



## Garden Locations



- ① Craven Street Garden, beside the church office entrance.
- ② Ann Street Garden, beside the Eure Building.



## Caretakers of God's Creation

The Book of Discipline calls United Methodists to be caretakers of God's Creation: (¶ 160 Preamble) "All creation is the Lord's, and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life, and space are to be valued and conserved because they are God's creation and not solely because they are useful to human beings. God has granted us stewardship of creation. We should meet these stewardship duties through acts of loving care and respect."



## Additional Resources

For more on Ann Street United Methodist Church and its ministries and discipleship in the community of Beaufort and the region, visit:

[www.AnnStreetUMC.org](http://www.AnnStreetUMC.org)

For more on the Creation Care initiative of the United Methodist Church, which promotes good stewardship of God's Creation, visit:

[www.UMCCreationCare.org](http://www.UMCCreationCare.org)

The Ann Street United Methodist Church Butterfly Gardens are registered with the N.C. Wildlife Federation as one of the Pit Stops on the Butterfly Highway. To learn more, visit:

[www.NCWF.org/Habitat/ButterflyHighway](http://www.NCWF.org/Habitat/ButterflyHighway)

Butterflies and Moths of North America:

[www.ButterfliesAndMoths.org](http://www.ButterfliesAndMoths.org)

North American Butterfly Association:

[www.NABA.org](http://www.NABA.org)

The Xerces Society:

[www.Xerces.org](http://www.Xerces.org)



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*Winter  
Butterfly Gardens*

Presented by

The Creation Care Ministry of  
Ann Street United Methodist Church



## Why Leave the Leaves?

To some people, the Ann Street UMC Butterfly Gardens may look like a mess in the winter with spent plants, dried stalks and drifts of dried leaves. But the keepers of the gardens leave the leaves for a reason.

“Nature is messy by our human standards, [but is] certainly ordered and balanced in her own way,” says the N.C. Wildlife Federation. “Those unaware of the ecological benefits of a natural mess may be inclined to prefer clear garden beds and leaf-free lawns. While garden cosmetics may be nice in the peak of the growing season when we’re spending more time outside, let the offseason be ugly.”

Leaving the leaves benefits many wildlife species, including salamanders, wood frogs, box turtles, earthworms and millipedes. Thousands of insect species rely on the leaf layer to burrow for the winter and become a food source for wildlife higher up the food chain. For some, like the noble lightning bug, this is where they lay their eggs. Moth and butterfly caterpillars also overwinter in fallen leaves before emerging in spring. And birds rely on seeds from dead flowers.

The ideal time to clean up the garden is right before the new growing season, in late winter or early spring, after insects overwinter in the old stems through the cold months.



## Care for the Winter Garden

The National Wildlife Federation offers these tips and recommendations for leaves in your yard or garden:

- Let leaves stay where they fall or move them into your garden beds to protect your plants’ roots, suppress weeds, preserve soil moisture and eventually break down and return nutrients to the soil.
- Rake leaves off the lawn to use as mulch in garden beds.
- Let leaf piles decompose; the resulting leaf mold can be used as a soil amendment to improve structure and water retention.

## Sowing and Planting: More Fun than Raking!

Fall is a perfect time to sow seeds, plant shrubs and start or expand a garden.

The best months to plant native pollinator seeds for habitat restoration are September through February. Sowing during this period gives seeds a chance to “settle” into the site during the winter and burst into growth in the early spring.



## Appreciating Every Season

The Creation Care Ministry at Ann Street UMC is part of an initiative of the United Methodist Church to address the significant challenges facing our natural world. Read more about the ministry and the church’s Butterfly Gardens in our companion brochure displayed alongside this one.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 says, “There is a time for everything, and a season for everything under the heavens: A time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot.”

Although winter may appear dreary and confine us, even these times are needed for the new growth coming in Spring. No matter which spiritual season it feels like we’re in, there is good taking place because of God’s work in and through us.

On those dreary, overcast days, it is important we remember that even though we can’t see the sun, it is there. Likewise, Jesus Christ, the Son is always there! God is at work in every season.

Ezekiel 34:26 says, “I will bless them and the places surrounding my hill. I will send down showers in season; there will be showers of blessing.”

- Make compost: Combine fallen leaves (“brown material”) with grass clippings and other “green material” and keep moist and well-mixed. You’ll have nutrient-rich compost to add to your garden next spring.
- Share them with neighbors, friends, schools and others. Some communities will pick up leaves and make compost to sell or give away.
- Build a brush shelter. Along with branches, sticks and stems, you can use leaves to make brush piles that shelter native wildlife.