



Latter-day Saint
EARTH STEWARDSHIP



2023



ANNUAL REPORT

of Latter-day Saint Earth Stewardship

www.ldsearthstewardship.org



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LETTER FROM CHAIR

Phil Fernberg

2023 was a year of transitions for LDSES. Our leadership shrank as Brigham Daniels and Chip Oscarson officially ended their Board terms (we still miss you two!) and Executive Director Serena Anderson stepped down from her role to start a new chapter as Director of Community Development in her city government. We owe much of our success the past few years to Serena's selfless and diligent service. A grateful bow and tip of the hat to you, good sister! Despite those departures, the contraction was luckily short lived as we added three new board members to the mix and restructured our operations to get used to our new, somewhat leaner normal.

There is a lot to be excited about. Six new LDSES chapters launched—and they are all ON FIRE for evangelizing earth stewardship; our membership is on the rise and increasingly global; people are recognizing the organization, and more importantly, supporting the mission. And it wouldn't quite be this exciting without the support of you, our members. From the bottom of our bleeding earth loving hearts, thank you! We hope to see you at our events, on our social platforms, at a clean up, or on the trails. Let's keep growing. Let's keep going!

With love and faith,
Phil



ABOUT LDSES

Latter-day Saint Earth Stewardship launched in 2012 with a mission to help Latter-day Saints understand the gospel principle of earth stewardship. We believe that every saint should be a steward. As we entered our second decade, we refined our mission, vision, and values to help guide us into future action.

Mission: Our mission is to honor God by learning and living Latter-day Saint principles of creation care.

Vision: Every Saint a Steward

Values: Teach · Unify · Celebrate · Testify · Congregate

To better serve our updated mission, visions and values, we have released a new website and an updated logo. In 2023-24, we also added three new members to our board: Anastasia Jespersen, Randy Miguel and Lisa Aedo.



Updated 2023 Logo

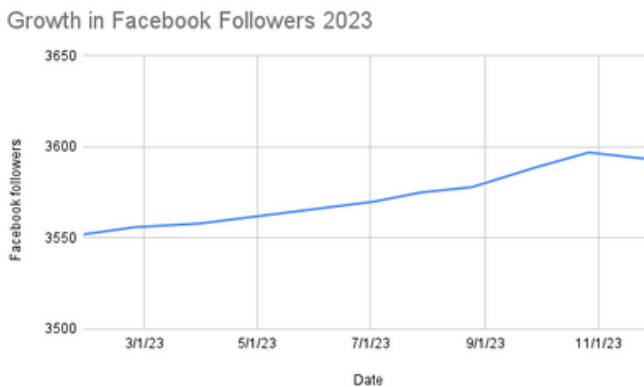
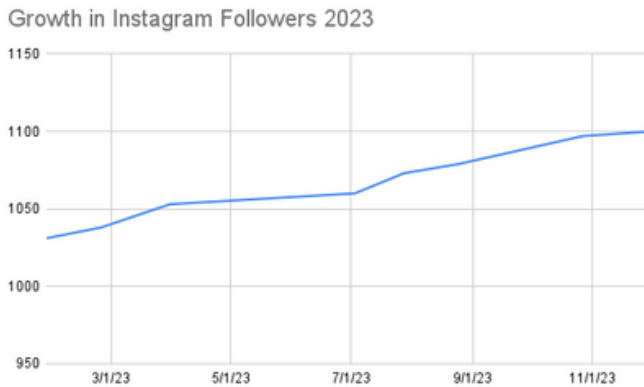


L to R: Anastasia Jespersen, Randy Miguel, and Lisa Aedo



OUTREACH

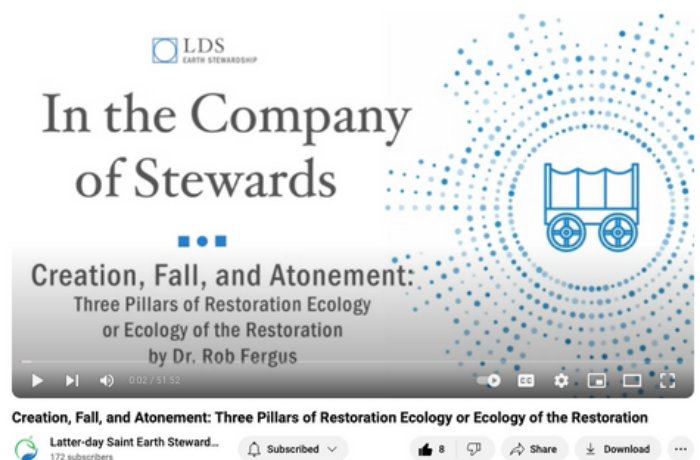
One of the values of LDS Earth Stewardship is to **testify**. We do this by providing a platform for fellow Latter-day Saints and others to share their stories and convictions of earth stewardship. We use our social media channels, newsletter, and YouTube channel to share stewardship stories.



Social media audience (as of Dec. 1, 2023):
Facebook: 3593 followers
Instagram: 1100 followers
Twitter: 1082 followers

Additionally, our newsletter reaches over 1700 people each month. In all our social media, we seek to **celebrate** examples of earth stewardship, particularly within the Church or among our members. Our newsletter often features blog posts that are also posted on our website—we shared 12 posts in 2023.

We also **teach** about stewardship on our [YouTube channel](#). Our video library contains 32 videos teaching principles of stewardship (we added 11 in 2023). Many of these videos are recordings of In the Company of Stewards—a virtual seminar covering topics from native plant gardens to home solar panels.



Screenshot of In the Company of Stewards Recording



Social media post of July 2023 book group pick

LDSES members also learn as they read and discuss books related to earth stewardship (34 books have been read and discussed to date). Our book group meets online six times a year and is open to any LDSES member.



LOCAL CHAPTERS

Another LDS value is to **congregate**—to share fellowship, whether in-person or remotely. We aspire to global reach and local action. To help Saints around the world congregate as stewards, we are proud to have twelve local chapters in operation, with six of those having been added in 2023. Our local chapters are

- LDSES Mid-Atlantic (formerly Earth Stewardship East)
- LDSES New York
- Treuhandschaft für die Erde (Germany)
- LDSES UK
- LDSES Philippines
- LDSES Northern California
- LDSES Salt Lake Area (added in 2023)
- LDSES Provo (added in 2023)
- LDSES Inland Northwest (added in 2023)
- LDSES Bear River (added in 2023)
- LDSES Toronto (added in 2023)
- LDSES Kumasi (Ghana) (added in 2023)



Formation of Kumasi chapter



Earth Day clean up by LDSES Inland Northwest



EVENTS

To help us fulfill our value of **teaching** about earth stewardship, we planned and participated in several programs and events during 2023. These events also serve to **unify** us in our stewardship.

In the spring, we joined our friends in the Creation Care Coalition (MWEG, MESA, and the LDS Action Team of CCL) to host an Earth Day event with author, speaker, and former Shoshone Nation Chairman Darren Parry. Brother Parry spoke to us about the indigenous perspective on climate and the environment.

In the fall, we held our annual Fall Forum at the Sweet Branch of the Salt Lake City Library, with over 30 people in attendance. The theme of this year's forum was "Stewardship in Practice: Next Steps in Taking Care of the Earth"—a topic discussed by our panel comprising LDSES members Shelly Parkin, Lucy Harper, Teresa Gomez, and Chip Oscarson and moderated by George Handley. At the Fall Forum we also showed our pride in LDSES by distributing and wearing our green bandanas, which were available as a thank you gift for donations.



Panelists at the Fall Forum



Mike Maxwell, Salt Lake Area chair, sporting an LDSES bandana

Our local chapters hosted many events in 2023 to **teach** and **unify**. A few examples:

- Treuhandschaft für die Erde (Germany) hosted four online seminars including one on the new LDS Chapel in Ramstein with solar and geothermal energy and one with guest Rabbi Andrew Steiman on Creation care from a Jewish perspective. They also hosted a Wunderbarer Wald meditative forest walk with scriptural prompts (imagine reading Lehi’s vision of the tree of life while sitting in a mature forest).
- LDSES New York hosted an Earth Day Festival with live music and various activities related to earth stewardship; more than 150 community members came.



Participants at the Inwood Earth Day Fair (New York City)



LDSES Mid-Atlantic bike ride and fungi find

- LDSES Inland Northwest launched a speaker series with the first event in November 2023. Around 25 people attended to learn about wildfires.
- LDSES Mid-Atlantic hosted a bike ride and woodland hike with a focus on learning about fungi. The chapter hosts several hikes a year.

SERVICE PROJECTS

We believe stewardship is more effective when it's communal. We also seek to unify by creating an organization where people of all social and political persuasions feel welcome. Working on the ground with tangible service projects is an effective way to feel unified with fellow Saints and community members. Our local chapters were busy during 2023 with several important service projects:

- The Philippines chapter planted over a thousand mangrove trees in a joint project with the Rotary Club, the Philippine Naval Reserve, and local schools.
- The Salt Lake Area chapter had a very successful service project at Antelope Island State Park, where dozens of volunteers moved a mountain of wood chips to prepare a picnic area (while also learning about the island from a park ranger). They've also helped significantly with various events held in SLC, including the LDSES Fall Forum and the U of U Stegner Symposium, and collaborated with other organizations to clean up litter around the Great Salt Lake.



Top: Planting mangroves in the Philippines
Left: Shoveling mulch on Antelope Island

- The Provo chapter helps plant and maintain a community garden established by an LDSES member.
- The Mid-Atlantic chapter continues to maintain a native plant garden which they created on an historic African American site in Maryland. To date more than 450 volunteers (both LDS and from the community) have learned of habitat benefits from native plants while helping in the garden. The chapter also helped remove invasive vines from trees along the Mt. Vernon Trail, Virginia.
- LDSES UK have been clearing beaches of litter then weighing the litter and reporting – members are dispersed so this is something each can do independently but as part of a group effort.



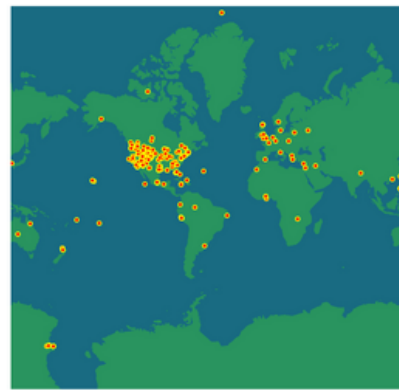
Top: Planting in a community garden in Provo
Right: Tires and other litter collected on the beach in Scotland





OTHER PROGRAMS

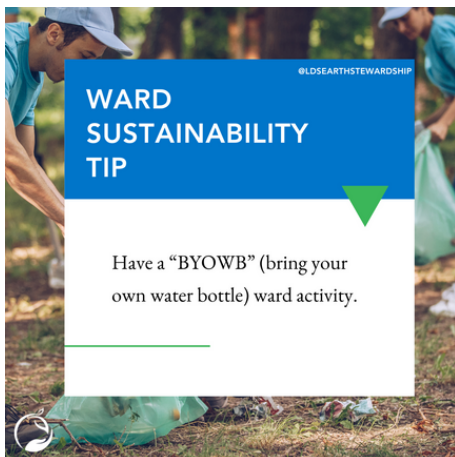
2023 saw the continuation of our successful Y-Talk campaign—a joint venture with BYU to track conversations about the environment, climate and sustainability. After two semesters, we had over 72,000 conversations on all 7 continents!



72.7k

Total Conversations

A map of climate conversations.



An idea from the Ward Sustainability Guide shared on social media.

Many stewardship-minded Latter-day Saints are also looking for ways they can make their church practices more eco-friendly. To help in this endeavor, we created the [Ward Sustainability Guide](#)—a downloadable guide with suggestions for how to use fewer resources, build sustainable habits, and practice earth stewardship in church congregations. This will be a valuable resource for years to come as we update it with feedback from our local chapters and LDSES members.

Latter-day Saint Earth Stewardship is only able to accomplish its work through the support of volunteers and donors. We invite you to be part of our work in 2024. Your generosity can help build the sustainable financial foundation necessary to continue to spread our message.