

## **CARING FOR CREATION NEWS**

### ***Earth Day Sunday is May 6, 2007***

The Caring for Creation Ministry at Hope Church began about four years ago. During that time, many fine people have contributed to the scheduled outings and discussion. Hope Church has been particularly blessed with a core group of persons that cares for the natural world. It has been our objective to work toward three goals: provide information and education about environmental issues; identify specific actions that church members can do to help heal the environment; and inform the congregation of ways in which they can contribute to the ongoing public debate.

The Caring for Creation name was part of the package when we were approached by the RCA and asked to begin a ministry. I've come to like the name. I think it says a lot about who we are and how we respond to God. The name draws us into the deepest parts of our faith. Our scriptures begin in Genesis with the story of creation. It's here, at the beginning, that God frames the context for our salvation. The story will play out and find its conclusion in the natural world. The gospel of John even goes so far as to say that ". . . God so loved the world (*cosmos*), that he gave his only Son . . ." Ultimately, scripture concludes with the vision of a new heaven and a new earth — created order exactly as God intended

Caring - no idle, romantic term - is another word that draws us into our faith. Caring is not a given. One cannot be compelled to care; rather, caring can only be given and cultivated. Caring is an expression of our deepest selves and one will not care for that which one does not love. We use the term in the negative when we intend to hurt or reject. Perhaps you have been on the receiving end of "I don't care!" The call to care for creation invites us to engage in God's own work - the restoration of everything that God has made. "For God so loved the world . . ."

The Caring for Creation Ministry will continue to schedule outings and speakers. We will continue the battery recycling program. New this year, we have created a task force for global climate change. Rachele Oppenhuizen, Michelle Hamman, Teresa Housel, Laurie Baron, Phil Tanis, and Bill Parr have all stepped forward to be part of the task force. Share your ideas with them and encourage them in this important task. **The Climate Change Task Force has taken the lead in planning an Earth Day Service for Hope Church. That service is scheduled for Sunday, May 6, 2007.** Special thanks to Pastor Gordon Wiersma for all his help and support. We look forward to meeting with you in worship as together we express and nurture our common faith and common heritage as created beings that are deeply cared for and loved by God.

Peter Boogaart, Caring for Creation Coordinator