

## Bees!

(A Tft Enrichment Kindergarten FLEx)

A couple months ago the Enrichment Kindergarten students began studying bees. They learned about different homes and were intrigued by the bee hive, so they dug deeper. It was then that they discovered a frightening disorder called CCD, or Colony Collapse Disorder. This occurs when the majority of worker bees in a colony disappear and leave behind a queen and plenty of food and a few nurse bees to care for the immature bees and queen. No one can explain positively why this is happening, but there are four theories; pesticides, loss of habitat, global warming and infections. One student even said, "I bet they are leaving because they are tired of doing all the work!" Another student wondered if they were leaving because they were frustrated with other bugs getting to their hive. This disorder initially sounded sad to the kindergartners, but once they learned that one third of our food supply is dependent upon pollination, and what that really means, they became very concerned.

After learning more about bees from a local beekeeper and studying more about bees' life cycles, their jobs and their benefit to mankind, the students began to brainstorm what we could do to help. One of the Teaching for Transformation throughlines is to be an Earth Keeper. The Kindergarten students decided that being an Earth Keeper meant that they should do something about the problem they had learned about. The students decided to write to local greenhouses and nurseries and ask them to please label their plants in two ways; one, if it is grown organically and without the use of toxins. Two, label those plants that are bee-friendly or attractive to bees. These labels will help consumers purchase plants that are not only safe for bees but encourage the building of hives.

The students also decided to make 'bee chains' (key chains) listing the toxins that are most dangerous to bees (and maybe humans). This information and the 'bee chains' will be available at the spring greenhouse gift card sale. It will be a handy reference for consumers when they shop for their plants. As one student said, "That would be just useless to buy flowers and spray them with chemicals and the bees die!" Our hope is to draw attention to the devastating effects of CCD and what we can all do to help make God's world more like He intended.

