

## “Three Sisters” Planting at Clare’s Garden September 2023

We are using several garden areas to grow corn, string beans, and squash, which are known as the “Three Sisters.” The Iroquois and the Cherokee called corn, bean, and squash the “three sisters” because they nurture each other like family when planted together. For centuries these Native Americans placed corn in small hills planting beans around them and interspersing squash throughout of the field.

These three crops help each other—the corn provides tall stalks for the beans to climb. The beans provide nitrogen to fertilize the soil, while also helping the tall corn stay up in windy days. The large leaves of squash plants shade the ground which helps retain soil moisture and prevent weeds. Together, the three sisters provide both sustainable soil fertility as well as a healthy diet.



As we grow the “3 Sisters” plants, we will talk to the church’s pre-school students to tell them about this unique Native American historical planting method and to show them the plants and how we harvest ears of corn, squash, and string beans.