GSC Short Report for April 24, 2022, Meeting

The mission of FUUSM’s Green Sanctuary Committee is: "To guide and encourage FUUSM and the wider community to live our Seventh Principle and achieve our vision of a sustainable and just world for all."

The committee is co-chaired by Dawn Hewitt, Debra Miller, and Jim Grecne. The Green email distribution list is long, but our committee has about a dozen faithful, dedicated, and active members. We are all grateful for the support of those who participate primarily by staying tuned to what we are doing, and providing help when we need it.

Since the 2021 annual membership meeting, we have made important progress on the pollinator plot on the Harmar side of the Muskingum River. It was a steep, weedy riverside slope. Now, it is a beautiful display of pollinator-friendly and native plants. Bees and butterflies expressed their appreciation with the first blossoms, and several human neighbors of the area were inspired to undertake similar projects. The national organization Interfaith Power & Light awarded FUUSM with a $500 prize in the Sacred Lands category of their Cool Congregations Challenge because of our initiative and efforts.

Related—because the pollinator plot is also funded by a 2020 Clear Into The Future Grant from DuPont—the City of Marietta took possession of a solar charging-bench that will be installed somewhere near the Armory, once their Lock One Park project is finished. But that is still in the planning phase.

Various members of the GSC, most notably George Banziger, have focused on the environmental threats and problems of injection wells for fracking waste storage. Washington County has more than its share, and leaks and spills have not gotten the attention they deserve. On this topic and many others, many GSC members have contacted state and U.S. legislators, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, President Biden, Mayor Schlicher, Marietta City Council members, and the Washington County Commissioners. As individuals and as a committee, we have signed several petitions. We have written letters, sent emails, made phone calls, and submitted letters to the editor to call for increased environmental protection.

We jointly and independently watched several documentary movies, mostly about environmental activism, and discussed them afterward. One of them, *The Condor and the Eagle*, was about Indigenous activists in North and South America who are Water Protectors and Climate Warriors, inspired us deeply. We are actively planning several projects to support them—morally and financially. The first such activity is a book discussion group of *Braiding Sweetgrass*. You will hear more about this project in the year to come. We hope you will support the Green Sanctuary Committee in this and all our other efforts to uphold the Seventh Principle. We are grateful for your continuing encouragement and support.