

# Grace Seeds Ministry Update

March 11, 2014



**Seeds and Stories**  
**March 15** (p.2)

**Climate Change/Faithful Response**  
**March 22** (p.1)

**Mushroom Magic**  
**April 5** (p. 1&2)

## Spring is here! We're celebrating! Join us!

### Climate Change:

#### Responding in Faith

**March 22 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

Presbyterian Church of Western Springs  
5250 Wolf Rd, Western Springs

### Share the Harvest Spring Gathering Mushroom Magic and More...!

**April 5 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

First Presbyterian Church, La Grange  
150 S Ashland Ave, La Grange

**The reality:** climate change is happening now. Scientists have shown us the evidence. Gardeners see it happening in their own backyards. With these global climate shifts, come serious economic, political, environmental and social challenges. How can our faith help us to meet these challenges? How can we take what we say we believe and turn those beliefs into a faith-filled response?

Join us for a presentation on climate, presented by Lisa Albrecht and Drew Solomon from **The Climate Reality Project**. After the presentation, we'll hear from an **interfaith panel**, highlighting the ways different faith traditions (Muslims, Jains, Christians) understand our place in God's creation and our responsibility toward it. We'll ask how that faith inspires action and explore some action we can take together to help the planet we call home! We'll end with a **savory, simple soup lunch** and an opportunity to continue sharing and networking at the table!

**Come celebrate** the beginning of a new season of **Share the Harvest** by having fun with fungi! We'll learn the important role fungi play in our ecosystem and we'll learn how to grow fabulous, delicious, healthy mushrooms! Our guest presenter and teacher for the morning will be Rachel Swenie, who will also lead us in a hands-on opportunity to prepare "spawn" we can take home to get started with our own mushroom growing! (See Rachel's bio on p. 2.)

**Also included in the morning:** opportunities to learn fun ways to recycle your magazines and newspapers **and** get recipes for eco-friendly personal care/cleaning items! And...(drum roll)...we'll be unveiling the new **Grace Seeds Ministry logo**, created by graphic artist **Megan Schreurs**! Megan, one of Clarissa's YAV colleagues here in Chicago, generously donated her artistic gifts to create the logo! Come celebrate our new "look" and stay for a delicious lunch!

## Seeds, Stories and Soup

Feb. 15 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church  
9401 S. Oakley, Chicago

Grace Seeds invites you to “**Seeds, Stories and Soup,**” an intergenerational event! Parents and grandparents are invited to bring their children and grandchildren for a shared time of seed planting, story telling, and story-making.

Grace Seeds will provide all the resources for seed planting and will provide instructions on how to care for the seeds as they grow into seedlings. We'll share several children's books that celebrate care for creation and will offer a list of suggested books for future reading.

Children will also have a chance to do some of their own storytelling and story-making, too. A soup lunch, with meat and vegetarian options, will be served. Questions? Contact Grace Seeds Ministry at 773-495-7865 or [graceseedsministry@gmail.com](mailto:graceseedsministry@gmail.com)



Puppets joining us on 3/15!

### **Need to contact Grace Seeds? Here's how!** **Grace Seeds Ministry**

PO Box 1378, Bedford Park, IL 60499-1378  
773-495-7865  
[graceseedsministry@gmail.com](mailto:graceseedsministry@gmail.com)

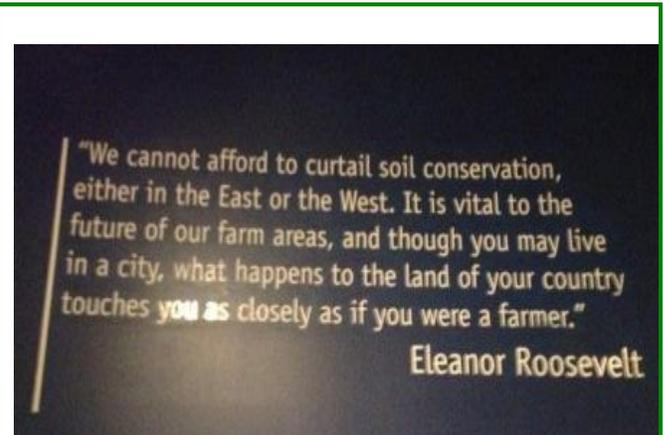
Rev. Linda Wygant and  
Clarissa Sents, Young Adult Volunteer  
You can also learn more about Grace Seeds on  
our Facebook page: “Grace Seeds Ministry”  
and at [graceseedsministry.wordpress.com](http://graceseedsministry.wordpress.com)

## More About Rachel Swenie

Rachel, our presenter/teacher for our Share the Harvest Spring Gathering, created and manages the Plant Chicago mushroom farm, which produces gourmet mushrooms year-round. Rachel is committed to bringing interesting and unique strains of mushrooms to market, as well as educating others on the benefits of mushrooms for their own farms and gardens.

The mushroom farm operates with a closed-loop concept: using waste outputs from one process as material inputs for other processes. The farm is located in the innovative building known as The Plant, a closed-loop food business incubator and urban farming model. Plant Chicago is a non-profit committed to promoting The Plant's model of sustainable economic development and closed-loop food production through research and education.

(Note: You'll find an article about our Feb. field trip to The Plant in this update.)



Sign at an exhibit at The Field Museum

**Eleanor Roosevelt was right!** We're trying to do our part through Share the Harvest, a project of Grace Seeds Ministry. Hope you can hear that commitment in our Share the Harvest mission statement:

**Share the Harvest**, a transplant of **Grace Seeds Ministry**, grows fresh produce to share with hungry neighbors. The project is a direct, hands-on response to poverty in our communities. Share the Harvest teaches and inspires partners to share God's hospitality, treat creation with care, and seek God's justice.

# Did you miss “No Impact Man”? Have no fear, resources are here!

**The Young Adult Volunteer program in Boston** is focused on food justice. The YAVs eat entirely locally for 5 months of the program and also incorporate other “No Impact-like” changes into their lifestyles. As you can imagine, changing one’s lifestyle does not come without certain sacrifices or shifts in paradigm. **Here are some thoughts they shared with Clarissa** about incorporating these changes:

**“It is a lot of really little things that make a difference.”**

**“Nothing we do is innately hard, it's just different and takes time to learn alternatives”**

**“It requires a stronger will to do that [take time to learn to do things differently], and community helps us help each other, and also monitor each other.”**

## Suggestions from Boston YAVs on Reducing your Impact

*Libby McDermott, Alex Haney, Kathleen Murphy, Audrey Holt*

- Compost (this reduces a lot of waste and returns nourishment back to the earth)
- Reduce Dryer usage (line-dry Laundry)
- Food Choices
  - Eat Local
  - Shop at farmer’s markets
  - Buy fair trade/organic for things that aren’t local

- Be ethical with your food choices!
- Eat date-expired (but still safe) food
- Preserve food (buy a lot and freeze it)

- Reuse containers
- Recycle
- Buy Used Clothing
- Reduce automobile usage
- Make soap (baking soda and vinegar clean everything!)
- Use "green" cleaning supplies

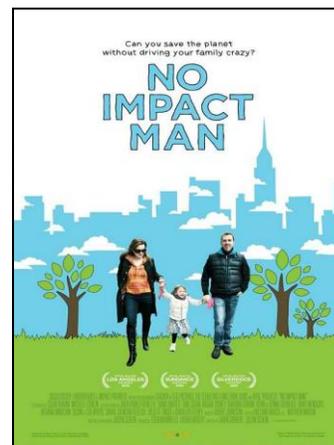
\*For more information on the Boston YAV site, visit:

<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/yav/boston/>

or see their Facebook page @Boston Food Justice YAV Program.

## The documentary’s website

(noimpactproject.org) has a *tremendous* amount of resources and suggestions available.



**Interested in seeing “No Impact Man”?** **Grace Seeds** would be happy to host another screening per your requests! Email us at [graceseedsministry@gmail.com](mailto:graceseedsministry@gmail.com) if you’re interested!

## World as it is or World as it should be?

*Reflections from Clarissa after attending a Community Organizing Training  
with the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless*  
by Clarissa Sents

At the end of January, my fellow Chicago YAVs and I had the opportunity to attend a 2-day training on community organizing with the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless (CCH). We have been working with CCH all year doing outreach at neighborhood schools to inform parents of benefits that homeless students are entitled to. JD invited us to go so that we could learn more about the intentions behind doing outreach at the schools, and hopefully start to actually engage parents in some of these issues (rather than just handing them a flyer and being done with it). It was a pretty cool training. We talked about some events from history that were founded in community organizing- women's suffrage, civil rights, etc. We also talked about building relationships, holding meetings, how you need to act as a leader, power, all kinds of stuff.

One principle from the training was pretty intriguing to me- "World as it is vs World as it should be". This means that we live in the world as it is (broken, mean, sad, corrupt, etc) but have this hope/dream of the world as it should be (happy, nice, caring, fair, just, harmonious). As organizers we're caught in between the two worlds. It's important to live in both worlds because if you get too caught up in one or the other you simply won't be effective.

It's funny because they kind of put words to how I've been feeling this year. I live in this really broken community and get so sad and frustrated thinking "How did this happen?" How can people treat others this way?" "WHY?!?!". You get the picture. In those moments of despair, I'm caught in the world as it is. It's hopeless, it's beyond repair. There's nothing I can do so why try? Whereas sometimes I am oblivious to the world as it is and think everything is as it should be or that it will all work out in the end. This may be comforting, but it's too idealistic and not realistic. Looking at the world this way won't inspire me to make any changes.

Do you ever feel caught between these two worlds? If so, how do you try to balance these two paradigms? Share your thoughts with me at [graceseedsministry@gmail.com](mailto:graceseedsministry@gmail.com).



**Clarissa and her colleagues at the CCH community organizing training.**

# Pancakes

**They're not just for breakfast anymore!**

**Who needs a mix** when you can make them from scratch with just a few basic baking ingredients?

**We are still seeking recipes for our cookbook!** If you have a recipe to share, send them to us at [graceseedsministry@gmail.com](mailto:graceseedsministry@gmail.com)

## Pancakes

Submitted by: Clarissa Sents

1 Egg  
3/4 C. Milk  
1 T. Sugar  
1/2 t. Salt

1 C. All-Purpose Flour  
2 T. Oil  
3 t. Baking Powder

Beat egg with hand beater until fluffy; beat in remaining ingredients just until smooth. For thinner pancakes, stir in additional 1/4 C. milk. Cook on stovetop or griddle, flipping halfway through cooking.

## Field Trip to The Plant: Closing the “Loop”

Our Grace Seeds field trip to The Plant in Feb. gave us the opportunity to see a developing, creative, sustainable, closed-loop system at work! Our visit included:

**A tour of the building.** It's a warehouse, built in 1925 to be used for meat packing and now being repurposed, bit by bit, into a combination vertical/urban farm, business incubator (non-profit and for-profit) and education center.

**A visit to the aquaponics farm** in the basement. We learned how plants, grown hydroponically, are fed by the waste created by Tilipia. The solid wastes generated by the fish are used to fertilize the outdoor garden at The Plant.

**A peek into the mushroom farm!** The lovely mushroom on the first page of this update is a pink oyster shell mushroom- grown and sold at The Plant and by The Plant at farmer's markets in Chicago.

**Learned about The Plant's anaerobic digester.** The digester, which looks like a long, silver cylinder, functions like a giant composter. Unlike our small, backyard composters, it can “eat” 30 tons of waste per day, including meat and dairy. After “digestion,” solids go outdoors to fertilize gardens. Liquids are used as fertilizers, too. And the bio gas produced by the digester powers a turbine – which creates steam for the brewery that is soon to move in.

Other businesses already at home in The Plant include a furniture maker, two bakeries, and a cheese distributor.

