

## STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION TASK FORCE RETREAT AT CAMP MCDOWELL

It was our hope to embrace God's creation through exploring the mission of the task force related to our local congregations. Lay persons and clergy who care deeply about God's creation enjoyed a wonderful weekend learning about our connectedness. With liaisons representing parishes from all over the diocese, we discussed common interests, received updates on current events and issues, learned about ways to stay connected to the diocese, and took home action plans for creation stewardship in our personal lives and local parishes.

Beginning on Friday night, October 21<sup>st</sup>, we listened and reflected on the *Bishop's Pastoral Letter on the Care of Creation*. After introductions and reflection on our mission, Eleanor DelBene led our group on a Cosmic Walk. On Saturday, we had three sessions led by task force members. Session I, learning to advocate for wise and just environmental policy, was led by Bishop Mark Andrus and the Rev. Mark Johnston. They helped us to think both globally and locally, from the Millennium Development Goals to protecting our local Clear Creek. Session II, educating the people of the diocese through a lesson in the *Care of Creation* Study Guide, was lead by Deacon Gerri Aston. Rosine Hall and Roger Conville led Session III about different opportunities of service. Learning the scientific background that supports much of our environmental work provided a great foundation for ideas like energy audits, rain gardens, and other ways people can save money and save the earth. Our time concluded with a Care of Creation liturgy.

A final outcome of this enlightening weekend was the open line of communication that has started and will continue by an email discussion group. By identifying a topic for each month, we will invite discussion and brainstorming of ideas. This feedback will then be compiled and reported in an article for the *Apostle* along with the other efforts of our task force. If you have an interest in being a part of this effort or a liaison for your parish, please contact Michael Churchman at [mjchurchman@hotmail.com](mailto:mjchurchman@hotmail.com) or 205-999-5328.