

St. Mark Giving Garden at Bertha's - Duluth Hillside,
Summer 2021 (August)

The St. Mark Giving Garden & Food Access Project is an exciting health, food justice, community connection, racial equity, empowerment garden project in the Duluth Hillside Neighborhood.

St. Mark AME Church and **Healthy Alliances Matter For All** are at the core of this collaborative initiative of African Heritage people and organizations — driven by and for Duluth communities of color.



Giving Garden Gate Gathering

Symbolic of access, hospitality, community, and belonging, our front gate was installed this month!

Come, enter the Giving Garden Gate and see what we've been up to **Saturday, August 28 10am-2 pm.**

If you have excess sharable produce that doesn't require refrigeration or special packaging, bring it!

*Thank you for this land
Thank you for this land
Thank you for this land
Thank you for this land*

*This healing healing healing land
This healing healing healing land!*



At the St. Mark Giving Garden (Bertha's Kids Garden) at 323 E. 7th Street, we are growing many things: Food, skills, neighborhood relationships, connections, partnerships But one of the biggest things growing is gratitude.

We often sing the above song and read an African Heritage Acknowledgement statement when groups and youth employment teams gather in the garden space. We give thanks for the land shared generously by the Duluth Community Garden Project. We give thanks for how the land sustains and teaches us. We give thanks that we are given the opportunity to care for, heal and repair this Duluth Hillside land, and in so doing, heal and repair our community and ourselves.

We give thanks that in this project we have been able to give away to the neighborhood gifts of seeds, transplants, bucket gardens, and produce.

The symbolism of restoring a garden that had significant portions unusable for the last couple of years is not lost on the Giving Garden team. We are in service to the missions of repair, healing, health and holistic well-being... for the individual, for the area African Heritage

community as a whole, and for our City. Holistic well-being means access to good food, life-giving connections, equitable opportunities for health and wealth, and empowerment from intergenerational wisdom and cultural identity and spirit. It means growing and recognizing resiliency. It means the growth of hope and justice.

Tomatoes are red. Greens are full. Youth are laughing, learning, and sharing food with neighbors. Volunteers are humbly appearing and working their quiet magic of watering, weeding, and caring during this summer's drought. The dedicated gardening team is learning the pattern of sunlight, plant needs, squirrels and bunnies, and passing neighbors. The Giving Garden leadership are beautifully broadening circles of connection. We have all been shaped by important SURJ anti-racism training... and by this season. In the face of the passion of some community members to be a part of the healing and gardening we are moved to consider deeper mentoring and apprenticing opportunities.

As we harvest and share food grown in the Giving Garden as well as other partner gardens, we give thanks...for healing nourishment... and for and to our many partners who have made this start-up season of the St. Mark Giving Garden possible.

We still need wisdom, hands, partners, and funds to make it to the end of this first season and to grow the powerful vision for the next phases of the Giving Garden project.



YES Youth teams with Team Member Ms. Rhunette & Guest Mr. Peter (& his lettuce!)



Gardening Team - Lead Garden Janice, 2nd from left; with Rose and Maddie.



One of our many before and after hours volunteer water warriors keeping the garden green during drought. (It's hard to tell, but this is Shana!)

If you'd like to get our news or be involved as a volunteer, partner, or funder, contact Sarah Nelson (Sarah@silvercliff.net) or Regina Laroche (reginalaroche@hotmail.com)

To donate financially, please send your check to our Fiscal Agency Partner:

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
219 North 6th Ave.

Duluth, MN 55805 Attn: KathyWimer *Note "Giving Garden Donation" in memo*

The St. Mark Giving Garden is funded in part by UMN Northeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnership, Peace UCC Jubilee Fund, Echoes of Peace with support from the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation Transformation Grant, and many individuals!