



January 2008

Greetings from the Creation Care Council of Mennonite Creation Care Network. Here's what we've been up to lately. We look forward to hearing about your "green activities" too.

Creation Care Represented at Mennonite Assemblies:

Mennonite Creation Care Network was well represented at both the bi-annual Mennonite Church USA Assembly in San Jose, California, July 3-6, 2007 and the Mennonite Church Canada Annual Assembly at Abbotsford, BC, held on the same dates.

Creation Care Council member David Neufeld, Winnipeg, MB, attended the Abbotsford event and reported lots of positive energy with many pastors expressing interest in creation care and its practical applications. He was instrumental in drafting a statement on Creation Care that delegates adopted and a resolution calling for guidelines that reduce energy and resource consumption at future assemblies. A nature walk and two workshops on creation care rounded out green offerings at the assembly.

The U.S. event involved around 6,200 youth and adults and provided a great opportunity for MCCN to make contact with every segment of MC USA. During a delegate session, Luke Gascho, Goshen, IN, who chairs the MCCN Creation Care Council and Anita Amstutz, pastor of Albuquerque Mennonite Church, Albuquerque, NM, delivered a joint-presentation entitled *Creation Care and Sustainable Actions*. The presentation is available on MCCN's website under the News>MC Assemblies tab.

MCCN members also offered two seminars at San Jose 2007 and hosted a late evening forum for networking with other conference attendees interested in creation care. In the exhibition hall, a new display banner attracted assembly participants to the MCCN booth for personal contacts.

Guidelines for Green Gatherings Now Available

Version 1.0 of MCCN's *Guidelines for Greening Church-wide Assemblies and Regional Conferences* is now available and posted on the MCCN website under "Resources" on the Church Agencies page. The guidelines address six categories of concern: transportation, shelter, food, water, communication and worship and teaching.

Is travel by bus, train or carpooling promoted? Are recycling bins available and easy to find? Is tap water served in pitchers or bulk coolers rather than bottled water? Is written material printed on recycled paper? These are the kinds of questions the document asks event planners to think about.

Last June, MC USA's Indiana-Michigan Conference made earth-friendly gathering a priority at its annual assembly. Participants drank from recycled mugs rather than Styrofoam and were encouraged to bike, walk or carpool. To read more about this group's experiences, see MCCN's website under the "Agency Actions" tab on the Church Agency page. For help on the Styrofoam versus dishwashing issue, see http://www.newcommunityproject.org/glass_styrofoam.shtml.

MCCN Website Updated

Here is a sampling of stories you can find on our website. Each story is accompanied by a featured action step our readers can apply to their own lives.

- Mennonites behind the scenes in recent decisions at Wal-Mart and BP
- Drift Creek Camp Embraces Local Ecosystems
- How the 70s Energy Crisis Created a Mennonite Farmer
- Eastern Mennonite University Offers Course on Green Buildings

Questions People Ask Us:

People are beginning to use MCCN as a resource as they work at caring for the earth. Here are a few questions Creation Care Council members have fielded:

- Can you recommend a children's curriculum that focuses on creation care?
- Can you send a representative to our Youth Environmental Summit?
- Can you help us communicate with Old Colony Mennonites in Mexico who share territory with an endangered falcon?

Creation Care Council activities:

MCCN's Creation Care Council met October 19-20, 2007 in Goshen, IN. The council reflected on the first two years of MCCN and considered future options for the ongoing success of the organization. Leadership patterns and council member terms were discussed. Additional staff time will be necessary to accomplishing many of the goals of the council. Finding funding to pay for staff time is a priority. The council will meet again May 2-3, 2008.

Get Involved

Nominate a creation care hero: We are now taking nominations for the Art and Jocele Meyer Award. Please tell us about an individual, household, congregation or business within the Mennonite constituency that models care of creation. To request guidelines or nominate a recipient, email lukeag@goshen.edu.

Volunteer to be a news scout: MCCN would like to gather and archive material on creation care that appears in Mennonite periodicals or websites. If you read one or more Mennonite periodicals, would you be willing to send us articles and news notes you come across? Email jenniferhs@goshen.edu for an instruction sheet.

Share a story: The MCCN website is prepared to feature stories about the many ways people are already working toward a renewed earth in their homes, schools, congregations and workplaces. If you have a story to share, send it to lukeag@goshen.edu. Selected examples will be published on the website.