

# **Gardeners' Welcome Packet**

## **Monona United Methodist Church Community Garden - 2018**

Welcome to Monona United Methodist Community Garden. This Welcome Packet contains important information about how our garden operates. It also contains information about how you can pitch-in to make the garden run smoothly and efficiently. Because community gardening requires a fair amount of work beyond tending your own plot, every gardener is asked to participate to the best of their ability in the management and upkeep of the garden as a whole.

### **Welcome to Community Gardening**

A community garden means many things to many people. For some, a community garden is a place to grow food, flowers and herbs in the company of friends and neighbors. For others, it's a place to reconnect with nature or get physical exercise. Yet others use community gardens simply because they lack adequate space to have a garden at their house or apartment.

Regardless of why you are choosing to take part in a community garden, the activity comes with both responsibilities and rewards.

Responsibilities: Successful and vibrant community gardens rely on the dedication of each and every gardener to **1) maintain their own plot and 2) contribute to the upkeep and management of the garden as a whole.** There are many jobs that need to be done in order to help the garden run smoothly, including keeping paths mulched, maintaining tools and equipment, planning events and workshops, stocking and hauling supplies and building raised beds, among other things. The adage many hands make light work is very appropriate. If everyone pitches in according to their ability and desire, then the garden will prosper and grow.

### **Successful Community Gardening**

- Plan to visit your garden two to three times a week during the growing season. Make a schedule with yourself or other gardeners. Write it in your calendar. Post a colorful reminder on the fridge. Because your garden is not located outside your front or back door, it's sometimes easy to forget that there is weeding, watering, staking or harvesting to do.
- Attend scheduled meetings and workdays. This will help you meet other gardeners and become part of your gardening community. You'll also learn about the various jobs and projects that need to be done to keep your garden in shape.
- Make friends with other gardeners. Experienced gardeners are an invaluable resource at your garden. Pick their brains for gardening tips. Visit their plots to see how they stake their tomatoes or trellis their beans.
- Volunteer for a garden job or committee. Community gardens don't manage themselves. They require a fair amount of work. By pitching in on a certain job or project, you'll be supporting the garden as a whole and ensuring that the work is spread among many people.
- Educate yourself. Check out books from the library. Attend classes. Become a Master Gardener. There's always something to learn about gardening. The more you learn, the more success you'll have.

### **Gardener's Guidelines**

Gardener Guidelines (or rules, regulations, policies, etc.) can take many shapes and forms. The following Guidelines have been established by the members of this garden. Please read the Guidelines and direct any questions or comments to the Garden Co-Leaders.

1. All gardeners are required to complete an application form. An application fee of \$35 is due by April 15th, 2018
2. Garden meetings and work parties are scheduled throughout the season. Please plan to attend to get to know your fellow gardeners and assist with garden upkeep and special projects.
3. Keep your plot and the adjoining pathways tended. If your plot appears to be untended for a period of time, and you haven't contacted the garden Monitor, you will be contacted and your plot may be assigned to another

gardener. Call your garden Monitor if you need help or if you will be out of town for an extended period of time. If you plan to discontinue use of your space, please let the Monitor or Registrar know as soon as possible so that your plot can be assigned to another gardener. Gardeners who do not maintain their plot may not be eligible for a plot the following year.

4. If the contents of a plot are not being harvested, the gardener will be contacted to determine if you will be harvesting or if your produce needs to be donated to St. Steven's food pantry.
5. Plant tall plants and vines in places where they will not interfere with your neighbor's plot. Planting illegal plants is prohibited
6. At the end of the gardening season, all dead plants and non-plant materials (string, wire, wood, metal, plastic, etc.) must be removed and disposed of properly and all gardens left neat and tidy. If your garden is not cleaned-up by October 28th, you could lose your gardening privileges for the next season or be reassigned to a new, smaller plot.
7. Pick up litter when you see it. Take all your rubbish home-if you carry it in, you can carry it out.
8. Please put weeds and dead plants into the compost bin provided. Do not leave them in the pathway. Any diseased plants or seedy or invasive weeds are to be bagged and put in the trash so as not to contaminate the gardens. Old woody plants are to be placed in the brush pile to be carted to the recycling center.
9. I commit to using organic gardening methods and will not use chemicals in or near the gardens.
10. Do not apply anything to or pick anything from another person's plot without their express approval.
11. Please do not leave the water on unattended. When finished gardening for the day, please roll up the hose at the faucet area, return tools to the shed and lock the shed before leaving the garden.
12. Minimize water use by watering less frequently and more deeply and by mulching over the summer. We will provide straw mulch at planting in the spring.
13. Wear sun hats, sunscreen, gloves and protective footwear as recommended.
14. Following guidelines on handling potting mix and compost- i.e. wear gloves and keep products moist (to avoid breathing dusts and particles when handling). Wash hands immediately after use.
15. This is a great place for children, but they need to be supervised by parents or caregivers.
16. Smoking and chewing tobacco is not allowed. Tobacco can transmit a lethal virus to tomatoes and cigarette butts are loaded with toxins.