



Finding Common Ground

April 2026

Up Front

Spring warmth and energy is stimulating all to wake, stretch, and join the dance of life emerging at Common Ground. [The warm season CSA](#) is nearly sold out, feeding a record number of eager veggie eaters. The kitchen is open at the Farm, serving community lunches and dinners once again. We're showcasing the farm at the **Piedmont Farm Tour** on April 25-26 and inviting volunteers to help us prepare for and staff this vibrant event.

The long Winter's infrastructure-development muddy slog is nearing the end! We now have two wells with water lines to serve village dwellings. Thousands of board feet of lumber from felled trees have been milled and stacked on the land.

And we're in the final stages of finalizing lot leases for future Village residents—which could include you if you are called to what is happening here.



Lucy helps plant potatoes at the Potato Palooza. [Watch a video](#) about this annual Community event. (Photo: Abigail)



Top: Dogwood blossoms—an early Spring joy (Photo: Abigail)
Above: Sage helps to grow Shiitake mushrooms. (Photo: Jacob)

Building an agrarian ecovillage is big work and requires big capacity. In the midst of all this activity (and increasing global instability), we are digging deep to refine and define our purpose, mission, and messaging. We're excited that our own Kai Madrone is leading us in a process she calls, TrueVoice. **The kick-off begins with a capacity-building mini-workshop, happening on Saturday, April 4, from 2-5pm.** The aim is to help us to shift over time from overwhelm, exhaustion, and stress towards increasingly embodied compassion, clarity, and creativity—together. Read on for even more ways to be inspired and get involved.

Circle News Column

Membership

Members have shown high productivity in crafting policies that will guide aspects of village and overall community life. **The Membership Circle is playing a role in moving the drafts along** to the point of GENSET (good enough for now; safe enough to try). All of the drafts are reviewed by General Circle and then go through a consent round. Your input is welcomed. [Here is a list](#) of those policies where you can make comments.

Encouragement to all Exploratory Members: take the next step and complete the application for Engaged membership, a requirement to living in the village. We have designed this application to fit your style for telling your story. If you find yourself stuck, why not ask a friend to take a video of you answering the questions? Your words will be electronically transcribed into a document!



The Many Turtles Playgroup enjoyed a Spring walk to the wetland, guided by Rachoog and Hope (Photo: Hope)

Compassion Corner: Making Life More Wonderful Governance & Communications

Focus: Empathy Before Advice - When we hear phrases that start with, "You should..." "Why can't/won't/would/don't you..." "Have you tried..." in response to what we're doing or sharing, we often react with defensiveness or hurt. We are unlikely to realize that the need they are trying to meet is to contribute to the project or perhaps to protect us from regret, stress, or harm. "Connect before correct" means prioritizing empathy before offering advice, strategies, teaching, or

Meetings & Events Column

Events Snapshot

Details are in the section below Circle Meetings

- ◆ **Mondays, 7-8pm**-Racial Awareness Book Grp, Zoom
- ◆ **Tuesdays, 1pm**-Farm lunch, 1pm
- ◆ **April 3 & 17, 6:30pm**-Farm-to-Fork dinner
- ◆ **April 4, 2-5pm**-Capacity-Building Mini-Workshop
- ◆ **April 11, 2-5pm**-Community on the Ground
- ◆ **April 11, 5:30-7:30pm**-Community Potluck
- ◆ **April 19, 2-3:30pm**-trip to see Elderberry's common house
- ◆ **April 25 & 26**-The Piedmont Farm Tour
- ◆ **May 3, 1-3:30pm**-Persimmon Grafting Workshop
- ◆ **May 8, 7:30-9pm**-Guided Song Circle

- ◆ **All gatherings are in Eastern Time** and open to everyone unless otherwise stated.
- ◆ **You must RSVP** for details and last-minute changes.
- ◆ **COVID Policy:** For your safety and others', bring a mask in case it is needed. At CGEV, we protect those most vulnerable.
- ◆ **Accessibility:** At this stage, terrain is unpaved and uneven, and restrooms are not wheelchair-accessible.
- ◆ **Google Calendar Link:** To subscribe to the CGEV Calendar, add or change an event, email Ren at calendar@commonground.eco
- ◆ **Members Only Discourse Forum Link:** <https://discourse.commonground.eco/>



Circle Meetings

Planning & Development

Wednesdays, 4-5:30pm, hybrid

[RSVP to Anthony](#) with subject "P&D"

Membership

Thursdays, 5:15-7:15pm, Zoom and at the home of Amy H. in Durham. Task meetings, as needed, are on alternate weeks, same time.

[RSVP to Lisa](#) with subject "Membership Circle"

General Circle

Sundays, April 5 & 26, 6:30-8:30pm, Zoom

[RSVP to Hope](#) with subject "GC" 2 days in advance

fixing. When people feel seen and understood, defensiveness softens and trust grows, making us more open to learning or change. Otherwise, even helpful advice can land as criticism, bypassing, or minimizing, and block connection rather than build it.

Practice: Unless it is an emergency (and calls for protective use of force), try pausing before speaking and then name what you hear: “It sounds like you’re feeling frustrated because you wanted more support.” Then check if you got it right. Once the person feels understood, seek consent to offer help: “Would you be open to some ideas or assistance?” For those socialized as male, this part may be extra challenging, but building a connection first makes any guidance more welcome and effective.

Land Stewardship

Common Ground was buzzing with many activities on the Land in March. Our efforts to make optimal use of the many trees that were sacrificed for Infrastructure installation kept us very busy. There were many days of processing lumber: from unloading and stacking huge truckloads of our lumber from a local sawmill, to on-site sawmill-processing of many logs that stayed on the Land, to shaving bark off long slender logs to become posts in our future Common House.

We also made good use of a lot of oak logs by inoculating them with Shiitake mushroom spawn. We did this as an educational workshop sponsored by our Many Turtles non-profit organization. Everyone reported learning a lot and enjoying the workshop. Thanks to Janey, Kara, Rachel, and more to help prep for this opportunity. **We still have lots more logs to inoculate and spawn in storage, so please consider coming out in April to help inoculate!** Contact Doug at (919) 444-9680 to arrange a volunteer visit – he’s very flexible!

Our annual **Potato Palooza planting day** was a huge success. Volunteers worked together to help plant about 1,000 row feet of potatoes. Afterwards, folks enjoyed a potluck and Spring Equinox Celebration.

Farm Highlights

There are just a few Spots Left in the CSA! Full Table grows delicious veggies *and* resilient community and there are a handful of Harvest Shares still open for the Warm Season. If you like flavorful produce and supporting local agriculture, **now is your chance to join**

Land Stewardship

Tuesday, April 14, 7-8:30pm, on the land at the barn (hybrid if needed).

Contact [Doug](#) or [Lucas](#) w/ subject “LSC” for details

Governance & Communication

Tuesday, April 21, 7-9pm, Zoom

[RSVP to Quai](#) with subject “G&CC”



These logs have been cut, labeled, and ready to be inoculated with Shiitake Mushroom spores. (Photo: Kara)

All About Events



Tours of the Land

Membership Circle

Are you a new Common Ground member or a curious person who is thinking of joining? Email [Lisa](#) or text at 919-619-2979 and put “Request for Tour” in the subject line. We usually have a tour each month upon request at 1:30pm on the same day as the Community on the Ground (COG) meeting and Potluck.

Racial Awareness Book Group

Membership Circle

Every Monday, 7-8 p.m., Zoom

Contact Lisa to Join with subject “Racial Awareness Book Group”: lberley@yahoo.com

The book group is for CGEV members and the larger community. We read our books aloud and

Full Table. [Click here to learn how](#) or share the invitation with a friend.

Farm to Fork Meals are back! As the light returns, we enter a season of gatherings on the farm — a chance to connect, learn, and resource ourselves with the beauty of the earth. Cooking and sharing meals is an essential part of our community. Join us for a donation-based meal cooked with what's fresh on the farm.



Jascha's first seed potatoes, offered by Papa Caleb (Photo: Jacq)

General Circle

Our TrueVoice journey begins. April begins the official process with Kai to help us to see our common ground together and clearly articulate a message that draws in the right people and the necessary resources to create what we're here to create. **The TrueVoice Core Team is nearly complete, so if you've been curious about being part of the team, [contact Kai](#) by April 2nd.**

Planning & Development

So much has been going on with infrastructure work! Josh Robertson from [Triad Drillers](#) dug two wells, one with OK yield and the other extraordinary. Anthony led efforts to build pump houses (Goni, Alex, Mark, Kathleen, Gonzalo chipping in), completing one as of press time.

All the water and sewer lines have been installed, allowing for both potable (connected to wells) and non-potable (connect to the pond) uses. (Yes, it was hard to witness the land disturbance as deep channels bit into the clay). The pond rehabilitation is being completed. The repaired dam will now last for many decades and the pond will have more capacity to store water.

break between paragraphs to share personal reflections, questions, and ideas. People attend as often as they can. We are currently reading What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Blacker: a Memoir in Essays, by Damon Young.

Farm Lunch Returns!

Land Stewardship Circle

Every Tuesday at 1:00 pm

Contact Lucas if you plan to come:

lucas.babinec@posteo.net, 301-767-6720

The light and warmth have returned and we're ready to celebrate. Join us Tuesdays at 1:00 pm, at the barn. By donation--either cash, Venmo, or pantry staples are warmly appreciated (olive oil, rice, beans, lentils, GF flour...) Come enjoy a simple, nourishing meal prepared straight from the garden + thoughtful conversation with good humans who care about the earth.

Farm-To-Fork Dinner

Land Stewardship Circle

Fridays, April 3 & 17, 6:30pm, by donation

Contact Lucas if you plan to come:

lucas.babinec@posteo.net, 301-767-6720

At Full Table, we believe that eating should be a cause for celebration. This year, every third Thursday of the month you're invited to join us for a simple meal cooked with farm-grown and local ingredients. All are welcome.



This delicate Bloodroot flower is one of the first to pop up near McGowan Creek come Spring. (Photo: Rachoog)



Quaye and son, Bodhi, wield a battery powered auger to dig holes to house the new trees (Photo: Hope)

We had great success planting over 60 trees provided by [Trees for the Triangle](#) (footnote-please consider joining the team to water them as they get established!). Randy masterminded this event, developing a list of species with our engineer, Bobby Tucker, and coordinating with David Kemp to co-create a volunteer day for planting. After so many trees came down to build the new road, it's very heartening to see so many beautiful and varied saplings in now place.

Jacob worked with Pete from [Falco Sawmill](#) to come out and do a second round of milling. Doug worked diligently to move logs in support. MANY hours have been spent attending to milled boards by stacking and "stickering" them with spacers to help them dry and avoid too much mold and mildew. There is still more to do to honor the trees that gave their lives for the village. So chip in, lean into the reality of our agrarian vision, and get a good workout. Thanks to Janey for championing getting a second tent to cover them as they dry.



Ben and Jacob spent many hours lifting and stacking boards

Capacity-Building Mini-Workshop

General Circle

Saturday, April 4, 2-5pm, hybrid, location TBD

RSVP to Kai: kaimadrone@pm.me

*Kai will be gifting us with the basics of how to shift from overwhelm, scarcity, exhaustion, stuckness, and stress— to being more grounded, resourced, compassionate, discerning, clear, and creative. Everyone is welcome and **all community members are strongly encouraged to attend.***

Community on the Ground (COG)

Governance & Communication Circle

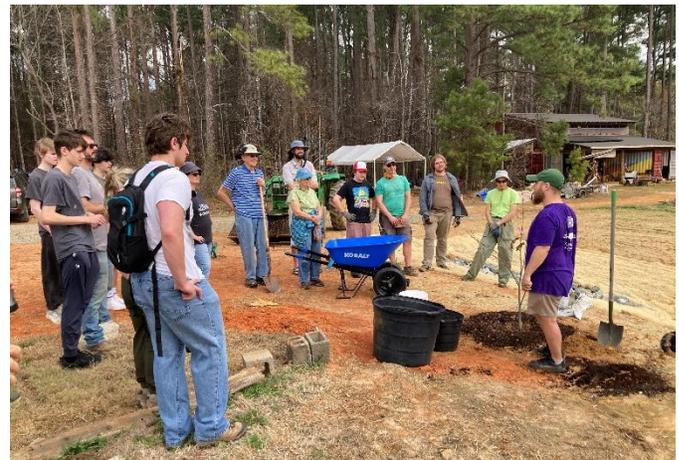
Saturday, April 11, 2-5pm, hybrid at the Nest

RSVP to [Theresa](#), subject "COG."

Community on the Ground is a monthly forum for ALL MEMBERS to help you:

- *Get more connected with each other*
- *Hear updates and information from Circles*
- *Explore hot topics, inspire ideas, and hear feedback from members*
- *Discover how to become more involved in winning ways*

*We'll have in-person conversations and a zoom link for folks to call into for **audio only**. Watch your email for details about this month's event!*



Dave Kemp demonstrated how to plant trees (Photo: Hope)

Community Potluck

Membership Circle

Saturday, April 11, 5:30-7:30pm, after Community on the Ground, location TBD

RSVP is helpful for set-up and location.

Email [Lisa](#) or text 919-619-2979

Potlucks are our time to break bread together and



These boards were swept and stacked with spacers placed in-between. Randy, Janey, Rachel, Mary Anne, Doug, Goni, Jacob and others have done the heavy lifting. (Photo: Jane)

Last but very much not least, **Orange County approved the final plat** which is the document created by a surveyor that depicts the change in Zoning.

Which leads to, what's on the horizon for April? The short answer is that **the "development train" that left the station more than a decade ago emerges from the tunnel!!** In other words, all infrastructure work necessary for home building should be completed. Probably the most visible things will be moving of the big mulch piles and installing some of the electric lines.



Paul, Goni, & Kamal work on the solar kiln (Photo: Hope)

The final regulatory/administrative details, as well as one of our most major momentous milestones, will be to close on the lots/leaseholds. **We are aiming for Earth**

socialize, play, and sometimes chew over the Community on the Ground meeting content Please bring something to share. Vegetable dishes typically predominate, but all sorts of food and drink are welcome. Just bring a list of ingredients or jot them down when you come.

Come See Elderberry's Common House

Planning & Development

Thursday, April 19th, 2:00-3:30 pm,

60 Elderberry Lane in Rougemont, NC

Contact Jane by text: 919-357-1711

Join us to see "the Hive"—a beautiful, light filled common house at Elderberry Cohousing Community. We will be getting a tour of their 18-house village from a founder who will tell the story of their decision to cooperatively build the Hive before any other houses were built, which, for them created the 'community glue' that bonded them relationally. Several of us have been inspired by this space and want to share it with you. It'd about an hour from the land, so let's carpool!



[Click here](#) for a video of Josh and crew digging a new well

Piedmont Farm Tour at Common Ground

Land Stewardship Circle

Saturday/Sunday, April 25 & 26, noon-6pm

Buy a weekend ticket: carolinafarmstewards.org

Contact Doug to help prep for and staff the event

This will be a festive weekend with tours of our Full Table current crops, high tunnels, mushroom operation, pollinator habitat, worm composting, and sharing about Common Ground. We'll also be

Day – April 22nd – for lease-signing and bringing in the remaining money owed on the lots/leaseholds, which will allow us in turn to retire the HAC loan and other associated costs. Extensive efforts right now to finalize the Lease and Declaration arrangements and documents and assure that there are no hitches with contemplated policies going forward (see the Membership Circle report above). **We also note, for anyone wondering if there might still be room for you, the answer is that there could be.** Several lots or parts of lots are being “banked” for future (hopefully near-term future) potential residents working now toward the required Engaged status. **Contact [Anthony](#) to inquire.**



The beavers are also building! This brand-new dam has turned merely soggy ground into a pond in the wetland (Photo: Hope)

Outside Community Events not offered by Common Ground

Quaye brings our attention to this all-day May 9 event, offered by a friend of his with Flourish Integrative Mental Health and Midwifery: *Healing the Healers: A Ketamine-Assisted Healing Gathering for Birthworkers.* [Email here](#) for more information.



Singing around the fire as night falls (Photo: Lucas)

*selling medicinal herbal preparations, baked goods, vegetable starts, and cheeses from Boxcarr Goat Dairy Farm. We strongly encourage CGEV folks to come, learn about, and serve our agrarian mission on the land. **What can you do to support and enjoy this event?** Come early to prep and set up—festivities start at noon. Staff the CGEV information booth to introduce people to what we are doing here. Take a tour—or offer one—of the surrounding land. **Above all, soak in the beauty and wisdom of the plants and people who make all this possible!***

Save the Date! Persimmon Grafting Workshop

Land Stewardship Circle
Sunday, May 3, 1-3:30pm

Details to come—contact Jacob for information:
rutzjc@gmail.com

Guided Song Circle with Deja Belle & Tessie Castillo

Many Turtles Learning Collective
Friday, May 8, 7:30-9pm, on the land
Location: Common Ground Ecovillage*

REGISTER HERE: <https://givebutter.com/unisonq-nature-song-circle>

*Come together to make joyful and stirring music at the Fire Circle in the Far Field. Walk past the barn, beyond the pines. Bring a blanket or camp chair for comfy seating. *Location: 5797 Daisy Evans Gunn Trail, Mebane, NC. **You MUST use Google maps and/or a GPS that takes you to Daisy Evans Gunn Trail from Frazier Rd. Apple Maps does not work!***

Member Offerings

Rachoo is helping us to look closely at the beauty of Earth, Sky, and All in-between. [Click here](#) to read all about “the verdant beauty of life” that Rachoo relates to us from her experiences on the land on Substack.

Goni & Hope invite you to [two SONAM Concerts](#), May 3 and 31—presenting beautiful and moving music to raise funds for selected non-profit organizations every time.

