Pollinators are in trouble. Bees in particular. Some may think this is good news as bees often provoke lots of screams and cause people to pull out the bug spray. They are usually not welcome at the family picnic.

But did you know that 75% of flowering plants and nearly 75% of our crops are pollinated by pollinators? Pollinators are species that carry pollen from one plant to another in order to produce more plants or fruits. Reproduction in the plant world results from pollen sticking to the feet or body parts of the pollinator and being deposited as the pollinator visits other plants and carries the pollen with it.

Pollinators include: Bees, butterflies, moths, beetles, wasps, bats, and birds. This list is not exhaustive; it even includes wind but we'll get to that later.

Many of the foods we eat rely on the work of pollinators: fruits, berries, nuts, and squash, even chocolate and coffee.

When we create a mental image of animals working on a farm, we may picture cowboys on horses or a dog rounding up the herds but did you know that native pollinators — including honey and bumble bees — provide essential services to American agriculture that are estimated at $3 billion annually? (Xerces Society, www.xerces.org)

It is in our best interest to do what we can to provide habitat for pollinators on our property and to become involved in community actions that protect them as a resource.

Pollination is the good news that provides multiplication in the plant kingdom and food to our tables. We would be foolish not to participate in efforts to protect
these sometimes hated (wasps and flies) and sometimes beloved friends (butterflies and hummingbirds).

There are similarities between pollinators and Christians.

Let's think metaphorically for a while, comparing ourselves to pollinators and sharing the Good News of the Gospel to the flowers in the world.

Just as ecology needs many unique pollinating species to maintain harmony and production in the natural world, we the children of God are uniquely designed and sent to plant the seed of God's word to specific flowers. And just as part of the natural pollinator process includes the wind, we are ever dependent on the wind of the Holy Spirit of God to do the work of Christ. He sends us to our metaphoric flowers. Specific flowers. Flowers that God loves and cares for but are unable to fend for themselves.

As we prepare ourselves in relationship with Jesus, praying and seeking His direction, our feet become filled with the sweet sticky substance of the Good News of the Gospel. We need to carry that substance and release it in order to be healthy and productive ourselves. This is God's plan to grow His kingdom. He wants to use us as pollinators. Isn't that amazing?

Just as the pollinators are facing endangerment, the deliverance of our message often faces a hard world and sometimes it feels as if we will become extinct. But God is with us, so fear not.

It's true that sometimes we feel hated like the wasp and at other times we may feel embraced and loved like the hummingbird. This should come as no surprise when we read 2 Corinthians 2:14 – 16.

"But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are an aroma that brings
Review the story of Jonah with the congregation.

Whether you believe the story of Jonah to be a myth used to teach us or you believe it to be a literal account, you must admit that Jonah found himself in quite a predicament. The Ninevites of Assyria are historically recorded as having been a brutal force. They were bitter enemies of Israel and some of the Ninevites Jonah was sent to offer salvation may have killed or tortured members of Jonah's own family. Yet God sees them as not knowing their left from their right. He sends Jonah, a white-washed weak figure battered by the sea, frightened to death, and resistant. But because the wind of the Holy Spirit went before Jonah, when Jonah speaks his impassionate word — repent — people repent.

For Jonah, this was injustice. These people had tortured and killed Jonah's kinsmen, but God's grace is greater. His ways are not our ways. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

It is so easy to forget that each of us has sinned and fallen short of God's ways, and we continue to do so. But God's powerful forgiveness lifts us up each time we fall. Like Joshua in Zechariah 3, we are cleaned up and made ready for service.

Where are you being sent? Who can benefit from the germination of the seed of God? It may be a family member, a work group, school group, spouse or friend. It may even be your enemy — someone who has done nothing but evil against you. Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Jonah learned a hard lesson for humanity. God so loved the world, He sent His only begotten son that whoever believed on Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. He did not come to condemn the world but to save it through Him. We killed Jesus but God still sent Him knowing that we would. Jesus said, while hanging on the cross, "forgive them Father for they do not know what they are doing."
Think of yourself as a pollinator buzzing with the presence of God, being filled with His Spirit to a field of flowering plants that do not know their left from their right — yet God loves them. Can we?

How beautiful are the feet of him who bring good news!
“God saw everything that he had made, and indeed it was very good.” Genesis 1:31

Pollinator Stewardship

Litany from Psalm 104

By Gina DeMarco, Northern Rhode Island Conservation District, RI

Leader: How many are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

Congregation: May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works.

Leader: There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number – living things both large and small.

Congregation: May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works.

Leader: You make springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains. They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst.

Congregation: May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works.

Leader: The birds of the air nest by the waters; they sing among the branches. You water the mountains from your upper chambers; the earth is satisfied by the fruit of your work.

Congregation: May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works.

Leader: You make grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate – bringing forth food from the earth: wine that gladdens
the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread that sustains his heart.

**Congregation:** *May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works.*

**Leader:** The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God. The sun rises, and they steal away; they return and lie down in their dens.

**Congregation:** *May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works.*

**Leader:** How many are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

**All:** I will sing to the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.
**Things You Can Do To Help Pollinators**

**Plant native flowers** — Use this guide to find out what type of native plants are appropriate for your area: [http://www.pollinator.org/guides.htm](http://www.pollinator.org/guides.htm)

**Provide fresh water** in a bird bath or similar container, but change the water often to keep from breeding mosquitos on your property.

**Raise honey bees** — Check with your local cooperative extension office or other bee keepers in your area. Additional resources available at — [http://www.pollinator.org/beekeeping.htm](http://www.pollinator.org/beekeeping.htm)

**Reduce pesticide use** — try natural ways to deter pests before using chemicals. Always read labels carefully. Or build a bat house to help with the pests — see information below.

**Provide homes** — Build bat houses, pollinator houses, bee houses

Links below for additional information.

**BAT**
- [http://www.batcon.org/pdfs/BHBuildersHdbk13_Online.pdf](http://www.batcon.org/pdfs/BHBuildersHdbk13_Online.pdf)

**POLLINATOR**

**BEE**

**Learn how** to certify your area as pollinator friendly — visit: [http://www.pollinator.org/SHARE_howto.htm](http://www.pollinator.org/SHARE_howto.htm)

Whether you are a farmer of many acres, a land manager of a large tract of land, or a gardener with a small plot, you can increase the number of pollinators in
your area by making conscious choices to include plants that provide essential habitat for bees, butterflies, moths, beetle, hummingbirds, and other pollinators. As you begin to plan and plant, be sure to include elements that provide food, shelter, and water for pollinators.

**Education Resources**
National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) — Pollinator Education
http://www.nacdnet.org/education/resources/local-heroes

NACD educator guide on the Pollinator Education page has additional resources on the topic, literature connections, activities and more.
Music Selections

Indescribable by Chris Tomlin

1) From the highest of heights to the depths of the sea,
Creation's revealing Your majesty.
From the colors of fall to the fragrance of spring,
Every creature unique in the song that it sings. All exclaiming...

(Chorus)
Indescribable, Uncontainable,
You placed the stars in the sky and You know them by name.
You are amazing God.
All powerful, Untameable,
Awestruck we fall to our knees and we humbly proclaim,
You are amazing God.

2) Who has told every lightning bolt where it should go,
Or seen heavenly storehouses laden with snow?
Who imagined the sun and gives source to its light,
Yet conceals it to give us the coolness of night?
None can fathom...

(Chorus)

(Final chorus ends with:
Incomparable, Unchangeable,
You see the depths of my heart and You love me the same.
You are amazing God.

All Creatures Of Our God And King Hymn

All creatures of our God and King
Lift up your voice and with us sing,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou burning wind that art so strong
Ye clouds that sail in Heaven along,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Thou rising moon, in praise rejoice,
Ye lights of evening, find a voice!

Refrain

Thou flowing water, pure and clear,
Make music for thy Lord to hear,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Thou fire so masterful and bright,
That givest man both warmth and light.

Refrain

Dear mother earth, who day by day
Unfoldest blessings on our way,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
The flowers and fruits that in thee grow,
Let them His glory also show.

Refrain

And all ye men of tender heart,
Forgiving others, take your part,
O sing ye! Alleluia!
Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,
Praise God and on Him cast your care!

Refrain

And thou most kind and gentle Death,
Waiting to hush our latest breath,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Thou leadest home the child of God,
And Christ our Lord the way hath trod.

Refrain

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship Him in humbleness,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One!

Refrain

O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Take the World, but give me Jesus by Fanny Crosby

Take the world, but give me Jesus,
All its joys are but a name;
But His love abideth ever,
Through eternal years the same.

Refrain

Oh, the height and depth of mercy!
Oh, the length and breadth of love!
Oh, the fullness of redemption,
Pledge of endless life above!

Take the world, but give me Jesus,
Sweetest comfort of my soul;
With my Savior watching o’er me,
I can sing though billows roll.

Refrain

Take the world, but give me Jesus,
Let me view His constant smile;
Then throughout my pilgrim journey
Light will cheer me all the while.

Refrain

Take the world, but give me Jesus.
In His cross my trust shall be,
Till, with clearer, brighter vision,
Face to face my Lord I see.

Refrain

I Surrender All by Judson W. Van Deventer

All to Jesus, I surrender;
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live.

Refrain

I surrender all, I surrender all,
All to Thee, my blessèd Savior,
I surrender all.

All to Jesus I surrender;
Humbly at His feet I bow,
Worldly pleasures all forsaken;
Take me, Jesus, take me now.

Refrain

All to Jesus, I surrender;
Make me, Savior, wholly Thine;
Let me feel the Holy Spirit,
Truly know that Thou art mine.

Refrain

All to Jesus, I surrender;
Lord, I give myself to Thee;
Fill me with Thy love and power;
Let Thy blessing fall on me.

Refrain

All to Jesus I surrender;
Now I feel the sacred flame.
O the joy of full salvation!
Glory, glory, to His Name!

Refrain
O Lord my God, When I in awesome wonder,  
Consider all the worlds Thy Hands have made;  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art.  
Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!

When through the woods, and forest glades I wander,  
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees.  
When I look down, from lofty mountain grandeur  
And see the brook, and feel the gentle breeze.

Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art.  
Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!

And when I think, that God, His Son not sparing;  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in;  
That on the Cross, my burden gladly bearing,  
He bled and died to take away my sin.

Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art.  
Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!

When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,  
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.  
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration,  
And then proclaim: "My God, how great Thou art!"

Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art.  
Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!
Visit these website links resources about pollinators. Most of these links will have additional pollinator resource links. This is only a small sample. There are many more resources. Check you local library.

**Pollinator Partnership**
What is a pollination/pollinator?
Why are pollinators important to us?
Types of pollinators
http://www.pollinator.org/Resources/What%20is%20a%20pollinator.pdf

**Xerces Society**
Pollinator Conservation: http://www.xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/
Fact Sheets: http://www.xerces.org/fact-sheets/

**DID YOU KNOW??**
- Worldwide, approximately 1,000 plants grown for food, beverages, fibers, spices, and medicines need to be pollinated by animals in order to produce the goods on which we depend.
- In the United States, pollination by honeybees and other insects produces $40 billion worth of products annually!

Source: Pollinator Partnership  www.pollinator.org
Eco-regional Pollinator Planting Guides

Great resource to learn about your area and what is best to plant for pollinators. 
Pollinator Partnership http://www.pollinator.org/guides.htm

The Power of Pollinators
3 downloadable PowerPoint’s and additional resources

1) Why Pollinators Matter
Butterfly Conservation: http://www.xerces.org/butterfly-conservation/

2) Bee Biology & ID
Crop Life http://www.croplifeamerica.org/pesticide-issues/protecting-our-pollinators

America’s Heartland http://www.americasheartland.org/pollinators/index.htm

Ohio State University Bee Lab http://osu.campusguides.com/agric_bees_pollination

Research http://www.pollinator.org/research.htm

3) Gardening for Pollinators

Plants and Animals – Partners in Pollination
And 4 lesson plans http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/partners_in_pollination/lesson_2_main.html

EPA’s Pollinator Information http://www2.epa.gov/pollinator-protection


USDA Forest Service Pollinator Resources http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/

Bee Friendly Certification for Farmers and Gardeners http://pfspbees.org/bee-friendly-farming/certification

Photo by Crouch, UT

Butterfly Conservation: http://www.xerces.org/butterfly-conservation/

Crop Life http://www.croplifeamerica.org/pesticide-issues/protecting-our-pollinators

America’s Heartland http://www.americasheartland.org/pollinators/index.htm

Ohio State University Bee Lab http://osu.campusguides.com/agric_bees_pollination

Research http://www.pollinator.org/research.htm


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USDA Forest Service Pollinator Resources http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/

Bee Friendly Certification for Farmers and Gardeners http://pfspbees.org/bee-friendly-farming/certification