



*What is the
"matrix of grace"
and where
are we in it?*

**Sunday
March 29, 2009**

Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

-Colossians 1:15-27

In Christ, all things hold together. Many congregations embody this scripture in the way they serve their communities through their earthkeeping work.

Wesley United Methodist Church, in Yakima, WA started a recycling center in their parking lot 30 years ago. Their recycling work raises funds for other ministries of the congregation, but the recycling itself is a ministry that serves their community and the earth. Through their work they have processed 60,000 pounds of recyclables each month, kept at least 5 million pounds of waste out of landfills, and provided continued service when the city of Yakima reduced its curbside recycling program and closed recycling sites.

In Stevens Point, WI, St. Paul's United Methodist Church members stopped using valuable resources to mow the lawn on their five acre property and watched as native wildflowers and grasses began to regenerate a diverse prairie ecosystem. Over the years the church added birdhouses, interpretive signs, and a nature trail, and after five years the site was home to 45 species of grasses and wildflowers, 15 species of butterflies, and at least 8 species of dragonflies! Congregation members learn and teach about prairie seasons and species through the church newsletter, and a local public school uses the site to teach their students about the local ecology.

Read more stories like these on the [NCC Eco-Justice Program](#) Web site.

Does your congregation have a story to tell about caring for God's creation? Share it with us so we can inspire others! Send a brief description in an email to mary.minette@elca.org.

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