

Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce.

—Jeremiah 29:5



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18

My father was an avid vegetable gardener, tilling up the better part of an acre to accommodate enough space to grow food for a family of four. I hated weeding when I was a child. It felt like a sentence to sweaty, itchy, undeserved duty. And I definitely hated picking the cabbage worms off of the broccoli. But it was better than thinking about how many worms I might eat at the supper table. Fresh vegetables are definitely delicious but decidedly risky.

Gardening became a practice of meditation and prayer for me as an adult. I love the vigorous work of tilling the soil and smelling pungent, fresh dirt. Although planting can be tedious, when new life sprouts up and transforms into beautiful, edible things, every moment of work and weeding is worth it.

Episcopal Relief & Development's Abundant Life Garden Project resources are a wonderful way to introduce children to sustaining life through healthy food. My own children have also been sentenced to weeding. And they love fresh vegetables and grow their own herbs. They understand the process that gets food to the grocery store. And they, too, enjoy the peaceful prayer that goes with gardening. How do the children in your life encounter creation? How about the child in you?

—**Bronwyn Clark Skov**