



St. Augustine's in-the-Woods Episcopal Church  
Freeland, WA

If you visit St. Augustine's on a Wednesday morning, you'll spot a cadre of dedicated parishioners scattered around our grounds. Wielding rakes, pruning shears, shovels, and other garden implements, they are busy pulling weeds, trimming overgrown shrubs, and piling up brush and fallen branches to be trucked to the landfill. You'll also see smiles and hear laughter as they work, and it's clear they enjoy what they're doing. Who are these incredible people? Why, it's our own Alder Guild!

Founded and originally lead by the late and beloved Diana Klein, the Alder Guild was formed to help improve the appearance of the flower and shrub beds around our church building. Tasks have expanded to include trimming and watering plants not covered by our irrigation system, planting new shrubs and plants, and removing noxious weeds. This group also cares for our Columbarium where cremated ashes are inurned or spread, a special place to many of our parishioners. The Alder Guild's ultimate goal is for our church grounds to be tidy and welcoming to our parishioners, newcomers and visitors, and the community. An additional hope is that our beautiful setting and grounds can offer places for meditation, fellowship, and learning.

Barbara Graham, the current Alder Guild leader, describes the Alder Guild as "a group of 'gardeners' who love to be together, work together, and look forward to the "First Wednesday of the Month" potluck lunches. The best part is that you don't have to be a gardener! You can come and learn, teach or just kibbitz! Your gardening skills will improve. If you enjoy this too, please come join us!" Even if you aren't a gardener, take a moment to walk around our grounds and enjoy the results of their hard work. And join me in appreciating and thanking Barbara and the Alder Guild for all that they do.



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