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Legacy Gardens bring people together

Reeds Spring, MO – May 22, 2014 – All of the Legacy Gardens plots at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church and St. Mark Episcopal Church in Kimberling City, and at Reeds Spring’s City Hall and Life Song Church, have been claimed by community members. Summer planting of both vegetables and flowers has begun.

The Legacy Gardens is a community-wide initiative championed by Ozark Mountain Legacy catalysts who are committed to bringing families and friends together to improve the quality of life in Ozark Mountain Country.

“We have already seen what a huge impact the Legacy Gardens are having on our community,” said Dennis Ahlvers, volunteer manager of the St. Andrew Presbyterian Church and Reeds Spring Legacy Gardens. “They are truly bringing people together.”

Ahlvers and his wife, Frances, live close to the Reeds Spring City Hall garden and frequently walk over to check on the garden’s progress.

“Last week we saw about 12 people at the garden planting and watering,” said Ahlvers. “The greatest thing was that the older and more experienced folks were helping and guiding the younger and more novice planters on how to plant their seeds and starter plants that were provided by the Reeds Spring High School botany class.

“As time passed, many of the gardeners, who did not know each other before, had gathered and were visiting about how they were going to prepare the food from the gardens. They were even discussing how they might freeze and can the food for next winter.”

These gardeners understand the two-fold mission of the Legacy Gardens—to teach people how to grow healthy food for their families and to donate a portion of the food grown to the Stone County Loaves and Fishes program.

To that end, Becky Allen, botany teacher at Reeds Spring High School and coordinator of the Legacy Gardens Project, is already making plans to arrange summer canning classes for Legacy gardeners.

The Legacy Gardens have also provided a place to bring family together. Ahlvers says that one St. Andrew's gardener explained to him that the garden has meant much more to her than she expected when she started. It has become a special project that has brought her and her daughter together and has given them some of the most precious moments she has had with her daughter for some time.

The congregation at St. Andrew's has also come together as a result of this project. When they realized that they needed an efficient watering system and a fence around the beds to protect them from wildlife, church members responded with donations of supplies, money, and labor. Within days, fellow church members constructed a chain link fence and placed 750 feet of soaker hoses to ensure the success of their garden.

"People often ask me who is really in charge of this project," said Ahlvers. "But the fact is that this is the Lord's project. People around the community are willing to serve, and He is making it happen."

For more information about how to get involved in Legacy Gardens, please call Becky Allen at (417) 294-5549. For more information about Ozark Mountain Legacy, visit www.ozarkmountainlegacy.org.

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Ozark Mountain Legacy is our area's non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, promoting, and championing our core values of Family, Faith, Friends, Flag, and Future to ensure the continued success of our Ozark Mountain Spirit as we Pass It On to future generations. (www.ozarkmountainlegacy.org)