



New Garden Park

Farm Annual Report

Lena Van Wyk, Director

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Mission:

The Farm at New Garden Park is a “new creation” project—one that gives a foretaste of Christ's Kingdom to come. We want to make this abused land sing with life in the power of the Holy Spirit—and in so doing, create a place of radical hospitality for all God's created beings. We are working to pioneer uniquely Anglican ways of sustainably farming *as a parish, for a parish*. We believe that through the act of growing, harvesting, and eating food from our own land, we are participating in our Scriptural mandate to become a holy people that stewards God's gifted land well. We also aim to transform our parish's imagination of eucharistic eating, that grounds eating together as community in our practice of Holy Communion. Finally, we are preparing our community to be resilient and resourceful in an age of economic and ecological uncertainty, not motivated by fear but by biblical wisdom.





Infrastructural Blessings in 2018:

Revelation Garden, Part 1 (Leaf Shaped Garden by Greenhouse)

- Removed gravel; imported compost; formed beds and pathways; installed permanent drip irrigation system.

Medicinal Garden

- Double dug beds; imported compost; installed new arbors; reworked pathways.
- Two beekeepers in our congregation (Victoria West and Logan Porter) installed 4 beehives.

Hoop House #1

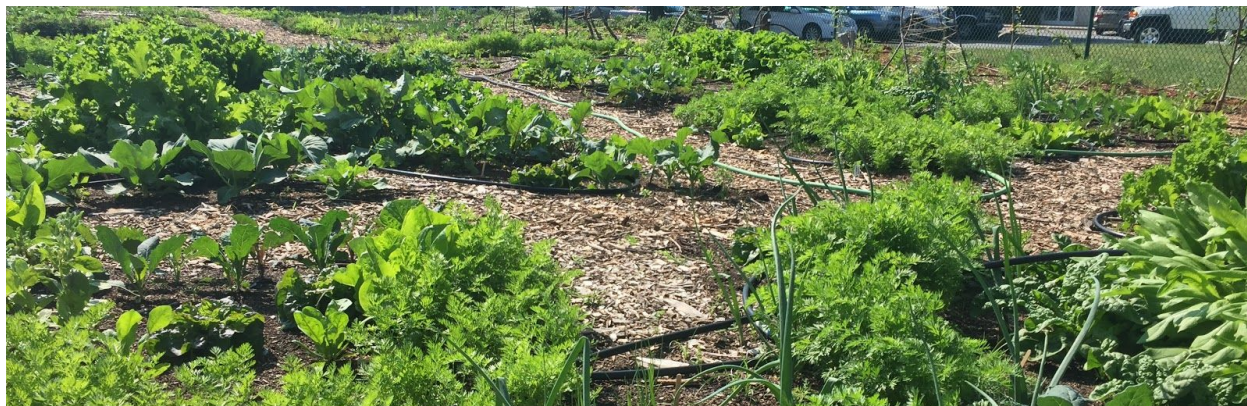
- Repaired and retrofitted for cultivation; imported compost; installed plastic covering and roll up side system for winter cultivation; installed drip irrigation system.

Greenhouse

- Built tables on rolling casters for easy propagation of seedlings.

Sheds, Storage, and Refrigeration

- We retrofitted the two sheds in the “guard house” into one tool shed and one harvest shed and filled them both with tools and supplies.
- MacEntyre retrofitted both of our existing enclosed trailers: one for additional farm tools and supplies and one as an insulated, refrigerated trailer for produce storage and transport.



Cultivation Blessings in 2018:

Revelation Garden, Part 1 (Leaf Shaped Garden by Greenhouse)

- We grew from seed:
 - 46 varieties of flowers, for cut flowers and native varieties for pollinators.
 - 35 varieties of culinary herbs
 - Over 130 varieties of heirloom vegetables
- We planted:
 - 8 fruit trees (cherry, plum, pear, and mulberry)
 - 10 fruit shrubs (raspberry, blackberry)

Medicinal Garden

- We grew from seed:
 - 30 varieties of medicinal herbs
- We planted:
 - 2 fruiting vines (passion flower & hardy kiwi)

Hoop House #1

- We grew from seed:
 - 12 different varieties of heirloom tomatoes

Greenhouse

- We grew 17,000 seedlings in seedling trays.



Harvest Blessings in 2018:

Revelation Garden, Part 1 (Leaf Shaped Garden by Greenhouse)

- We harvested vegetables/herbs every week from April 29th-November 18th. We didn't weigh/count our harvest (we will next year), but we produced enough vegetables to feed about 15-20 families every week (on average). About 80% of this was sold and 20% given away for free.
- God graced us with flowers from June-October, with enough flowers to produce many bouquets each week.
- Harvest Share CSA Program: 14 families in our church received a share of produce a week (5-7 items) for 20 weeks.

Medicinal Garden

- We didn't harvest much this year, to let the perennial herbs establish. But we experimented with harvesting for medicinal teas.
- Three out of four bee hives survived and pollinated our garden all year round. We will harvest the first honey next June.

Hoop House #1

- We produced about 30-40 pounds of tomatoes each week (on average) from mid-July to late-October.

Greenhouse

- We sold and gave away several hundred seedlings to congregants and to local elementary schools with school gardens.



Ministry and Community Blessings in 2018:

Building Community in the Parish

- **Workdays:** We had 11 work days this year, with a range of 25-50 participants each time. I was generally amazed by the turnouts, even in poor weather, and the ways that the workdays encouraged rich community to start forming around the farm. Folks in our parish who otherwise would not interact much, due to different life stages, social groups, ethnicity, culture, etc. had an opportunity to work side by side in team building activities. I also witnessed lots of rich conversation between parish members about faith, the life of our church, current events, race, etc.
- **Harvest Team:** Every Sunday morning, from 6 or 7am to 10am, (from April to November), we had a loyal team of about 15 harvesters that would spend the morning picking, washing, and prepping produce and flowers for the Harvest Share CSA and farm stand. This team represented folks from our church from every demographic--from teenagers to 20-year-olds to 70-year-olds. One of the most beautiful parts of this season, for me, was to see the deep friendships and fellowship form across culture, gender, race, and age gap. Working side by side every week is deeply bonding. This became almost like a community group.
- **East African Community:** Innocent Muco, a leader in our East African community, has been working at the farm 10 hours a week since the spring. He has been an amazing blessing to me and to our farm, bringing farming knowledge from the Congo. He has also been a liaison for the farm to his congregation and next year will be in charge of a section of the garden for raising Congolese crops. In the spring and summer, we brought vegetables to the East African service at 3pm and offered them on a sliding scale or free (we are still working out the kinks of this system, as we want the refugees in our community to have access to fresh produce even amidst financial struggle, but also want to dignify them and not appear condescending to their situation).



- Fellows' Involvement:** In the spring, we had two fellows (Anne Spooner and Adam Hubert) volunteer 6 hours a week and the rest of 2017-2018 crew came out to every workday. Anne and Adam and I grew very close and had many deep conversations in the garden about theology and faith. It was an opportunity to not only train them in agriculture, but to also disciple them in the faith. Then, in September, current fellow Julia Myhre came to join this fellows cohort specifically to work at the farm. She has been working 25 hours a week and has been an immense blessing to the farm, with past experience working on the Duke Campus Farm and with her knowledge of East African culture (where she was raised).
- Children's Involvement:** Throughout the summer, the children ages 3-9 had catechesis out in the garden during a "Garden and Grow" series (including many children of our refugee families). We applied scriptural lessons in the garden and taught them the basics of seeding, watering, nurturing and harvesting. Leah Wall made this possible and it was a wonderful opportunity to enrich the children's biblical and ecological imagination. In the spring and early summer, I also worked with the children in the garden during the East African service. Jennifer, pastor Jonathan's 3rd-grade daughter, helped me transplant 400 tomatoes single handedly! Finally, our youth helped out during a youth workday in the autumn and had a blast showing off their muscular skills to each other.
- Weekday Volunteers:** Throughout the year, I was rarely alone at the farm on weekdays. I have several volunteers, like Sara Charles and Sara Dickey, who came out weekly. And others who came out monthly, or every day for a short period. On average, I had 2-5 volunteers a week in the spring-autumn. This was a staggering and unexpected gift from God! What we achieved in the gardens this year would not have been possible without the generosity of congregants with their time. This made the farm truly feel like a *parish* farm, rather than *my* farm.
- Harvest Feast:** Our harvest feast was the crowning jewel of the year--a time to dedicate the garden to the Lord and to thank Him for his abundant provision this year. Over 200 people from our congregation attended! It was truly a eucharistic feast and we plan to repeat it every year!



Missional Presence in Community

- **Hope Academy:** Adam Hubert brought his 5th and 6th grade science classes out on two field trips in September, to learn about plant life stages at the farm. Hope Academy serves primarily low-income students of color in the Glenwood Neighborhood and it was wonderful to host them out at the farm!
- **Donated Seedlings to School Gardens:** We donated several hundred tomato plants to local school gardens and plan to do so next year as well, due to high demand.
- **IRC Homeless Shelter:** We found out late this year that we can donate produce directly to the IRC downtown who will distribute the produce, which we did this November. We can use the refrigerated trailer to haul large quantities next year.
- **Neighborhood Presence:** We had many folks from the neighborhood or surrounding businesses come by to ask us about our farm and the church as they walked by, including one young woman who now comes regularly to walk Naomi. It's a great opportunity to witness to God's Kingdom to folks who are intrigued that a church has a farm!
- **Visitors:** We had countless visitors to the farm this year: people who were intrigued about our farm vision and wanted to come see us. Some notable ones include Elaine Heath, former Dean of Duke Divinity School, and a visiting group from an Anglican church in Tennessee interested in similar land-based ministries.

Partnerships and Education:

- **Wake Forest Food and Faith Fellowship:** I was awarded a fellowship to attend a week-long food and faith summit for folks in agricultural ministries and represented our farm at that gathering.
- **ECHO Missionary Agricultural Network:** We are partnering with this wonderful missionary organization to get seeds for Congolese crops for our East African community and to learn more about farming cross culturally.

- **Orange County Extension PLANT Class for New Farmers:** I attended an 8-week intensive on sustainable agriculture in January-February to strengthen my skills and knowledge for this work, which was invaluable starting out.
- **Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA):** Julia and I attended the annual CFSA conference on sustainable agriculture and went to many relevant and helpful workshops and networked with other sustainable farmers in our region of NC.
- **Christian Farmers Redeeming the Dirt Network:** Sara Dickey and I have been plugging into this wonderful, evangelical network of farmers seeking to listen closely to the Holy Spirit about our agricultural methods.
- **Partnerships with other local church farms:** My mentor this year has been Howard Allen, a church farmer with a 9-acre market farm with his African American Pentecostal church outside Chapel Hill. He helped me get off the ground in the spring and has been the first person I call for help all year long.
- **ACNA Matthew 25 Network:** I've been asked to lead a workshop on creation care and agricultural ministries at the ACNA Matthew 25 gathering for social justice in February. I'm hoping to build relationships with others in our denomination interested in doing similar ministries.



2018 Finances:

Income:

We project that by the end of the year, we will have made about \$6500. The Harvest Share CSA income was \$4200 and we have made about \$2,300 in farm stand sales. We also have received generous donations from congregants, including one anchor donor who gives \$300/month, another who gives \$50/month for Naomi's care, and another who has given almost \$2,000 for tools and infrastructure.

Expenditures:

Year-to-date expenditures have been \$10,247.34. This does not include Lena's, Julia's, and Innocent's salaries, which are covered by external accounts and church budget. Essentially, we have reinvested all the money we have made in income back into the farm. We have also spent about \$4,000 of external budget (this total minus total farm sales income) on farm expenditures. So much of our expenditure for the year has been pricey start-up costs--retrofitting infrastructure, buying tools and supplies, removing gravel, etc. We aim to move closer to financial self-sufficiency every year. For a detailed record, feel free to look at our budget tracker spreadsheet:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1McF9S0BYANTABeKDfXB5tjDY2FTWYN2uehK_-E73Wmg/edit?usp=sharing

Here is a breakdown of our expenditure by category:

Budget Category	FY 2018 Grand Total	FY 2018 Monthly Average
Soil Restoration (gravel removal)	\$1,216	\$101
Cultivation (seeds, fertilizer, etc)	\$4,076	\$340
Irrigation (drip & hand irrigation)	\$1,731	\$144
CSA/Farm Stand	\$226	\$19
Events & Education (conferences, harvest feast, classes, etc).	\$857	\$71
Equipment (hoop house plastic, tools, etc.)	\$2,118	\$177



Looking ahead to 2019 Season:

Strategic Goals:

- We aim to increase our cross cultural commitment to proactive inclusion of our East African brothers and sisters, through the creation of an East African section of the Revelation Garden and through greater communication with Pastor Jonathan and the leaders of his community about their desires for the farm.
- We aim to make all our systems, from volunteer management to seedling production, more organized and efficient this year, now that we have a year under our belts. Julia and several of our volunteers are very talented at systems creation, which gives me great hope. This past year was all a big experiment and we are going into 2019 with a lot more knowledge and confidence.
- We aim to clarify and commit to a food offering program. Essentially, we would like to decide how much of the land's produce we are going to sell vs. donate, through a detailed Scriptural study on Mosaic teaching in the Torah and through dedicated prayer. We then want to increase partnership with our refugee community, the IRC, and Out of the Garden, to get the produce to those who need it most.
- We aim to continue to use the farm as a ministry tool for congregational health, through education on eucharistic eating practices, ecological stewardship, and care of one's bodily temple.
- We aim to continue to work on the strategic plan for our full property, in anticipation of acquiring Phase 2 in Nov. 2020, and to continue to research and deliberate different methods of agriculture, strategic crops, and organizational structures to make a large church farm possible.
- We aim to continue to develop the long term mission of the farm being an incubator farm of sorts, for Christians in the United States aiming to do missional, sustainable farming that supports alternative micro-economies that can sustain Christian intentional communities. There are Christian organizations doing this for international agricultural development, but none that I know of for domestic

agricultural/economic development. If you are interested in learning more about this vision, come ask me about it!

Infrastructural Projects:

- Expand the Revelation Garden by adding “Part 2,” a second, mirroring leaf shaped garden on the other side of the outdoor chapel that extends to the spiritual direction house. This will allow us to increase production and to have plenty of space for an East African section farmed by Innocent. It will also aesthetically improve the Grove area greatly! We plan to remove gravel for this in early spring.
- Retrofit the second hoop house in the same manner as we did Hoop House #1, to be able to grow tomatoes, cucumber, squash, and winter greens with season extension and disease prevention.
- Install rainwater collection and irrigation in the Medicinal Garden.
- Plant grape vines, nut trees, and fruit trees all around the Grove and in the Revelation Garden Part 2, to increase our stock of edible perennials and beautify the Grove area.

Financial Goals:

- We are aiming to significantly increase production and improve the harvesting and marketing process, with the hope of doubling our sales income next year, to about \$12,000.
- We are hoping to cut 5-10% of our expenditures this year, through efficient purchasing, economizing, and making our operation more “lean.” However, continued infrastructural retrofits will mean that we will likely spend close to the same amount as in 2019.
- We are hoping to cover the second hoop house retrofit with a \$2500 AgVentures grant from NC Extension, which we are applying for currently.
- Our long term, based on extensive research on similar sustainable market farms at peak performance, is for the farm to gross about \$100,000 in fruit and vegetable sales. This sounds absurd given our low total this year, but in 5-10 years, once our cultivation systems and soils are greatly improved and our markets have expanded, this will be a realistic goal. However, at this juncture, (for tax purposes) the farm will have to be its own 501c3 or LLC, so part of our organizational goals are to start making this legal/organizational transition within the next few years.

Prayer for the Farm:

Dear Heavenly Father, We praise you for all you have done in this farming ministry this year--for the countless created things you have brought to life, for the many people you have drawn to our land and to the farm, and for sanctifying us in the process of growing food. We pray that you would not take your Holy Spirit from us, but that we would continue to be grounded in your holiness in the coming season. Please help us to discern how to use the produce you bless us with and how to live in economic shalom with one another as a parish. We pray that each year we become more of an image of your New Creation to come and that everyone who visits the farm meets Jesus in our midst. In Christ's name, Amen +.

