



PARMA LUTHERAN CHURCH – COMMUNITY GARDEN 2021 RULES AND EXPECTATIONS



Thanks for your interest in participating in our community garden, where both the words "community" and "garden" are equally important. We expect gardeners to primarily grow food, both for their own use and pledge to donate at least 10% of their harvest to the Parma Lutheran Church Hunger Center, housed right at the church. Gardeners 18 years old or older are eligible to apply. Our family-friendly garden welcomes the participation of youth who are supervised by a parent or guardian.

1. LAYOUT – Individual plots are 4' wide by 12' long. Optional fence plots are 1' wide by 5' long and are intended primarily for climbing plants such as peas and cucumbers. Dedicated Hunger Center plots run perpendicular to individual plots. Wood chip pathways surround the perimeter and each plot.
2. PLOT ASSIGNMENTS – First year gardeners are limited to one plot. Returning gardeners are limited to two 4'x12' plots unless unclaimed plots remain at the time of the Annual Indoor Meeting. Plots are assigned on a first come, first serve basis after the application and payment are received. Returning gardeners who did not properly maintain or clean up their plots the previous year may have their applications placed on hold until the Annual Indoor Meeting, with preference given to new gardeners and returning gardeners with good maintenance records. After all plots are claimed, hopeful applicants can choose to be placed on a waiting list for a possible forfeited plot. Plots must be 50% planted by June 1st and fully planted by June 15th or be forfeited without reimbursement of plot fees.
3. GARDEN ACCESS – Registered gardeners are given the combination to the garden gate lock and may enter at any time to maintain their plots or other work. Keep the combination confidential. If you are the last one out, lock the gate after putting away any tools or supplies you have used. Children and teens under 18 are welcome if supervised by a parent or guardian. Please instruct children to walk on the pathways and respect the plots of others. The Garden features a sandbox to help entertain children. Pets are not allowed in the Garden at any time.
4. VOLUNTEER HOURS – **Each gardener pledges time towards the common good of the garden in addition to time spent on his/her own plot(s) - see application page.** Communal work days count towards this commitment, as does serving on the Harvest Team and/or maintaining the dedicated Hunger Center plots. Other qualifying tasks include weeding common areas, turning the compost bin, trimming hedges, and watering the fence perimeter flowers.
5. PLANTING – Gardeners provide their own plants and/or seeds. Check storage cabinet for shared seeds that may be available. Choose plants that will not shade other plots (no corn or sunflowers) or extend beyond your plot's boundaries when mature. Prune or trellis plants if they begin to block paths.
6. STRUCTURES – Supports such as stakes, tomato cages, and trellises are permitted, but not a fence that encloses your plot. No structure may extend beyond your individual plot area. Low tunnels to extend the season and floating row covers are permitted.
7. WATER – Use sprinkling cans and the water provided in the rain barrels. Notify the Garden Coordinator immediately of any leaks, extremely low water levels, or problems with the storage system. Conserve water by using a mulch to reduce evaporation. Black plastic mulches and weed barriers are permitted if used responsibly and removed by the end of the season. Organic options include straw, compost, and pine straw.
8. WASTE – Add healthy plant waste to the compost bin. Chop or cut in pieces no more than one foot long. Place weeds and diseased plant waste in the "Yard Waste" trash containers. Throw away squash and tomato vines; do not compost them. Place any inorganic waste (plastics, metal) in a trash container.
9. DISEASE CONTROL – We value organic gardening practices. Use methods that protect pollinators and other beneficial organisms in the Garden. Herbicides (weed killers) are prohibited, including Round-up and Preen. Use of floating row covers to prevent feeding damage and egg-laying is encouraged. When a pesticide to control insects, mites, or fungi is necessary, Neem Oil is an option (in storage cabinet along with a sprayer). Diatomaceous earth is permitted as an insecticide and GreenCure as a fungicide. Both are organic.
10. FERTILIZERS (plant food) – Organic and synthetic products are allowed. Our soil is typically tested annually and a professional lab provides a detailed report. Follow the lab's recommendations to correct for any nutrient deficiencies and pH imbalances.
11. EQUIPMENT – Gardeners need to bring their own garden gloves, trowels, and their own stakes and cages. Sprinkling cans and some tools (shovels, rake, garden fork, loppers, pruners, etc.) are available for shared use. The

community garden provides soil amendments, straw to use as mulch, and supplies that are donated by garden supporters.

12. **HARVESTING** – Our goal as a no-waste garden is to have all healthy produce find its way to someone’s plate. Ideally every gardener would pick his own produce for home use and donate at least 10% to the Parma Hunger Center. However, schedules don’t always allow for timely harvesting, so the Hunger Center Harvest Team supplements this effort. Anyone can serve on the Harvest Team on a routine or occasional basis. The Harvest Team inspects all garden plots on Mondays and Thursdays in the late afternoon or evening, picking all mature produce that would become overripe, bolt, or otherwise become inedible if left until the next inspection. This produce is donated to the Parma Hunger Center. If you are aware of maturing produce in your plot and will pick it yourself, place a “Do Not Harvest” marker (located in the storage cabinet), at the base of your plot ID marker or near individual plants. If the Harvest Team observes overripe, inedible produce in a marked plot, this privilege will be revoked. 100% of food grown in dedicated Hunger Center plots is donated to the Parma Hunger Center.

DONATION PROCEDURES: Weigh and package your donations. The scale and record sheet are in the storage cabinet. Help yourself to shared packaging supplies when you harvest. You are encouraged to donate clear recycled plastic bags and clamshells brought from home. The collection coolers behind the hedge are stocked with cooler packs on Monday and Thursday evenings. Produce is taken into the Hunger Center on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Harvest only from your assigned plot(s) unless you’ve been given permission by the plot’s owner or unless you are harvesting as part of the Hunger Center Harvest Team.

13. **PLOT MAINTENANCE & NEGLECTED PLOTS** – Come regularly to weed, water, prune, stake, mulch, and harvest. Remove any plants that are dead or dying. All plots will be monitored and you will be notified if plot maintenance falls below Garden standards. If there is little improvement after two notifications, you may be directed to forfeit your plot. If you realize beforehand that you won’t be able to fulfill your obligations for the season, contact the Garden Coordinator, who can reassign your plot to someone on the waiting list or possibly coordinate temporary maintenance help for you. It is your responsibility to keep the Coordinator informed.

14. **FALL CLEAN-UP** – Begin early (September) so you can start sowing winter cover crops where you have pulled out food crops. Clear plots of all food crops no later than the Final Cleanup Day (typically in November) unless an extension is granted by the Garden Coordinator. Dispose of tomato and squash vines and anything diseased in the trash (do not compost).

15. **TOBACCO** - Most tobacco products carry the tobacco mosaic virus, which is readily transmitted to tomato and pepper plants. All tobacco products must remain outside the garden, and if you have used tobacco products, you must wash your hands with soap before entering the Garden.

16. **RESTROOMS** – The church building is open during business hours, 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM, Monday to Friday. Enter the building with clean shoes through the back parking lot by the office doors. Use only the restrooms in the sanctuary hallway (do not use those in the Education wing due to lease agreement with Parma Preschool).

17. **PARKING** – Park along Tuxedo or in the church parking lot. Do not drive vehicles on the lawn.

18. **NOISE** – Keep to a minimum during weekday office hours. The Preschool office overlooks the Garden.

19. **VANDALISM** – Discourage vandalism and theft by being courteous to inquisitive neighbors, reporting suspicious persons to the Garden Coordinator, and keeping the garden gate locked when the garden is empty.

20. **CONFLICTS** – Promptly bring disputes to the attention of the Garden Coordinator in order to resolve the issue in a timely and Christian manner. When engaged in a dispute, always remember Matthew 22:39, “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

GARDEN COORDINATOR:
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HARVEST TEAM COORDINATOR:
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PLC COMMUNITY GARDEN 2021 WORKDAY AND MEETING SCHEDULE

Attendance at garden workdays is strongly encouraged, as the tasks below are a general guide of what needs to be completed – for everyone’s benefit!

- ❑ **Kickoff Meeting:** *None this year – to be held one on one with new participants*
 - Introductions, plot assignments, gate combination, and review of rules & expectations.
- ❑ **Early May, Workday — Garden preparations:**
 - Spread wood chip mulch on paths & perimeter (they’re free, so date is TBD)
 - Clean up winter debris. Unpack supplies.
 - Turn compost.
 - Weed your assigned plot(s).
 - Spread compost/topsoil on plots that have been weeded.
 - Turn under cover crop and prep soil if dry enough.
 - Complete water bin hookups
 - Rebuild cinderblocks for Bin #4
 - Weave Deerstopper ribbon through perimeter fence
- ❑ **Saturday, May 22, Planting Day!** *Saturday morning, 9a-12p*
 - Plant, share extra seeds and plants, have fun! You can plant in your plot at other times—before or after--but on this date we try to meet as a group.
- ❑ **Summer workdays – TBA:** as needed for season maintenance, special projects such as trimming the hedge, etc. Do your part to help the keep the garden looking respectable!
- ❑ **October, Workday - Preliminary Garden Cleanup:**
 - Pull out any dead or dying plants and begin sowing cover crops in their place. Weed. Turn compost pile.
 - Remove non-productive plants. Put unused cages & stakes away for the winter. Last chance to plant cover crops. Weed pathways.
- ❑ **Early November, Workday - Final cleanup**
 - Pull out all remaining vegetable crops. Clear out everything except cover crops. Winterize water bins. Store tools and equipment for the winter.

Work in common areas of the garden and in plots not your own count as volunteer hours. Accumulate hours by turning compost, weeding common areas and paths, weeding or watering Hunger Center plots, trimming hedges, watering the fence perimeter flowers and container garden, setting up and dismantling the water storage system, and/or serving on the Harvest Team.

Workday dates can change if weather conditions are prohibitive. You’ll be notified of changes via email or text message (or phone call, if necessary).



Plot #: _____

PARMA LUTHERAN CHURCH 2021 COMMUNITY GARDEN APPLICATION

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home phone #: _____ Best time to call: _____

Cell phone #: _____ Able to receive text messages? _____ on Facebook? _____

Email address: _____

Individual Plots are 4' wide by 12' long and Fence Plots are 1' wide by 5' long along fence

Plots along fence are optional: grow peas, cucumbers, etc. using fence as a trellis

Please make checks payable to "Parma Lutheran Church:"

_____ \$20 - PLC Members (if paid by first Sunday in April)

_____ \$30 - non-PLC members (if paid by first Sunday in April)

_____ \$25 - PLC Members (paid after first Sunday in April)

_____ \$35 - non-PLC members (paid after first Sunday in April)

_____ \$3 - Optional fence plot (in addition to regular plot)

_____ \$0 - Hunger Center plots, dedicated volunteer. All food is donated to Hunger Center.

** Plot fees may be reduced/waived for financial needs or commitment to at least 50% contribution to the Hunger Center, on a case by case basis*

Briefly list your expectations for this PLC Community Garden and why you plan to participate:

If possible, I would like plot(s) # _____ or to be near (list name): _____

Expectations and Lease Agreement Summary Checklist:

Please check off all boxes (if agreed) and sign below:

- I will volunteer at least **two hours a month** to the upkeep of common areas in the garden.
- I will willingly donate at least 10% of my plot's harvest to the Parma Hunger Center.
- I will not let the food I grow go to waste; if I cannot use it, I will try my best to harvest and donate it while still edible.
- I will abide by the attached "Expectations and Lease Agreement."
- I will not use herbicides and will use only approved organic insecticides and fungicides.
- I will do my best to heed Matthew 22:39, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

LIABILITY WAIVER: I agree to hold harmless the owner of the land (Parma Lutheran Church) and the Parma Lutheran Community Garden, its leaders and participants for any liability, damage, loss, or claim that occurs in connection with use of the garden by me or any of my guests.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

\$ _____ received on (Date) _____ Check # _____ Cash

Garden Coordinator Signature: _____