

HEAL Well!

By **Diana Davis**

January 2025

Welcome to the monthly Helping Everyone Access Life Well (HEAL Well)! Ministry Report. HEAL Well! is an initiative of the Northern Illinois Anti-Racism Advocacy Partners.

Genesis 2:9: "And out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.

Our Mission: To bring faith and community stakeholders together to create a more sustainable society for the present and future by planting trees and volunteering in community gardens.

Our Vision: Our vision for the future is to have relationships of trust and learning that care for God's creation.

We welcome our Church Partners: Bolingbrook: Friendship United Methodist Church, Chicago: Olivet United Methodist Church, Chicago: First Church Chicago Temple, Downers Grove: First United Methodist Church, Elmhurst: First United Methodist Church, Glenview: Glenview United Methodist Church, and Oak Park: Euclid Avenue UMC.

We are delighted to have Church Partner volunteers and individual volunteers. They are **Glen Cherry, Barbara Collins, Carol Jeanne Davis, Joy Doran, Frank Hughes, Sophia Hyon, Piers Fetters, Chester Lacey, and Beth Peterson.**

The HEAL Well Leadership Team consists of **Lisa Rogers, Chair, Rev. Marcus Tabb, Co-Chair, Diana Davis, Patricia Evans, and LaCretcia Edward. Amania Drane** is the Project Manager.

Recent Meeting Highlights
December 16, 2024

This past Monday we had the honor of having Dr. James Miller as our guest speaker. Dr. Miller has retired from internal medicine. He spoke about the garden at the Rising Sun Missionary Baptist Church in Austin which began in 2014. He explained the educational and community needs of the Austin community.

Dr Miller explained how the community where he serves is considered a food desert. He and others are on a mission to involve the community in the growth process offering fresh foods and empowerment. Although

Upcoming Events

Next Meeting

January 20, 2025
7:30 -8:30 pm via
Microsoft Teams

Guest : Austin Garden
Collective,
www.austingardencollective.com



considered “concrete deserts”, he explained that one can grow healthy foods in containers. Some of the limitations are the lack of volunteers to work in the gardens as well as distributing food items when they serve 1 -2 days weekly.

Looking towards the future he would like to build partnerships with hospitals and local churches. Other areas of conversation were about how one maintains the grounds in the growing season. He also discussed the negative health effects of too much sugar and artificial sweeteners; and how growing your own food will give people the advantage of knowing their food is safe when there are so many food recalls.

Pictures to the left are of the Northern Illinois Conference’s [Black Healing Collective](#) (BHC) from a summer visit to the Rising Sun Missionary Baptist Church during the BHC 2024 Community Garden Research Project.

What’s next?

We are looking for additional leaders to join our HEAL Well! team.

Partnership Development

Responsibilities: Reach out to Austin community representative(s) to help us decide which area tree planting would be most beneficial. Contact the Austin Garden Collective to develop a plan for when and where they would like our volunteers to work.

Community Youth Engagement

Responsibilities: My Block My Hood My City will help by offering our program to their Summer Youth program participants. Also, contact local Chicago Public Schools, local youth clubs, design a youth application and help decide on the appropriate youth stipend allocation.

Tree planting

Responsibilities: Research Chicago Free Tree Sapling Program, City of Chicago Tree Planting Program, Faith in Place Green Team

If you have an interest in participating or know of someone, please contact Lisa Rogers, jlrogers204@comcast.net.

“By acquainting ourselves with subjects in natural philosophy, we enter into a kind of association with nature’s works and unite in the general concert of her extensive choir. By thus acquainting and familiarizing ourselves with the works of nature, we become as it were a member of her family, a participant in her felicities; but while we remain ignorant, we are like strangers and sojourners in a foreign land, unknowing and unknown.”

John Wesley, A Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation, 1:viii.

Happy New Year.

Thank you for your participation!

