

The Methodist Community Garden

End of Year (EOY) Report for 2021-2022 and
Proposal for 2022-2023

Summary of the Past Year

The University United Methodist Church and Edible Campus Program are pleased to report out on another successful year of our joint community garden and garden education program. This year has marked a slow transition to a new form of normal and though there were many starts, stops, set backs, and relaunches, we are excited to report that we are back to full in person programming. We are also seeing a significant increase in volunteering and interest in gardening, especially as a wellbeing activity. This past year has solidified the value of healing outdoor spaces. Many community members were able to break away from their isolation in the garden and to maintain a connection to their neighbors through the garden as a gathering space. We believe that this excitement in being in the garden will continue well beyond the pandemic. We are taking several steps to embed a culture of wellness into the garden moving forward. In the next few months, we plan to complete a healing pollinator garden on the Campus 880 side of the Church. This will be a quiet place for reflection. We also applied for and secured a five year grant for a Nature Wellbeing Program that will bring in two new interns to work with all the Edible Campus Program gardens to offer emotional and mental wellbeing workshops that integrate natural settings and garden areas. This five year grant has the potential to become ongoing funding.

Our garden education and outreach program reached 1,294 people in total since Summer 2022. This was through 48 workshops, 4 food justice reading groups (6-8 week series), weekly workshops at St. George's Youth Center, 53 volunteer events, and several class presentations/guest lectures. We also hosted a Garden Fair in early March 2022. This event included tables from 12 different organizations. Tabling activities were geared towards both families and college students. Throughout the day we also had tours of the Sueno Orchards, Isla Vista Food Forest, Estero Gardens, and Methodist Community Garden. Please see here for a sampling of workshops we offered throughout the year.

- Common Garden Pests
- Plant Propagation
- Tea and Herbs Workshop
- Community Gardens and Social Justice
- Food Preservation Workshop
- Water Efficient Watering
- Grow Your Own Microgreens
- Black Gardening Day
- Making the Most of Small Spaces for Gardens
- Making Your Own Affordable Soil/Potting Mix
- Planting Roots for Food Sovereignty
- Plant Doctor

We also continued our Food Justice Reading Group. This is a weekly workshop series where we bring together a group of community members to read a book together and reflect on the lessons the author has to share. The books we select help us to explore concepts of community

gardening, food justice, equity in food systems, land ownership, food sovereignty, and food security. Here is a list of the books we selected for this year:

- "Who Really Feeds the World?" by Vandana Shiva (Summer 2021)
- "The One Straw Revolution: an Introduction Natural Farming" by Masanobu Fukuoka (Fall 2021)
- "As Long As Grass Grows" by Dina Gilio-Whitaker (Winter 2022)
- "Freedom Farmers" by Monica M. White (Spring 2022)

Our volunteer program is also in full gear. We host 2-3 small volunteer events a week at the Methodist Community Garden, a weekly Saturday Morning Live program which rotates between the gardens in Isla Vista and brings in 20-25 people a week, and 4-5 additional large volunteer events per quarter with large groups of volunteers (usually from fraternal organizations or community service organizations). In total. We have hosted 53 volunteer events since last Summer.

Since being granted \$19,000 in 2021, the Methodist Garden has:

- Returned to in-person programming
- Restarted weekly workshops with the St. George's Youth Center
- Hosted 48 workshops
- Hosted four Food Justice Reading Groups (6-8 week book clubs)
- Reached 1,294 people
- Hosted 53 volunteer events
- Restarted weekly Saturday Morning Live Volunteer program which averages 20-25 people each week.
- Provided countless folks (volunteers, congregants, and neighbors) with free, fresh, and organic produce
- Created a refuge outdoors for Isla Vista residents
- Added several new benches for outdoor seating
- Hosted outdoor services for the Methodist Congregation
- Hosted the first Isla Vista Garden Fair

2021-2022 Budget Update

This budget represents spend from August 2021 through March 2022 (58% of the year). We anticipate being fully spent out by August 2022.

Line Item	Allocation	Spent to date	% spend at 58% into the year
Garden Operations Coordinator	\$7,380	\$5,690.85	77%
Garden Outreach Coordinator	\$7,380	\$2,677.50	36%
Water	\$1,392	\$709.38	51%
Seeds and Starts	\$448	\$303.33	97%
New Infrastructure and Maintenance	\$1,000	\$927.50	
Tools	\$400	\$594.75	
Education Supplies	\$1,000	\$474.61	48%
Total	\$19,000	\$11,347.88	60%

Plans for 2022 through 2023

Next Steps for the Methodist Community Garden

In the coming year, we would like to continue to make our operations more efficient and productive. We plan to do this through revamping our composting program and expanding our production of starter plants we grow ourselves. We have been in conversation with the Isla Vista Compost Collective regarding merging our compost operations with theirs. IV Compost Collective has done a great job managing the bins at St. Michael's University Church Garden. They are well maintained, productive, and smells are kept to a minimum. We would like to bring them into joint management of the bins at the Methodist Garden giving IVCC expanded capacity and reducing the workload of our Edible Campus Program Garden Operations Coordinator so that the operations coordinator can focus on the growing areas. We also recently purchased a greenhouse and are looking forward to setting that up so that we can increase our capacity to grow plants from seeds.

On the education side, we are looking forward to offering our first workshops at the Isla Vista Community Center (starting in April 2022) and continuing to expand our in person workshops back to a level of 2 workshops per week in addition to our weekly program at St. George's Youth Center. We have also recently met with Friendship Manor and are developing a new set of volunteer events and joint programming that will connect Seniors at the Manor and college students.

Another area that we would like to work on in this coming year is our communication with the IVCS D Board of Directors and IVCS D staff. The annual report and presentation that we give is so infrequent that we feel that the board isn't always aware of the work that we are doing for Isla Vista and for the IVCS D. We would like the opportunity to give quarterly updates to the Board in this coming year. These could be written and shared via email to the Board.

Next Steps for Isla Vista Gardens

In our last two annual reports (2020 and 2021), the IVCS D Board of Directors encouraged the Edible Campus Program and Methodist Community Garden to consider expanding to new locations. This was delayed until this year due to COVID restraints. Edible Campus Program has opened up conversations with several potential locations.

In February and March 2022, Edible Campus Program (ECP) worked closely with Myah Mashhadialireza, Community Spaces Program Manager for the IV Community Services District to look into the possibility of doing a community garden at the IV Community Center. ECP's approach to setting up a new garden is to start with the community organizations, neighborhood groups, and stakeholders engaged with the space (and/or that we hope to engage in the space) to get their feedback on what they would like to see. Myah and Katie Maynard, Advisor of the Edible Campus Program, have met with the following stakeholders to get their feedback:

- SB County
- UCSB Counseling and Psychological Services
- Ecstatic Artists Collective
- St. George's Youth Center
- Goleta Library
- IV Arts
- Viviana Marsano
- IV Youth Projects
- Intervarsity
- Students Against Sexual Assault
- Jeffery's Jazz Coffeehouse
- Friendship Manor
- IV Compost Collective

And scheduled meetings with:

- IV Recreation and Parks District
- SB County Public Health
- More staff at SB County
- IV Clinic

Myah and Katie also hope to host a community forum, collect surveys with community feedback, and engage neighboring businesses to solicit their feedback as well. The Isla Vista Community

Center has been many decades in the making and any changes to the space would have to be rooted in the long history that has made this space what it is today.

Proposed Budget for 2022 through 2023

There are several different directions that we could go as we move into 2022 - 2023. We would like to receive some direction from the board on the direction and then have an opportunity to refine our budget based on the board direction.

In the meantime, we would like to share two budgets that we feel most comfortable sharing at this time. The first is a budget for maintaining our current operations. The second is a small proposal for only planting out the garden beds that already exist around the Isla Vista Community Center and which are currently fairly bare.

In order to develop a proposal for a larger/new garden area around the Isla Vista Community Center or in other locations, we would need more feedback on design, scale, and amenities as well as preferred management structures.

We would also like to note that the two budgets below assume our existing financial model and grant format with the Methodist Church. If we moved to a contract model, moved to UCSB financial management, or internalized our hiring/accounting in IVCSO, these budgets would likely have to change.

Maintaining the Existing Methodist Community Garden

Item	Cost	Change from 21-22
Garden Operations Coordinator	\$7,920	\$15/hr, 44 weeks/year, 12 hrs a week
Garden Outreach Coordinator	\$7,920	\$15/hr, 44 weeks/year, 12 hrs a week
Water	\$1,392	
Seeds and Starts	\$448	
New Infrastructure, Soil amendments, and Maintenance	\$2000	Increased due to increase in cost for wood and more build out needed to handle growing gopher issues
Tools	\$400	
Education Supplies	\$1000	
Total	\$21,080	

Building out the garden in existing beds around the IV Community Center

Item	Cost	Notes
Garden Coordinator	\$6,600	Would be a blending operations and outreach person. \$15/hr. 44 wks/year., 10 hrs a week
Seeds and Starters	\$500	
Gopher wiring/pest management	\$450	
Hoses and tools	\$500	
Soil amendments	\$250	
Total	\$8,300	

We would like to thank the IVCS D Board of Directors and IVCS D staff for their continued support of the Methodist Community Garden. It is through your help that we are able to continue to serve the Isla Vista community.