

Au Sable Institute (with Paul Wiemerslage) Interview 11.6.24 by Pr. Paul Busekist

The Au Sable Institute is a seasonal school in Mancelona whose mission is to inspire and educate young people to serve, protect and restore God's Creation – through academics and community interactions.

Strengths within the community:

- Connections with the CCCU (Calvin/Covenant/Cornerstone Universities), bringing college-age and younger students to the TC area...connected through the larger church
- A relatively new (within the last 3-4 years) presence in the Grand Traverse Area with the Sacred Grounds program, a partnership between Au Sable, the National Wildlife Federation, and faith communities in the area willing to use green space on their grounds to plant and maintain native plant species gardens
- Compassion for social issues
- Robust amount of cultural assets for a northern MI town (arts, academics, outdoors, food, etc)

Community issues to be addressed:

- Housing and career opportunities
- Population swell in the summer season overloading a small town with limited resources and difficult job market
- Cost of living

How can our congregation help fill some gaps:

- For Au Sable, a church could help with environmental concerns that often affect the most needy
- Creating a network of congregations to address Creation Care issues better than individual congregations could on their own
- Along the lines of the above, maybe there could be a special project each year that a collaboration of churches can team up to accomplish
- #1 is always Helping the Kids!