

## Action Idea: Practice Sabbath in your church garden

Many churches have gardens, but don't reflect on the biblical significance of their land stewardship beyond giving away produce.

- **Visually demonstrate Sabbath**

Among those who are to get rest is the land itself (Leviticus 25); one out of seven years, the land is supposed to rest. This is not only good spiritual practice, it is good gardening too. One option is, instead of letting the entire garden rest for a year, to let 1/7 of it rest every year. The garden can be split into seven parts, with one section fallow, or cover cropped. This not only lets the land rest and regenerate, it demonstrates the sabbath for anyone who cares to look!

- **Visually demonstrate tithing**

Mark out 1/10 of the land as a tithe. At the beginning of the gardening season, consult with a nonprofit or community members that have a need for fresh produce. What foods would they prefer? Plant their choices in the tithing area. Involve gardeners with individual plots in caring for the tithing area and giving away the group tithe.



**The ideas described above were implemented at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana, in 2021.**

**The photo at left shows one of the paths segmenting the garden into seven sections. The planted area on the right is the tithing garden with a composting area in background. The two fit nicely into a 1/7<sup>th</sup> segment.**

## Sabbath Gardening at AMBS



**Above is the seventh of the AMBS garden that was left fallow. The right side is planted in a cover crop according to modern sustainable agriculture practices. The left side was simply let grow. The gardeners are conducting an experiment to see which way of leaving the land fallow is most productive the following season.**