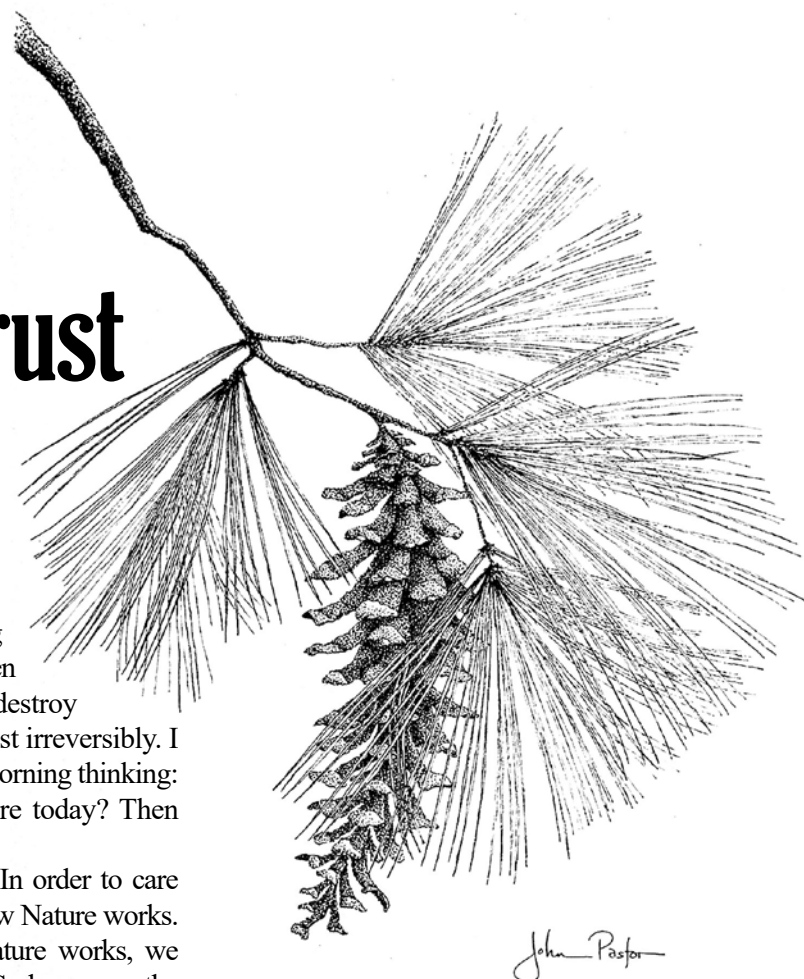
By John Pastor

After God created Nature, God gave us responsibility to care for it. Care for Nature, not subdue it. God wanted Nature to flourish under our care. But we aren't always helping Nature flourish. Instead, we are often destroying it — we pollute rivers, destroy forests, and change the climate almost irreversibly. I don't think anyone wakes up in the morning thinking: How can I destroy a piece of Nature today? Then why do we do it?

Part of the problem is ignorance. In order to care for Nature, we have to understand how Nature works. When we don't understand how Nature works, we inadvertently abuse it. Fortunately, God gave us the brains to understand how Creation works. God wants us to do this. I have spent my entire life as a scientist trying to understand how a small piece of Creation — the North Woods — works. In the process, I have learned a few things that no one has previously known. These moments of learning something new about Creation have given me great joy. I like to think that when we figure out how a piece of God's Creation works, it also gives God Great Joy: I have a vision of God smiling whenever someone learns something new about Creation and saying to the angels: Hey, look! They figured that one out!

But responsibility and brains are not enough to care for Nature. The final element we need is also a gift from God: Grace. If we accept God's freely given grace and use the brains God gave us, we will have the spirit to discharge our responsibility to care for Nature and care for it well. Grace is the spirit that moves us to love Nature. Whenever you are overawed by Nature, whether it is a beautiful scene in the Boundary Waters or a flight of geese wedging North in the spring, what you are feeling is God's grace flowing through you.

Humans, all of us, are a part of Nature. Taking care of Nature therefore also means that we must take care of



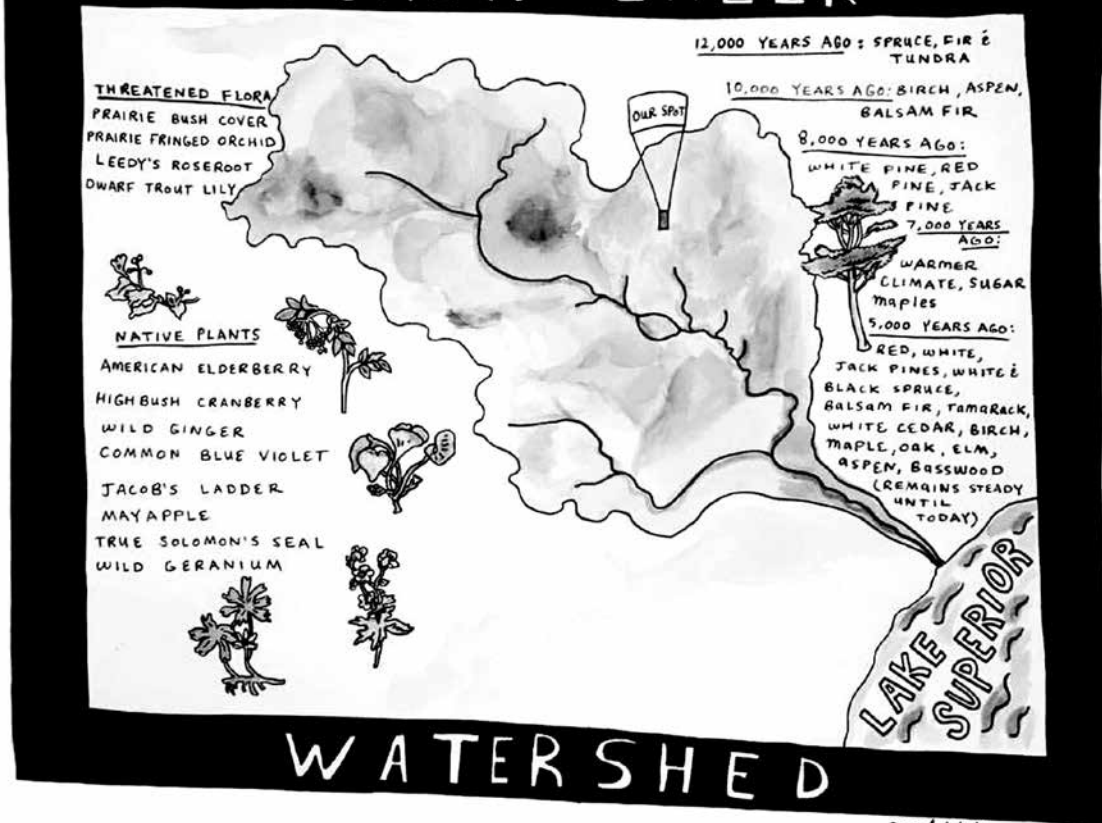
White Pine Twig and Cone by John Pastor

each other. When we don't take care of Nature — when we pollute rivers, when we deforest vast swaths of the earth, when we increase the frequency of dangerous storms because the atmosphere is warming and has more energy — some of our brothers and sisters suffer disproportionately. These brothers and sisters are the poor among us. The poor who barely can obtain enough food to make it through a day. The poor who don't have shelter from heat, cold, rain, and snow. The poor who don't have the opportunity to visit the beautiful places of God's Creation. The rich don't have to live in the pollution they make — they can move elsewhere. But the poor have to live in the filth of the rich. Neither the filth we create nor the poor who are afflicted by it can possibly be pleasing to God.

When we disfigure Nature, we are not accepting the responsibility given to us by God, we are not using the brains God endowed us with, we are not accepting God's grace, we are turning away from the poor. And we are turning away from God.

John Pastor is a Professor of Biology at UMD, a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, and a Benedictine Oblate of St. Scholastica Monastery.

TISCHER CREEK



WATERSHED

Sarah A. Holst

This map by Sarah Holst shows here place in the nearby Tischer Creek watershed

- exploring the languages of those original peoples (the words and sounds native to the air)
- learning the names and traditional uses of native plants (making an exercise of introducing oneself to a new plant every week)
- looking into what native peoples did to co-create with the wilderness
- finding out the history of fauna (What used to live here in abundance? What has gone extinct?)

Through the integration of all three layers of inquiry (natural history, historical trauma, active co-creation), a more mindful approach to re-inhabitation forms. Healing the land can only come from knowing its story, and it takes time to learn and understand. Much of this can only be learned by actively experimenting with gentle but courageous hands in the soil. The stories want to be told, and those who seek shall find.

Taking a cue from the natural world and going deeply into a season of profound listening, opening our senses, and relearning the land is countercultural to the capitalist system of constant output, but it is one that will serve us, and our sacred gardens, well over the long journey of placed-ness.

What awaits is an encounter with manna (truly, there is enough for everyone!), gained confidence and competence with how the world provides for and heals us (if we are willing to do healing work alongside her), and tools to imagine and grow creative, local, sustainable economies in our own back and front yards.

Sarah Holst is a Masters of Divinity student and bioregional artist living in the Tischer Creek Watershed of Duluth, MN. She works as the intern coordinator for EcoFaith Recovery which is based in Portland, OR and is a member of the SURJ (Standing Up for Racial Justice) Northland Core Team. Sarah is passionate about ritual, transformative justice and lichen

Updates

Homeless Person's Bill of Rights

On January 31, the Duluth Human Rights Commission hosted a public forum at the Central Hillside Community Center to discuss the Homeless Person's Bill of Rights. More than 100 people attended, most of them homeless or formerly homeless. At the meeting, Police Chief Mike Tusken unveiled a new police department policy on interacting with people experiencing homelessness. The policy was a response to a direct request from the Homeless Person's Bill of Rights Coalition. Then on March 13th, representatives from the Homeless Person's Bill of Rights Coalition testified to City Council about the need for more housing and an end to criminalization of homelessness. After hearing the testimony, Council passed another resolution seeking to support the community in creating real solutions to homelessness. We've received an endorsement for a city ordinance giving the Bill of Rights the force of law from Duluth Human Rights Commission. Our next step is working with City officials and the Mayor's Office to draft language that will be accepted and passed by the City Council.

Community Connect

This past January 27th we co-sponsored Duluth's bi-annual Community Connect event that brings together many service providers in one building assisting people to gain housing, healthcare, identification, clothing, hair and footcare, and other necessities. For the first time in Community Connect history, the event was held at the Damiano Center. Volunteers also gave the Point-in-Time survey that helps the county gain real information on where people have slept the prior evening.

Faith and Resistance

As can generally be expected, with a first arrest often comes a first trial experience. It's been a year since Michael, Donna, Kelly, and a bunch of Catholic Workers and Black Lives Matter organizers shut down the intersection in front of Target Field during the Twins' Opening Day game to bring attention to the murder of Jamar Clark, Target Field's exploitative labor practices, and the need for white people to speak up against white supremacy.

Donna's charges were dropped after it could not be proven she was directly blocking transporta-

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our dreams upon it (again)?

The essay "Decolonize Together: Moving beyond a Politics of Solidarity toward a Practice of Decolonization" calls for "a dramatic re-imagining of relationships with land, people and the state [that] requires study, requires conversation, [this] is a practice, it is an unlearning." Before tilling and planting this season, take time to ask the land what it needs to be healed.

Learn the botanical and natural history of the particular plot of land. (How did it look before colonization? What indigenous practices participated in the land's creation and abundance?) Find out what the history of settlement on the land has looked like. (And felt like—what trauma has the land endured?) Ask how you can best co-create with this place in a way that reconciles ecological processes with your community's needs.

Local Ojibwe elder Babette Sandman frequently talks about blood memory. The memory of what it means to dominate and colonize is alive in settler blood. Without knowing it, settler folk might repeat the damaging actions of our ancestors. The forces of extraction capitalism push us away and distract us from connecting to our stories, so the work of radically responsible gardening practices necessarily starts at a point of reconnection. Honoring that we do not live on un-storied place means that we must accept that we are not un-storied people. The work of unearthing our own immigration and ancestral history necessarily goes hand in hand with interacting with the stories of the land on which we live.

The path to re-inhabiting a suburban space begins with deliberately digging into the deep history of place. The particular goal of this first layer of research is to find out what the land looked like before colonization. Steps might include (but are not exclusive to):

- researching the natural history of the watershed
- learning about and from the indigenous people that were and are the traditional caretakers

Helping one another

By Bill Unger

My name is William Max Unger, and on February 11, 2017, I arrived at Dorothy Day House. Being homeless, not working and not really in a good spot in my life, I was able to stay. Since being here I have received support, friendship and the company of good people which have all helped me dramatically. I now feel safe and warm. I share meals and conversation with others, and as the days go by I have become stronger, and have been able to meet some wonderful friends. I am very grateful for this part of my life. The struggles I faced I was able to talk about, getting through each day and become a better person in the process.

I have also been involved with the Homeless Bill of Rights Coalition and feel strongly that more can and should be done to help people who have fallen on hard times. I joined the Coalition and have spoken to the Duluth City Council and even Mayor Larson. I am learning about others who are homeless and about the political process. I enjoy the many people who meet at the Dorothy Day House every Thursday night at 6:30 pm to discuss what can and hopefully will be done for homeless people like myself to move forward in life.

On March 14th, I joined a group of people organized by CHUM that went down to the 2017 Homeless Day on the Hill event held in St. Paul. At the Capitol, I met with Senator Eric Simonson, Representative Liz Olson, and a staff member for Representative Jennifer Schultz. We talked to them about the need to increase Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), which provides temporary cash assistance for parents who remain working toward full-time employment and their children. A \$100 increase to MFIP would be an immediate help to families struggling to meet their basic needs. MFIP has not been increased in 30 years! Also discussed was restoring voting rights for ex-offenders once they finish their prison sentence, and \$30 million for affordable housing projects around the state.



Bill (center, directly under Capitol dome), and other members of the Duluth contingent to Homeless Day on the Hill. Photo: Vanny Hayden

The Duluth legislators all agreed to support these three initiatives. It was a busy day but exciting and something I would do again in a heartbeat. The Capitol was full and everyone listened attentively to the many people who spoke.

Overall my life today is getting better, with the support of the many volunteers and housemates who have helped me in this transition. I am putting out many applications to find work, to better my life and to be a productive person in society. Without this home, I'm afraid that would have been lost.

For more information on Homes for All and Prosperity for All campaigns, visit www.mnhomelesscoalition.org

tion. Michael's charges stuck and unsurprisingly, Michael was found guilty of participating after explaining the importance of bringing attention to racial injustice in ways that don't always make white people feel comfortable to the courtroom. Kelly is still awaiting news after submitting a guilty plea through his lawyer.

This year, Mark Hakes and Michael Elderbrook went to the Catholic Worker Midwest Faith and Resistance Retreat in Chicago. They participated in workshops on racial justice in housing and a demonstration toward that end.

Enbridge Line 67 Protest

On March 7th, Jason and Michael travelled with a group of concerned Duluth citizen's to Bemidji, Minnesota to protest the expansion of the Enbridge 67 oil pipeline. The State Department chose to have the meeting in a more remote area of Northern Minnesota on a Tuesday night, but protesters also included one hundred people who took a long trip from the Twin Cities area. Before the meeting with the State Department, the RREAL renewable energy project, Water Protectors from Standing Rock, and organizer Winona Laduke spoke at Rail River Folk School. Protesters marched and sang through the snowy, windy afternoon to the Sanford Center only to be disappointed at what amounted to be a comment facilitation event with no real opportunity for discussion. A group of Jingle Dress Dancers lead a circular dance through the ballroom area after a table erupted in chants of "Mni Wiconi! Water is Life!" American Indian protesters took command of the room and aired grievances in an impromptu speaking area they needed to create themselves because the State Department did not include any real opportunities for dialogue that evening.



Housing For All Summit

Wednesday, May 31, 2017, 10:00 AM - 3 PM

First United Methodist Church, "The Coppertop Church"
230 E. Skyline Pkwy, Duluth

9 am Registration and Coffee Hour. Program begins promptly at **10 am**

Please join us in coming together as a community to put an end to homelessness in St. Louis County.

For more information visit facebook.com/SLCPlantoendhomelessness or call Joel at 218-340-4356

Everyone deserves a safe, affordable place to call home

Help create solutions to homelessness - all are welcome to this important community conversation

Sunrise Over The Mountains

By John Heid

There is no word for wall in the Tohono O'odham language, let alone a word for citizenship. The Tohono O'odham nation was slashed down the middle in 1853 by the Gadsden Purchase, leaving an open wound 75 miles long. Half of the Nation is now in Mexico, the other half in the U.S. "We didn't come to the border," they say, "it came to us."

700 of the nearly 2,000 mile U.S.-Mexico border is walled. In some places double-walled. Almost every place that can be physically barricaded is and has been for years. This structure, the wall, is the quintessential architecture of the nation-state. An imaginary line is drawn in the sand and then reinforced by a daunting mixture of steel and stone which in turn defines us from them and ours from theirs.

I believe the wall as symbol is even more insidious than the structure itself. The concept existed between someone's ears long before it was put to drafting paper. Its symbolic power outweighs its physical ability to define and separate peoples.

A Mexican man once said to me: "We know what that wall says to you about us. You are afraid of us. But please tell me, what does that wall say to you about who you are?" That query has echoed in my mind for years. What does that wall tell us about who we are on this side of the border? And why do some want it higher and longer and doubly, even triply reinforced?

Few people believe that 700 mile edifice is actually effective in keeping others out, from Homeland Security personnel to the leftest of left activists. U.S. Border Patrol agents call it a "speed bump." The wall is actually one piece of a much larger strategy called Prevention Through Deterrence. This strategy has two primary components: layering and funneling.

Layering refers to the wide array of technologies and strategies which have militarized the borderlands. These include ground sensors, drones, checkpoints, and surveillance towers scattered across the landscape. As I write these lines, 55 new towers, commissioned during the Obama years, are going up. Not to mention the vastly expanded Border Patrol force.

The practice of "Chase and Scatter" with horseback-riding agents, helicopters, and four-wheelers is yet another strategy, creating layers of enforcement which all ultimately funnel, that is to say, force people into some of the most austere, harsh terrain in North America. And it's lethal. Prior to Operation Gatekeeper in 1994, few people died in the southwestern desert. Today the list of fatalities is in the thousands. And thousands more are disappeared. Unaccounted for somewhere in

the arroyos and canyons of the Sonoran desert. 68 bodies have been recovered in the Tucson Sector this year alone. The desert has been turned into a contemporary killing field by U.S. border policy/enforcement.

However, the phenomenon of borderlands goes far beyond una herida abierta "an open wound,"

"The actual physical borderland is the U.S.-Mexico border. The psychological borderlands, the sexual borderlands and the spiritual borderlands are not particular to the Southwest. In fact, the borderlands are present everywhere two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy."

-Borderlands/La Frontera

as author, visionary, activist Gloria Anzaldúa calls the U.S.-Mexico boundary. She writes:

Sienna Ventura, a 14 year old Tohono O'odham tribal member, recently wrote in a letter to U.S. Senator Jeff Flake, an Arizona Republican: "People living near the border should be able to watch the sun set behind a mountain, and not a wall." How much clearer and simple truth can be?

In closing, I offer a verse from Charlie King's song "The Wall."

Don't you want a piece of that wall
When it comes down?
Don't you want to live to see it fall,
When it comes round?
No matter what side you were on
Can you say you took a piece of that wall down?

John Heid is a former member of the Loaves and Fishes community. He currently lives in Arizona where he has been at Mariposa House, worked with No More Deaths, and is now developing a new project for solidarity and assistance to migrants in Ajo.



Esin and Doris enjoying spring in Hannah House Community Garden

"Regard for the Soil"

An Easy Essay by Peter Maurin, co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement

Andrew Nelson Lytle says:

The escape from industrialism
is not in socialism
or in sovietism.

The answer lies

in a return to a society
where agriculture is practised
by most of the people.

It is in fact impossible

for any culture
to be sound and healthy
without a proper regard
for the soil,
no matter
how many urban dwellers
think that their food
comes from groceries
and delicatessens
or their milk from tin cans.

This ignorance

does not release them
from a final dependence
upon the farm.

2017 Local Solutions to Poverty Accountability Session

Last October, candidates hoping to represent Duluth at the the state legislature and board of county commissioners agreed to take actions steps to improve the lives of low-income people. On Friday, May 5th in the Dr. Robert Powless Cultural Center of AICHO, we met again with our elected officials to track their progress and discern how we can work alongside them in our community. We are grateful to have heard the voices of six community members who led the session: Andrew Moe, Kristy Eckhart, Becky Jacubek, Shareeka Smith, Barbra Dixon and Penny Love.

Similar to the candidate forum last October, the format was unconventional: speakers who have experienced poverty and homelessness presented testimonies and revisited the issues. Unlike the candidate forum, the Accountability Session provided an opportunity for the elected officials to share the progress they've made on these issues during their time in office.

As always, these events are meant to give those who've experienced poverty leadership in the political process by bringing community priorities to speakers in power. To that end, there was an addi-

tional discussion period at the end where the audience, speakers and elected officials could examine the issues in depth.



Accountability Session participants meet with state senator Eric Simonson to talk about dental care access

The four issues we revisited with the State Legislature are as follows:

- Will you co-author the Homes for All bill in the next legislative session to ensure funding for affordable housing projects across the state, and you commit to inviting at least three other senators or representatives from different parts of the state to support the bill?

- Will you support the creation of a dedicated source of funding at the legislature to fund an affordable housing trust fund for Duluth?
- Will you co-author the Prosperity for All bill in the next legislative session to ensure a \$100 Cash Increase to the MFIP Program, and will you commit to inviting at least three other senators or representatives from different parts of the state to support the bill?
- Will you support a solution that guarantees access to basic dental care for all Minnesotans especially those on MA and MNCare?

And the three issues we revisited with our County Commissioners:

- Will you agree to secure local funding to match state money for developing a Landlord Incentives Program in St. Louis County?
- Will you commit to hosting a public hearing with fellow commissioners that takes county wide input from board & lodge residents on Group Residential Housing Reform within 120 days of taking office?
- Would you work with ARC Northland to develop a County-wide solution to transportation barriers, especially for those with disabilities?

Our elected officials once again agreed to help make these seven requests a reality. Now we need to keep sharing our stories and holding them to their word.

Support the Homeless Community Today!

After a lot of hard work and planning, we are at a crucial stage in ensuring a Homeless Person's Bill of Rights that protects people's right to fair treatment and to carry out basic life-sustaining activities in public. We have already seen a great victory with the implementation of a new police department policy on interacting with people who are homeless, but this is not enough. The Homeless Person's Bill of Rights Coalition is asking for an ordinance and the force of law behind the Bill because policies can be changed at the will of department heads without input from the people. We need your support to lift the voices of the homeless community that has put forth so much time, effort, and care in seeing that Duluth can really be a place that offers dignity for all. Share your stories and insights, get involved, and please take a moment to contact your at-large city councilors and Mayor Larson to encourage them to pass a Homeless Person's Bill of Rights into law.

Homeless Person's Bill of Rights Coalition meets every Thursday at 6:30pm at Dorothy Day

House (1712 Jefferson Street, Duluth), with a community meal at 6pm. Call first though because once and awhile the meeting times change.

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Rallying for the Homeless Person's Bill of Rights

Leaves from the Olive Branch

By Shelly Bruecken, Chelsea Froemke and Mark Hakes

"The Women of Our World are like Mother Earth. They don't just give life to the next generation but also to Hope. The Women of Our World are to be loved, respected and protected." — Avijeet Das

Every fall the leaves fall from the trees, giving us a view of Lake Superior out of our kitchen window for the rest of the winter. The sunrise over the lake is often a daily conversation piece and a reminder of the beautiful gift that is mother nature. We are blessed to live in a city that has an abundance of natural spaces. At Olive Branch we make an effort to express our appreciation for Mother Earth by recycling, composting, conserving energy and water. We strive to use our resources carefully and wisely, but in a house so full of people it can be a struggle to do this well. The water is constantly flowing over a never ending pile of dishes, lights are left on, and the garbage finds its way into recycling. We still try, but the little we are able to accomplish pales in comparison to the monumental change needed to preserve the Earth. It feels hopeless considering the irreversible damage that has happened to our planet.

While reflecting on Mother Earth, we can't help but draw parallels to the many mothers in our community. Olive Branch is a place of respite for women and families who are needing support and community while they work to find stable housing. In the past few months we have witnessed a mother celebrating

her child's first birthday, mothers striving to regain custody, mothers experiencing the high energy of giggling children after school, and the sorrowful joy of a mother giving birth to a child who is then adopted. These women are all so different, but they all share a deep love for their children. They come with their own stories; some have experienced trauma, they struggle with addiction, and/or trying to find a balance for their own mental health.

At Olive Branch we have the pain and privilege to journey with these women. Sometimes we have the honor of celebrating alongside them as they secure stable housing or cheer on their baby as she takes her first steps. Other times we are left mourning alongside women as they endure setback after setback. In these moments we are left wondering: How do we better support moms who are struggling without reprimanding them for their mistakes? How do we provide support, lovingly and compassionately, while empowering their independence? These are the questions we struggle with as a community -- and it seems as a society -- as we discern how to walk alongside these mothers. Sometimes it feels hopeless when we consider the many women in our Duluth community who are struggling and in desperate need of support.

Despite the hopelessness for the environment, we press on. We continue to recycle, compost and share these values with all that live with us. Despite the hopelessness we feel for these mothers at times, we



New faces joined our community in recent months. Maweja, Gunes, Eren and Esin Henderson moved here from Chicago in December. Maweja does regular house duty at Dorothy Day as Gunes does house duty at Olive Branch. Eren and Esin bring youth and fun.

Mark Hakes moved back to Duluth to join the community after being away for 2 years. He lives at Olive Branch. Be sure to stop by Jefferson Street to say hello.

press on. We try our best to connect them with the wealth of resources in our community, express love, and create friendships. While it is important that we continue to do these little things, it is not enough. In both instances, we need greater systemic changes. We need to strive to be a community that emphasizes support, encouragement, and compassion.

Fostering Community at Hannah House

By Brooke Tapp and Drew Anderson

It has been a great year of changes for Hannah House. Drew, formerly a live-in volunteer at Olive Branch, joined Brooke at Hannah House. Drew has picked up the Bike Cave where Kelly left off. Brooke continues to work on projects for the community. We're both active in providing hospitality at Olive Branch and Dorothy Day House.

The biggest change is that Hannah House is licensed to provide foster care for children. We are grateful to have had a toddler living with us since October. We have also been able to provide respite for other foster children placed in other homes. Being a home focused on hospitality for children, we've made some updates to Hannah House. We installed a new electrical panel and "Worker Kent" (as he is known to the toddler), a friend from the electrical trade, volunteered his time and updated all the electric in the basement. He definitely made it a safer place to live. The backyard now has grass and a fence planned for this spring. This will offer a place for children to play this summer.

The outside of Hannah House has received the



most attention and still has changes to come. Our neighbor surveyed the property and the true property lines increased the size of Hannah House Community Garden! We will begin incorporating this space into the existing garden this spring. With the help from an Essentia Health Community Grant we will be able to

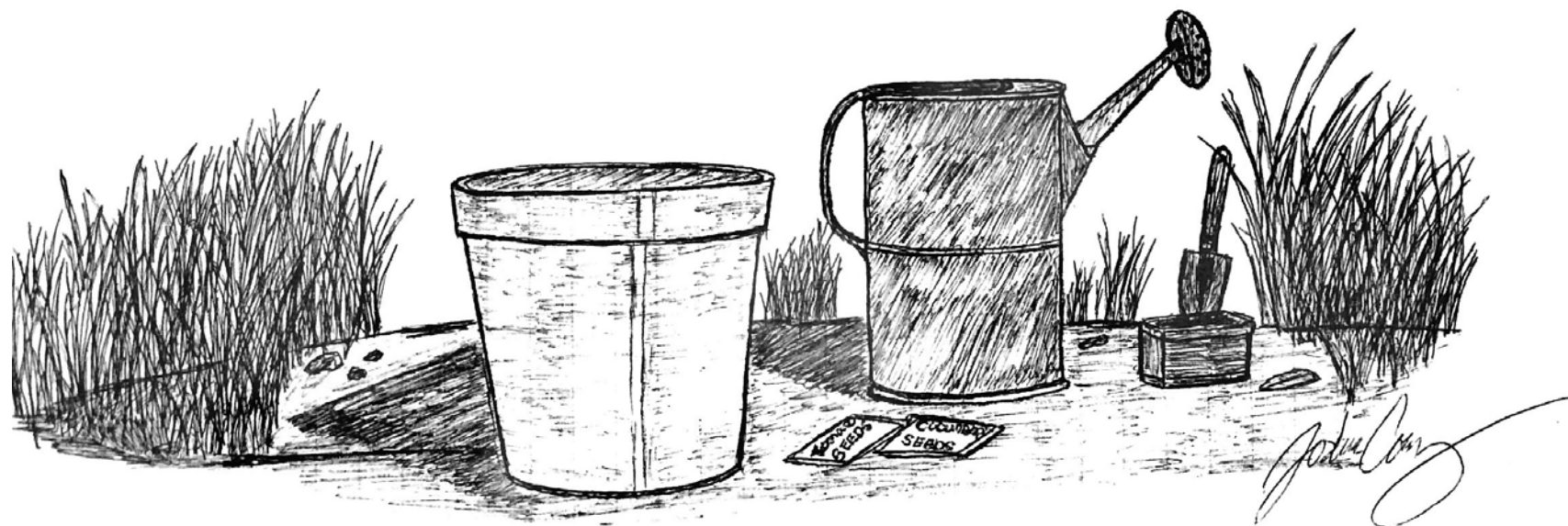
start building a fence. This new fence will be taller as we had many deer enjoying our garden last year.

With the updated electric and shop lights donated by IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers), the basement is a workshop. It will be great to utilize this summer as volunteer groups come to help us maintain our properties and make the changes needed to provide a welcoming and safe experience for guests of all three houses. Some of our guests will include Monarch butterflies coming to feed in the new flower garden just outside the shop.

Overall, it has been a joy to witness Hannah House become full of life this year. Our community live-in volunteer potlucks and meetings now happen within its walls. Brooke and Drew try to tidy it up while our toddler is away at school. And when we are all out of the house, there is still Ron, our orange tabby, staring out the back door at two chipmunks "Harvey and Harold," on the move for an early spring.

Dorothy Day House Notes

by Joel Kilgour



Art by Josh Corey

The backyard is a muddy fiasco. It all started when one of the guys, in a fit of mania, dug zig-zag canals in the already soaked dirt patch that is our Bike Cave work area. He said it was to move the snowmelt. His strategy backfired. Another guy, in a fit of frustration, raked it all back into place. He had just had hernia surgery. Luckily only popped one stitch.

Springtime is a messy between-time. The snow is gone, but the air is cold sometimes and the yard and garden are a swamp. It's hard to see underneath all the muck and brown snow to the plant life slowly awakening. But when the wind is blowing warm and fresh, if you are paying attention, you can feel it.

We see changes of season inside Dorothy Day House too. There are what seem like long winters when roommates are fighting, and when external obstacles and personal choices hold people down. There are messy times where we barely tolerate each other and meetings are a chore. And then there are times, like today, when birthdays are celebrated with genuine happiness, when people help each other write resumes and find housing, and when this house of strangers is nothing short of a miracle.

Two dozen men have come and gone from Dorothy Day House since the last newsletter. The stays are getting much longer as Duluth continues to face one of the worst rental housing markets in the state. No matter how many times we say it, people can barely believe that most of our household are working men, many of them with full time jobs, who simply cannot afford rent on top of their other life expenses. A felony conviction or eviction on your record makes it nearly impossible to find housing. The hard truth is that Duluth's already high average rent increased by \$100 last year, and for many years the City has invested staff time and resources in creating housing for "young professionals" with the hope that it would trickle down to everyone else. It didn't. We feel the human cost of those poor priorities daily.

Still, we are continuously amazed by the outpouring of love and support from friends and strangers. When we are low on funds it is only because we didn't ask. When we request furniture, or work clothes, or a bus pass for one of our guys it is only a matter of minutes before one of the thousands of people who follow us on social media offer what they have. First Covenant Church has joined the roster of faith communities that bring us lovingly prepared homemade meals, and we are delighted to welcome back our old friends Gerry and Annette Ouellette to the meal schedule. Fresh and returning volunteer faces help keep this a welcoming place -- big thanks to Christy, Mary, Jon, Paul, Michael, Meg, Luke, Marsh, Nate, Courtney and Jay! Many of our former guests visit on a regular basis and volunteer to cook meals, help in the Bike Cave, or get involved in activism for fair and affordable housing. Loaves and Fishes isn't an agency, it is an opportunity for all of us to do good.

In the fall, Jason Malmquist joined us as a live in volunteer and splits his time between cooking amazing meals, playing board games I can only begin to wrap my mind around, and inspiring the young people he teaches in the Superior school district. Mo and Gunes Henderson also joined the community in December with their two children, from Turkey via Chicago. Mo has plugged in here effortlessly with his calming presence and thoughtful outlook as a father and peacemaker (if you didn't see it, Mo was featured in a recent *Zenith City News*!). Michael continues to voraciously consume books and podcasts and has been deeply involved in Standing Up for Racial Justice, a group of white allies advocating for racial equity. In February he was given a suspended sentence in Hennepin County for his part in a nonviolent protest in support of Black Lives Matter at a Twins game in Minneapolis. Speaking of activism, the entire house is deeply engaged in work for the Homeless Person's Bill of

Rights Coalition, which meets in our living room every week.

I turned 40 since the last newsletter, having spent nearly half of my life in this house. Every day, I remind myself of the blessing this place is to me and to all the men who live here. This is a little slice of heaven, a look into what is possible if we truly care for one another. My family and community planned the best thing ever for my birthday -- a fundraiser shindig that raised over \$3,000 toward remodeling the basement and Bike Cave (complete with new boiler, slab floor and bathroom), which we expect to begin very soon. Thanks to everyone who has contributed to the project!

The work here is rewarding, though it isn't particularly easy. It takes love and patience. People don't conform to what we want out of them just because we demand it. We are at our best when we deliberately make the choice to expect the best out of each other, when we aren't afraid to laugh at ourselves, when we set aside time to be together and hear each other's stories.

Here in Minnesota the changes to our climate are real and unsettling. In my twenty years on Jefferson Street I have seen remarkable shifts that take the form of longer growing seasons, a warmer lake, and rain when there should be snow. Politically, we are also facing a climate catastrophe: a brutal winter of cold-heartedness, of dismissing facts, and of policies that punish rather than lift one another up.

In these days I am reminded of Dorothy Day's most famous dictum: "We have all known the long loneliness and we have learned that the only solution is love and that love comes with community." Community, like our planetary home, requires care and patience. Nothing changes overnight. We can't bend each other to our will. Cultivation of community never ends, it is a lifelong process. It's muddy and sunshine, sometimes on the same day. In it we can feel the spring air of what is possible.

Who we are

Loaves and Fishes is a community of people inspired by Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker movement to build "a new society within the shell of the old." We believe in a world that is abundant with resources and love, enough for everyone if we share. As a community, we offer family-style hospitality to people experiencing homelessness; operate a no-cost neighborhood bicycle shop; organize with our neighbors to protect everyone's right to housing; and study and practice nonviolence in our interpersonal relationships and in our politics. Loaves and Fishes is entirely volunteer-run and receives no government funding.

Current live-in members of Loaves and Fishes Community are: Drew Anderson, Shelly Bruecken, Michael Elderbrook, Chelsea Froemke, Mark Hakes, Gunes, Maweja, Eren and Esin Henderson, Donna Howard, Joel Kilgour, Doris Malkmus, Jason Malmquist, and Brooke Tapp. Many other people are part of our community as volunteers, donors, meal providers and advocates. We invite you to join us in whatever ways you can.

Dorothy Day House and the Bike Cave

1712 Jefferson St.
Duluth, MN 55812
218-724-2054

Olive Branch

1614 Jefferson St.
Duluth, MN 55812
218-728-0629

Current needs to keep us going:

Donations are accepted Monday-Saturday 8am-9pm at 1712 Jefferson St, Duluth. If you have questions, call 218-724-2054.

Thank you!

Stuff we almost always need: Eggs, Cheese, Coffee and creamer, Sugar, Butter and margarine, Healthy breakfast cereal, Milk, Ground beef, Tuna (large cans preferred), Napkins, Toilet paper, Laundry detergent (HE or powder, large containers preferred), Dish detergent, Hand soap (individual dispensers and/or refill bottles), Shampoo and conditioner, New socks (cotton or thermal, adult sizes), Bandages and antibiotic cream or spray, Ibuprofen, Postage stamps (letter- and postcard-rate), Matches and lighters, Sleeping bags and tarps (camo tarps preferred, for our many friends sleeping on the street or in the woods)

Cash donations to cover house expenses. Checks preferred to Loaves and Fishes, 1614 Jefferson St, Duluth MN 55812; or donate online at www.gofundme.com/LandF2016. Loaves and Fishes is a people-powered movement for change, we are not a tax-deductible charity.

Special requests: DTA bus cards (single-ride and 7-day passes), Nitrile gloves (small, medium and large), Gas cards (\$20 preferred, to any area gas station), Sunscreen and bug spray, Outdoor 5 line retractable clothesline, Box fans, Year-round storage space to hold furniture for people moving into their own apartments

Volunteer needs (please call for more information) People with trucks or large vans to be on call to help move folks into a new apartment, People with hair styling or barber experience who would be willing to offer hair trims at the houses on a monthly basis, Volunteer plumbers to help with DD basement remodel project

Echoes from the Bike Cave

By Drew Anderson

A Da Vinci of all things bicycle, advocate for the poor and self-powered transportation, mentor to young daredevils learning to ride and wrench on their own bikes, Kelly Wallin left us last October for colder pastures (Grand Marais) and a fire went out in the Bike Cave. Yet the gears still turn dependably on Wednesdays and Saturdays 1-5 pm, when we keep the shop open for bicycle repairs and the perpetual task of organization.

And Kelly is still in the loop, of course. He and his partner Wesley joined us for another dreary Bike Grave Halloween, dressed as lumberjacks riding a bicycle built for two. Our spooky cadre also included a yellow duck, Ziggy Stardust, a unicorn, and a giant whoopee cushion. Candy was thrown at passersby and received with smiles and the day ended with hot chocolate in the Bike Cave and an outdoor feature presentation of Muppets from Space. The wackiness of the Bike Grave draws its inspiration from the Bike Cave Collective itself: a collection of all sorts of bikes and people, from clean to crusty, hailing from trailhead to trail's end and everywhere between.

This winter also included several upgrades to the shop. Our friends from the electrical trade restored several light fixtures and cleaned up some of the old wire nest lurking above our heads. We are also excited to announce that the Bike Cave Collective was selected as one of the ten Park Tool's Community Grant winners. With this designation came the delivery of two new bike stands and an assortment of tools, some of which we have yet to understand how to use.

A special mention must go to Scott Maxwell, who has proved to be a steadfast shop manager. Scott's familiarity with the shop and it's intention has been invaluable to welcoming visitors, keeping it safe and unusually well-kept.

Overall, the winter season was quiet and pro-



Young volunteer bike mechanic builds a bike for his younger brother at the Bike Cave

ductive. A handful of regular winter riders utilized the shop for tune-ups and brake replacements. With our downtime, we rearranged the layout in anticipation of a full Dorothy Day House basement rehab, which may happen this summer. Yet an early spring has sprung and we have already sent along two toddler bicycles, equipped with helmets and bells. With the days warming we foresee the return of the neighborhood youth, families and solo riders.

Save the Date!

Annual Jefferson Street Block Party

Saturday, August 19th

2pm to 5pm

1600 block of Jefferson Street



Participants in last year's Jefferson Street Block Party Slowest Bicycle Race

In case of rain the party will move to St Paul's Episcopal Church (1710 E Superior St). The party is an annual, family friendly celebration that brings together hundreds of neighbors from Jefferson Street and across the Endion neighborhood. Watch Facebook for updates on the event.