

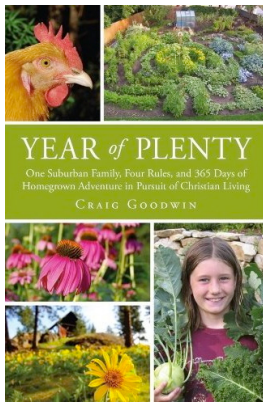


KAREN CAMPBELL

M E D I A

A Pastor, His Suburban Family, Four Rules, and One Year of Homegrown Adventure
Presbyterian Pastor tells of his family's year consuming goods that were local, homegrown, used, or homemade in debut book

Grand Rapids, Mich., January 12, 2011—When Craig Goodwin and his family decided to spend a year living more simply and eating locally, they had no idea what a *locavore* was, let alone that it had been named the 2007 Word of the Year by the Oxford American Dictionary. But it wasn't long before they discovered not only its meaning, but the impact that living as locavores would have on their lives.



Chronicled in his book, ***Year of Plenty: One Suburban Family, Four Rules, and 365 Days of Homegrown Adventure in Pursuit of Christian Living*** (Sparkhouse Press, April), Goodwin tells the story of how, annoyed by their consumer lifestyles, he and his wife laid down four rules for the family to follow for a full year in order to get in touch with the roots of the things they ate and bought.

The rules were simple: everything had to be local, used, homegrown, or homemade. And while the rules may have been simple, living by them proved to be more of a challenge. The one exception the family agreed upon was that they could purchase items from Thailand, with the year culminating in a memorable and meaningful family trip to that country.

What resulted from this experiment was a year of building relationships with growers and artisans, becoming more thoughtful about where food comes from and how it is produced, and an appreciation for the bounty of God's earth. From children's birthday parties to hailstorms, the Goodwins were forced to face the challenges of the year and look to a combination of their ingenuity and God's grace and strength to problem solve and provide. And what they found through these challenges was that their year was plentiful, if not with chocolate chips, then with personal growth and meaningful purchases.

Goodwin acknowledges that there are other notable books that chronicle year-long experiments on the margins of consumer culture and the industrial food system. But Goodwin ventures into uncharted territory as he explores the meaning of these cultural trends from his perspective as a Christian and a pastor. While his concern for the environment is an important motivation, his interest is not so much to save the world, as it is to seek after the Savior in his family's consumer choices. At its heart, it is a story about one family's experience of discovering intentional Christian living in the most mundane details of everyday life.

In the vein of Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*, ***Year of Plenty*** examines the hardships and joys that come with choosing to live simply, but does so in light of how it fits into God's call to Christians to care for the earth, to love one another, and to rely on Him.

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Year of Plenty

Craig Goodwin

Foreword by Eugene Peterson

March, 2011

ISBN: 9781451400748

\$ 12.95

224 pages, Paperback

A free small group curriculum will be available online for download by groups interested in reading the book and engaging the content.

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**For more information or to schedule an interview with Craig Goodwin,
please contact Karen Campbell at 616-309-4390 or karen@karencampbellmedia.com.
For inquiries regarding speaking requests, book readings, book signings, and review copies
you may contact the author directly at 509-280-3081 or craig@millwoodpc.org.**



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Interview Questions for Craig Goodwin and *Year of Plenty*

1. Tell us about the day, shortly after Christmas, that you and your wife launched your year-long experiment.
2. Describe the four rules you followed during the experiment (consume only local, used, homegrown and homemade. Were there any exceptions to the rules?)
3. What is a locavore?
4. You say you may be a couple years late to the party—suggesting there are plenty of other books out there concerning year-long experiments. How is your book different from the others?
5. Was there anything you missed having during that year?
6. Are there any aspects of your experiment you continued on with after the year was over?
7. Tell us about your preparation for the experiment. What was it like shopping for food the first time?
8. What was the best part of the year? Tell us about the relationships you created and cultivated over that time.
9. You mention the decision to consume things locally, homegrown, homemade and used disrupted the status quo—that it was a voluntary disaster. In what ways?
10. You have an amazing garden at home—complete with a vegetable labyrinth. Tell us about your experience starting this garden and what it's done to change your family and relationships with your neighbors.

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About Craig Goodwin



Craig Goodwin writes a popular blog (www.yearofplenty.org) that focuses on food, faith, and justice in the rich agricultural region of the Inland Northwest. His family's story has been featured on NPR, PBS, and in the *New York Times*. He is a Presbyterian pastor, a farmers' market manager, a master food preserver, and a fire chaplain. He has a Doctorate in Missional Leadership from Fuller Theological Seminary. Goodwin speaks regularly at schools, churches, and other community organizations about sustainable food and redemptive consumer practices.

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Praise for *Year of Plenty*

"The replacement god most in evidence in our generation is consumerism. *Year of Plenty* is a gentle but insistent expose of this consumerist replacement god. It is also a convincing witness to the sanctity of the everyday, the ordinary, the things we eat and clothes we wear, the names of our neighbors and the money we spend, which is to say, Jesus in our neighborhood."

--(From the Foreword) Eugene H. Peterson, Professor Emeritus of Spiritual Theology, Regent College, Vancouver B.C., Author of *The Message*.

"I heartily recommend Goodwin's charming, thoughtful, and extremely funny book. With remarkable insight and refreshing humility, Craig Goodwin takes us with him and his family as they learn who and what is behind the things we so often thoughtlessly purchase. Goodwin reminds us how much of community and life we have sacrificed in the name of convenience and low price. Through engaging narrative he skillfully integrates lessons on faith, life, and God, integrating the spiritual with the material and the local with the global. This is an important contribution to the ongoing conversation about our role as Christians in taking care of and enjoying God's creation."

-- Scott Sabin, Executive Director, Plant With Purpose, Author of *Tending to Eden: Environmental Stewardship for God's People*

"Craig Goodwin invites us into a life of paying attention. This is an experiment in God's ordinary: life centered in relationship, lived in a physical world of spiritual meaning, and expressed in daily acts of attentiveness that are unhooked from patterns that degrade us and imperil the world. It turns out to be a wonderful and complicating adventure. Free from grandiosity, sentimentality, or ideology, this book tells its story with captivating humanity and motivating honesty."

-- Mark Labberton, Ph.D., Director, Ogilvie Institute for Preaching, Fuller Theological Seminary, Author of *The Dangerous Act of Worship*

As someone who had gotten good at resisting grumpy calls to reject our consumerist culture, I found this book delightfully refreshing and compelling. Craig Goodwin describes an experiment in "familial art"--a creative effort to seek out new and very practical experiments living as more faithful stewards of the earth's resources. I haven't started raising chickens or making homemade butter (yet!) after reading this wonderful book--but I have learned some profound lessons.

-- Richard J. Mouw, Ph.D., President and Professor of Christian Philosophy, Fuller Theological Seminary

"Many clergy and other church leaders ask for examples of how and where missional work is actually taking place. Here is a leader faithfully engaging this work in a practical, local, on-the-ground way that leads to new expressions of church in mission. This is the kind of story about a church-in-process we need to hear."

-- Alan J. Roxburgh, Founder of the Missional Network, Author of *The Missional Leader*



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The Goodwin's are not the Swiss-Family Robinson -- they are simply not wired that way. But that is to our benefit. We begin to see the Goodwins as an ordinary family who begin to live an extraordinary life. In the process, they more deeply connect to God, to each other, and to all of creation. A fun and challenging read. Don't be surprised if you feel called to raise baby chicks and start planting seeds the following spring.

-- Ryan Bolger, Author of *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures*

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