

Earth Day in Hastings

On April 18, the parishes of the Rice Lake area had a, shall we say, "creative" way of celebrating Earth Day. It is the 40th anniversary of Earth Day and youth from the parishes from Roseneath to Havelock to Campbellford all participated to mark this important day in our life together as God's people. The celebrations began at the gazebo in Hastings, and then the people moved to various parts of the grounds to plant seeds, trees and other environmental activities.

The Rev'd Gloria Master provided much of the leadership for the day. "What the day is about is asking people to just pledge to do one thing - it could be as simple as changing light bulbs, picking up litter, or a mega-project, it can be anything. The emphasis is to move from talking about it to doing it in your own community in a way that is practical," Master said.

"The second part of the message is that during the service there will be prayer, ecumenical in nature and focused on the earth and creation and stewardship of the earth. We called it a Rally for the Earth and changed it to a Rally for the World because the kids were very concerned about making people conscious of people in Haiti, Sudan etc. who are struggling to survive."

One of the exciting things was to see some of the youth involved in this event, including Jeannie Strawbridge, 15, of Campbellford, Jesse Dafoe, 14, and his sister Beth Dafoe, 12, and Zachary Rodgers, 12, all of Havelock. To see our youth coming from different communities for this common purpose was a great thing to experience.

Some of what happened at "Earth Day in Hastings" connects with some of the other Area activities but Christina Harvey from Peterborough. Late in March, some youth from Christina's [parish as well as St Paul's in Brighton, gathered to watch the film "Food, Incorporated" and also talked of planting trees.

So, whether it is outside a gazebo in Havelock, or on the shores of Lake Ontario, or in the hills of Kawartha, it looks like our youth are truly coming together to provide a witness to our churches and a witness to the world about the importance of caring for our environment. We truly are stewards of the earth, taking care of this incredible gift, this "fragile earth, our island home". As has been said by others, we do not inherit the earth for our grandparents - we have it as a loan from our grandchildren.

The Rev'd Michael Calderwood