

# MISSION STATEMENT

Bethlehem Farm is a **Catholic** community in Appalachia that **transforms lives**, through **service with the local community** and the **teaching of sustainable practices**

We invite volunteers to join us in living out the **Gospel** cornerstones of **prayer, community, simplicity** and **service**.

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## VISION OF THE FUTURE

**We envision the purpose of Bethlehem Farm to:**

- + be a **center of reflection and prayer in the service of action**, inspired by the **Eucharist** and open to the **Spirit**.
- + **work *with* people and empower people** to address local needs, especially low-income home repair, but remaining open to God's call for us to other ministries.
- + **form a "contrast community"**<sup>1</sup> that chooses to build with God's plans in mind, rather than blindly following a culture that promotes pleasure, wealth, and power.
- + **pray** in both traditional and creative ways in order to foster spiritual growth, keep the focus on Christ, and mutually encourage one another
- + **encourage *metanoia*** in ourselves, our volunteers, and the community we serve, with emphasis on the Eucharist as a sign of the coming of the Kingdom of God
- + **form an intentional Christian community** of trust, commitment, faithfulness, and challenge in the spirit of the Apostles
- + **be an authentic local community** that seeks to 'be the change we wish to see in the world'<sup>2</sup> and which, therefore, supports sustainable practices<sup>3</sup>
- + **embody genuine Catholic** beliefs to counter existing misconceptions regarding the Catholic Church and its people, letting our actions witness to our faith
- + **strive to be one Body in Christ** by pursuing ecumenical ventures and always giving a favorable interpretation to others' views as a sign of mutual respect<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Models of the Church, Avery Dulles, S.J., in The Church Emerging from Vatican II, Dennis Doyle. p.32

<sup>2</sup> quote generally credited to Mohandes Gandhi

<sup>3</sup> At Home in the Web of Life, 1995. a pastoral message on sustainable communities in Appalachia from the Catholic bishops of Appalachia. pp. 2,3,25,41-54

<sup>4</sup> The Spiritual Exercises, St. Ignatius Loyola, 22