

## Youth Creation Care Summit

### Youth learn and practice the theology behind creation care

By: Anna Board, editor



June 28- July 3, 2020, youth groups and youth leaders from across Elkhart County will gather at Goshen College, Goshen, IN for the inaugural Youth Creation Care Summit.

This exciting, weeklong event is the culmination of work done by environmental leaders and Mennonite

pastors who are passionate about the integration of creation care and theology.

The idea for the Youth Creation Care Summit came from Ben Bouwman, pastor at Walnut Hill Mennonite Church, Elkhart, IN. About two years ago, Ben reached out to local pastors and environmental leaders sharing his vision for an event that would be for youth and that would incorporate creation care, education, worship and service. Amy Kratzer, Sunnyside Mennonite Church, and Daniel Yoder, College Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN, joined Ben and others in turning this vision into a reality.

Bowman stumbled across curriculum developed by former AMBS students, Rianna and Benni Issak-Krauss while they were

participating in the Sustainability Leadership Semester at Merry Lea. This curriculum provides resources for worship services and educational sessions and inspired much of the content for this event. Youth will explore the ways followers of Jesus are called to care for creation.

The students who attend the Youth Creation Care Summit will experience times of both learning and serving. According to Bouwman, students will be placed in groups that will complete work projects around the community.

This important work comes at just the right time. Ben states, "Many are rediscovering a healthy theology of creation, believing the Bible has much to say about the earth that God lovingly created, and what it means to be its caretakers. The entire experience is intentionally designed to consider the many facets of our lives and how they impact the environment around us, whether this be the food we eat, the clothing we wear, the way we travel, or the way we heat and cool our homes. Everything we do shapes the world around us."

The planners for this event are hopeful that the impact of this summit will be felt throughout the community. Amy Kratzer shares, "These kids are already living in this community as contributing members and many will remain here as adults. Interacting with local leaders in the field of creation care, seeing what is already happening and getting our hands dirty to help will enliven their imaginations as they continue to shape their lives and values around the ideas of creation care."

Kratzer and Bouwman invite congregations to pray for all those attending and planning the Youth Creation Care Summit. They recognize that it is through the power of the Holy Spirit alone that hearts and minds can be changed by this experience.

To learn more about the inspiration for the summit or to access the Issak-Krauss' curriculum, please visit: <https://mennocreationcare.org/youth-creation-care-summit-shares-its-curriculum/>.

## financial report

By Jim Norton, IMMC treasurer  
Most recent financial report

The income for February was \$5,980 below budget for the month and \$19,000 below expectations for the year. Expenses were \$3,603 above income for the month and \$5,679 above income for the year.

