



The Sanctuary

A Newsletter for Friends of Myra House

"Holistic Living Today
for a
Sustainable Tomorrow"



MYRA HOUSE
Holistic Living Center

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The first spring at Myra House has given us a vivid lesson on what it means to be alive.

Each garden sanctuary in the south, east, and north have shown their livelihood in distinctive ways. The garden on the east especially demonstrates its life through the numerous flowers that bloomed from the seeds that were planted just a couple of months ago. These California native wild flowers along with roses fully show themselves off by displaying a diversity of colors: snow white, yellow, tan, chrome, scarlet red, ice blue, pink, purple, lavender, etc. I experience joy and wonder from their life, their fragrance, colors and their appearance in full bloom. This spring I have learned that liveliness means peace, health, diversity and growth.

However, once I shift my eyes to recent newspapers and journals, I can not avoid the scary news: decline of marine fisheries around the world because of destructive fishing practices and humanity's over population, severe damage on redwood forests because of watersheds and flood water, blackout predictions because of unseasonable heat, mandatory water restriction because of the worst drought in seventy years, and so on. The liveliness that I have witnessed from the gardens declines in light of the gloomy incidences just mentioned. Just as the needle of a compass points towards the north, while keeping its relationship to the whole earth, the task of our life should point to these detrimental issues while keeping our concern on the whole creation. Thomas Berry says this life calls for a great work by participating in the liveliness of our planet. God has done a great work for the whole creation by giving life and has called humankind to share in that task. Jesus showed us his great work by bringing liveliness to the lifeless in response to this call.

Myra house is a place where we strive to bring liveliness to our souls, to people and to the earth. In this endeavor, an Advisory Board has been formed. Sharing your ideas and even little actions are always welcome in order to make this great work possible. We would like to invite you to be a part of this calling of sustaining life for today and tomorrow.

Sung Sohn



CALLING STATEMENT:

We believe God is calling us to hear and respond to the concerns of the world. The specific cries we hear are that the environment needs to be cared for and that our contemporary pattern of living has become too compartmentalized. Each moment of our life is interdependent and interconnected with the entire web of life. We share the environment—the land, air and water—with other creatures of this planet. We are called to till and steward all parts of creation, living holistically and renewing creation in regenerative ways for a sustainable future. Because of our learning and our awakened compassion, we are exploring the holistic dimension of religious life in three areas: Spirituality, Education, and Creation of a Healing and Caring Community.

OBJECTIVES AND PRACTICES FOR REALIZING THIS HOLISTIC DIMENSION:

1. *To connect with the Spirit, the source that gives life, healing and restoration, our creativity and our ability to discern God's desires.* We connect with the Spirit through the daily practices of rest, communal meal preparation, eating and cleaning up together, morning and evening prayer, a morning walk, and the spiritual and physical exercise of gardening.

2. *To educate ourselves and others about the truth of God's love through Jesus Christ for our inward and outward transformation.* This education is through the daily practices of Scripture study and reflection, exercising empathy toward people and nature, and learning from nature through stewardship. This will be an educational center providing quality learning opportunities from experts for ourselves, church and student groups, and community members.

3. *To create a healing and caring community that respects and celebrates our diversity and multi-cultural heritage.* We seek to help God heal what human beings have broken—the vulnerable and damaged environment, society, and individuals. This healing will occur by changing our passions, habits of thought, attitudes and actions in respect to the environment and our relationships with others. We will change ourselves through living in harmony with nature, living communally with one another and maintaining a rhythm of daily prayer. We seek to nurture this life through creating and living within an organic and regenerative environment.

(revised versions as of 1st Board Meeting of 3/18/02)



Dear Friends of Myra House,

We could expect that the holistic vision of ecological, spiritual and multicultural living that attracted us all to this ministry would affect life here. And so it does. For instance, the Sohns' Korean hospitality at the evening meal embraces both invited and providentially present guests. It includes glass mugs of clear roasted barley tea and bowls of fresh vegetables, kim chee, rice, soup or fish, fruit, forks and chopsticks. And it always includes the Spirit's willful promptings in conversations that organically grow forth the House's ministry. Better hold onto your hat when you come to table there. There is something else here too, along with the multicultural communing, the healthful food and in spirited conversation. The usual concepts of "table fellowship" and "table communion" fail to do this something justice. Marcus Borg provides an apt concept. He describes Jesus' inclusive table fellowship as Jesus' practice of "open commensality." "Commensal" first means eating together at the same table. In the biological sciences it refers to an animal or plant living with, on or in another without injury to either. In the social sciences it refers to a person or group that is not competing while residing in or occupying the same area as another individual or group which has independent or different values or customs. The noun commensal can refer to a table companion, or a specific animal or plant. While the underlying principle is one of doing no harm within and across species, the concept carries the humbling reality of our counter tendencies and the simultaneous realization that, thankfully, commensality includes God.

At Myra House, the richness of a potentially open commensality of mutual respect is present everywhere: In the universal rhythmic patterns of spoken and silent prayer, in private quarters and public house spaces, in the life-and-death cycle of nature and in the regenerative care of water, energy, soil, animals, vegetables, fruit trees, and people. And like the rings in a pond created by a thrown pebble, our partial or complete experiences of this alternate reality, as with any experience, accompany us to our homes, communities and beyond. We all influence all other parts of the web of life. Given the socio-political economic realities wreaking havoc on the planet, it is important to consider what kind of influence we are contributing. A holistic moment of commensality can nourish our spiritual and psychic wellsprings, inspire us to live in neighborly mutual sufficiency, lead us to practices of self-restraint or pro-action with others, with an influence greater than the sum of all the parts.

And so, you are invited to set aside your work and come for a soaking in the Spirit of God and the spirit and vision of this place. Explore the premises by yourself and find a spot which seems to have your name on it. Make yourself comfortable, and give your spirit time to catch up with your body. When you are ready, take to heart Hildegard of Bingen's invitation (12th Century): "Glance at the sun. See the moon and the stars. Gaze at the beauty of the earth's greenings.... Now, Think" As Jesus responded to John's curious disciples who wondered about his alternate vision for living, come and see (John 1:39). They did, and that was just the beginning.

Lois McAfee, Chair of Advisory Board



Things to celebrate...

Gift Check—Myra House received a gift check of \$1,347.48 from the Cal Pac Conference Riverside District Builders for building a labyrinth path. It will be located at the Sacred Garden at the south west of the property. We are planning to finish the project by June 15, 2002

Ordination—Sung Sohn, Executive Director, will be ordained as a probationary member of the Cal-Pac Annual Conference on June 22 (Saturday), 2002 at Redland University Chapel.

Excellence in Design Award—Myra House received "2001 Excellence in Design Awards" from the City of Claremont on April 24, at Claremont City Council Chamber

"Myra House is the recipient of an award in the category of Renovation and Additions. The two-story addition and remodel transformed the previously unremarkable exterior into an attractive, contemporary interpretation of early California Styles. Attention to detail is seen in the clay tile roofing, exposed rafter tails, custom gates, and smooth stucco finish with renovations made to incorporate ecological principles into the design, including the capture and reuse of rainwater and the reuse of the solar power."—*from the description of the Award*



Up Coming Two Programs at Myra House

ECO-STEWARDS WORKSHOP

Eco-Stewards Workshop is a weekend program of healing, caring and spirituality for family, church and community leaders who desire to be responsible stewards. The program aims to empower each participant to restore God's household to a sustainable place. We will respond to the specific issues of "struggle," "suffering," and "injustice" by connecting individual life to the whole web of life on earth. Participants are challenged to reconsider not only their individual living pattern but also the larger community and love of God's world. Through the program each participant will be nurtured, inspired and challenged on their faith journeys. Each person will engage the above issues in the following the "sphere of praxis": LISTEN, SEE, CHOOSE, and ACT.

The program provides a monastic home setting where each family member or faith community member participates in communal living set to a rhythm of prayer, reflection, study and fellowship, including meal time in a harmonic setting with the environment for two nights and three days. It also incorporates gardening, waste recycling, kitchen scrap composting, renewable water treatment and solar energy systems. The structure itself will be flexible, as are the movements within the sessions. Each week will accommodate each different language workshop (English, Korean).

Friday 5:30 pm-Sunday 8:30 am, second, third and fourth weekend of each month. Two nights and three days' lodging, meals including program packet, Suggested Fee: \$120 / person, Starting from July. Due day for registration: July 1.

ADOPT-A-TREE

Myra House is offering this program of about sixty, one-year old fruit trees that were planted last year. This is an opportunity for others to get acquainted with a specific kind of fruit tree. This program will be a vehicle for an environmental or ecological care program as follows:

Focus: Children and youth in local faith community

Purpose: Provide children, youth and their families with the wonders of the life of a tree and the responsibility of caring for a tree, using this as a way to teach overall environmental stewardship and responsibility.

Activities: Classes (approximately four per year/one per person) open to individual's schedule as follows: Tree care-naming, journal keeping, weeding, pruning, trimming, harvesting, examining the tree's health, time for parents to spend with children during family trips on assigned weekends to care for the tree, harvest time activities, fruit celebration, pie making, giving fruit to neighbors/needy people, selling fruit in farmer's market, Starting from September. Due day for registration: September 8.



Investing in the Myra House:

Many people want to know how to help the Myra House - Holistic Living Center. If you would like to know about any type of donation, please contact Prof. Andrew Dreitcer, Chair of Development and Public Relations at (909)447-2537 or e-mail adreitcer@cst.edu. As you plan your giving for this year please add us to your list of worthy causes to support. Your gift is directly related to the success and continuation of several programs and activities offered by Myra House. It really makes a difference!!!



Memories of the Retreat at Myra House

First, the three ponds are the most memorable: the Life renewing pond at the main gate, the Life giving pond at the heart of the property and Life healing pond at the south side. As we went over each program of the retreat: prayers, praise and worship, we were with God's presence as when Jesus was with God two thousand years ago. Every moment was in peace and harmony because of the surrounding's relationship between ponds, the clay roof tile house, and its rural setting. It was a such different retreat experience, not like other retreat program, when we were able to connect our damaged body and soul to each sustaining feature of the nature such as water, soil, trees and air (all considered God's creation). We were challenged and reconsidered our life style of high consumption as we have experienced solar heating water, solar generated electricity and recycling water from our shower. Myra House especially taught us how Christians can live consciously, depending on God's free given natural source of life - sun, water, air and energy, during today's polluted world. The time in the fruit garden and vegetable garden were also unforgettable - a precious moment not to forget.

Jay Lee, Director of the Living well Ministry (Sehm Teoh Sa-Youk) at Glendale UMC



Founding Advisory Board - March 18, 2002

Executive Director
Sung & Myra Sohn

Advisory Board
Rev. Lois and McAfee
Board Chair
Rev. Youngstone Jhun
Board Vice-Chair
Prof. Andrew Dreitzer
Chair, Dev. and P.R.

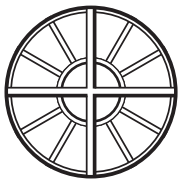
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Chair, Programs
Mr. Eugene T. Tchoe
Chair, Finance
Mr. Robert Vincent
Treasurer

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Dr. Dean Freudenberger
Mr. Mark von Wodtke, ASLA.

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Mr. A. Carlos Casillas
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Prof. Kathleen J. Greider
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Mr. Jay Lee
Mrs. Young Ran Lee
Rev. Dr. Donald R Locher
Rev. Seungbae Paik
Prof. Frank Rogers. Jr.

The Symbol of Myra House



The symbol of Myra House represents the wheel of holistic life. A holistic life maintains harmony and balance in relationships with God, creation, people and within themselves. The symbol is derived from two scripture passages. The first scriptures are found in Genesis 1 & 2:8, 10, 15 and the second scriptures are found in John 1:1,14.

"In the beginning God created heaven and earth." According to this scripture, the outer circle line represents the boundary of heaven and earth that God has created.

"And God planted a garden in Eden where a river flowed to water and garden and God caused every kind of tree to grow including the tree of life and tree of good and evil. God took Adam and Eve and settled them in the Garden of Eden to cultivate and take care of it." From this verse, the inner circle line represents the boundary of our home which is enclosed within it, just as God provided the Garden of Eden for Adam.

"...There was light, darkness, sun, moon, stars, vegetation, seed-bearing fruits, swarms of water creatures, winged birds, cattle, creeping insects and wild animals, and Adam and Eve.... And God said it was good...."

The space between the two circles is divided into twelve parts. This number signifies the perfect number of wholeness. In the twelve spaces, the created ones cohabit. Human beings are given the stewardship of tilling and caring for all parts of creation, to live holistically, renewing creation in regenerative ways for a sustainable future.

"When heaven and earth were created the Word was with God. The word became flesh and lived among us and we saw Jesus Christ's glory, received from God, full of grace and truth..." (John 1: 1, 14)

The cross is drawn across the center and becomes the cosmic radiant of all of created life. It extends across the microcosmic scale of creation--symbolized by our home boundary--to the macrocosmic scale of the heaven boundary. Christ reaches everywhere as the fundamental axis at the center of all living. It is this holistic life symbolized by this wheel for which we would like to strive.



Thank you so much for your contribution and participation
January 15 to April 30, 2002

As a staying guest and group: Rev. Wendy Dreitcer with Hannah and Monica, Rev. Jonathan Sung Hyun Lee and lay leaders from Glendale UMC Prof. Michael S. Northcott, Mr. Eugene T. Tchoe, Rev. Phyllis J. Tyler, , Dan and Brandi Vincent, several prospective students from CST.

As a visitor: Rev. Brandon I. Cho, Siri C. Dale, Mrs. JoAnn Yoon Fukumoto, Mr. and Mrs Do Won Kim, Rev. Ju Hwan Kwak, Mr. Ki Ho and Mrs. Chung Sook Pai, Mariko Yakiyama

As a visiting group: fifteen students and Prof. Karen Lyman from Chaffey College, fourteen people from Pilgrim Place, six students and Prof. Michael Black from Harvey Mudd College, twelve students and Prof. Paul Faulstich from Pitzer College.

As a supporting person for seeds, plants, garden supply, candles and books:
Mrs. Susie Fan, Prof. Scott Michael and Bonnie Gillis, Michael and Kathryn Herman, Mrs. Cathy Osman, Mr. Joe Rizzo from the Upland Home Depot, 50 Praise Song Books from Glendale UMC, Mr. & Mrs. Moon Ok Sunsoo

As gardening helpers: students of Prayer Tradition class of Claremont School of Theology, students from Prof. Michael Black's class of Harvey Mudd College

As a program consultant Dr. Dean Freudenberger donated books and journals: *Vital Sign* (5 Volumes), *State of the World* (17 Volumes), *World Watch: Working for a Sustainable Future* (3 issues), *World Watch Papers* (148 booklets). Now we have a book shelf in the library which is designated to Dr. Freudenberger in honor of his work

As a newsletter editor: Mrs. Connie Jacobs of CJ Media

And Thank you for being pray partners of Open Compline every Thursday.

Current Needs: a pulpit, four 5 feet diameter round dining tables, two study desks, two single bed mattress and frame, financial support for green house at Solarium, remodeling for studio,



Myra House is a non-profit organization. Donations are tax-deductible for state and federal purposes.

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