

NOTES from EARTH CARE MINISTRY MEETING, September 18, 2010

Earth care interests and concerns expressed by those attending the meeting include the following:

- preventing pesticide use to protect human and ecological health near and in Lake Champlain;

- promoting legislation that enables municipalities to regulate pesticide use, and legislation that governs currently unregulated uses of pesticides;

- working with a group in Burlington Intervale on riparian restoration;

- sharing simple things individuals can do to benefit the Earth;

- working with young people on earth care;

- developing availability and affordability of sustainably-grown food to all;

- keeping the lake clean, recycling, knowing that there is no time left to do nothing;

- preaching about earth care; sharing spiritual aspects which promote love for creation, including humans;

- developing a moral voice to speak to the State and to industry about sustaining Earth;

- understanding and promoting appropriate technology that is collaborative with, rather than exploitative of, the rest of creation.

Current Work on Biocides and Water:

Jay Vos reported on his work as chair of the subcommittee on pesticides of the Burlington

Board of Health to educate the public about Burlington's pesticide ordinance and described an initiative to help landowners switch from pesticides to sustainable lawn care. The lawn care project has a grant from the Lintlhac Foundation and Gardener Supply is contributing materials for the lawn care projects. Strengthening the ordinance will require action from Vermont Legislature.

Sylvia Knight reported on work regarding herbicide use at electric substations. Siting substations near or in wetlands, arrangement of drains, and lack of state oversight all present risks for water resources, biodiversity and human health. A 2009 letter from Charlotte residents to the Public Service Board (PSB) resulted in a temporary halt in herbicide use at three VELCO substations. A subsequent order by the PSB has allowed herbicide use, with conditions. Legislation is needed to govern this situation. Abuse of antimicrobial soaps containing triclosan is another developing concern for human and ecological health.

Green Roof: The group moved to the Memorial Garden to hear Frank Guillot's presentation on the green roof now under construction over the chancel. Advantages over a conventional roof include much longer service life, energy conservation

through reduced cooling needs and reduced heat loss, sound absorption, slowing of run-off in rain events. He also briefly described benefits of the replacement of the Great Window.

ECM members will consider activities for three events: Diocesan Convention in November; World Water Day in March, and Rogation Sunday May 29, 2011.