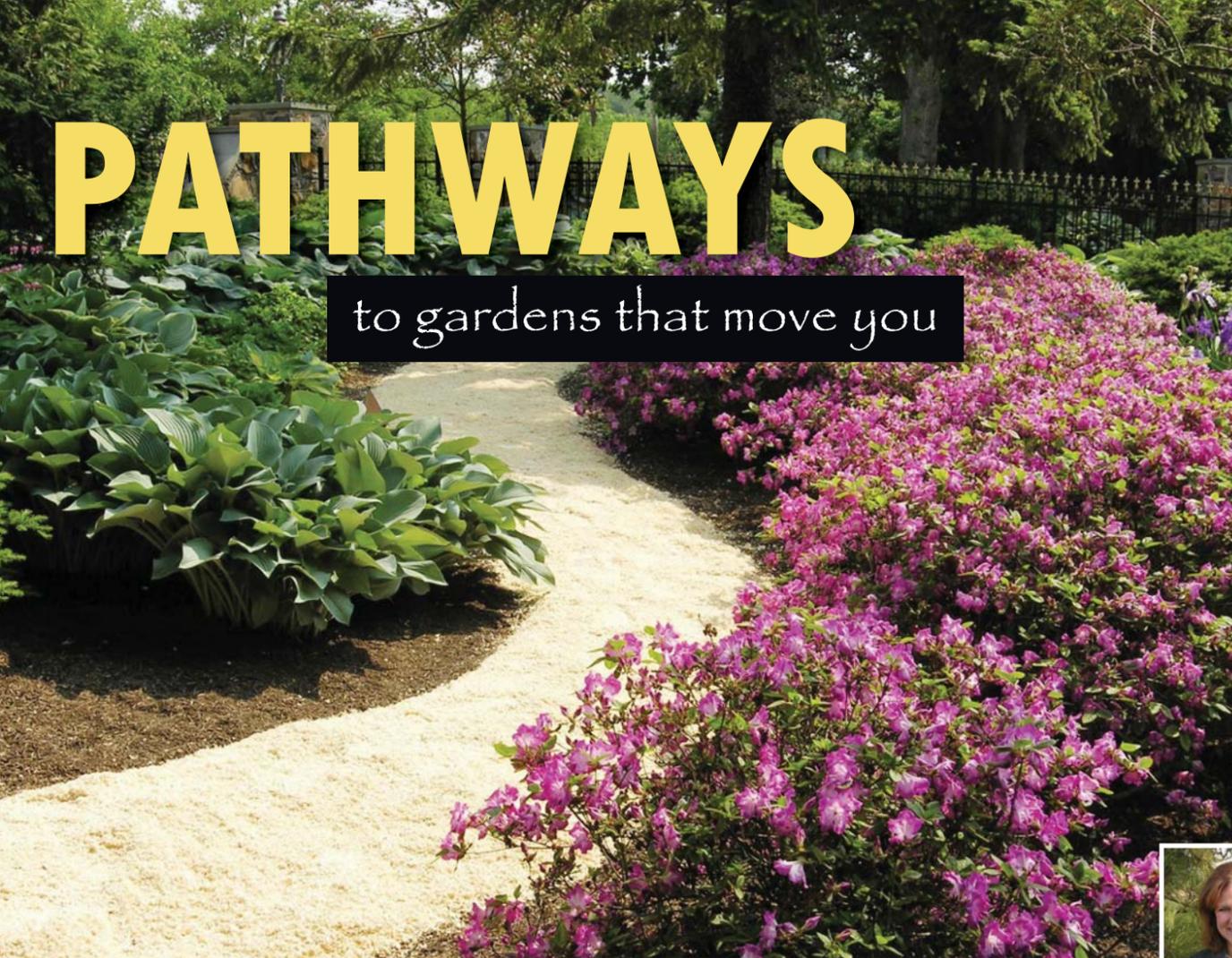


# PATHWAYS

to gardens that move you



by **Betty Hanselman**  
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Beautiful gardens are like impressive paintings—to be truly appreciated, they must be seen. For this reason, whenever we meet clients to discuss remodeling their garden, one of our first objectives is to find their main viewing perspective, often a favorite window. It is important to us that our clients enjoy the beauty of their garden on a daily basis from their favorite vantage point. Even better than a painting, beautiful gardens may also be experienced from the inside. Early on, we try to learn how our clients plan to interact with their garden, so as to provide practical and aesthetic reasons for access. We want to make it easy and attractive for them to get into their gardens and experience—through touch and motion—the varied textures, fragrances, and delights of their unique property.

Pathways that are both functional and elegant are a key to increasing a garden's accessibility, interest, and value.

Although we have spent many years designing gardens that encourage participation and movement, we have rarely seen anyone experience their garden with greater energy and enthusiasm than the little ones who visit the children's garden at Calvary Church in Lancaster.

During the recent addition of a preschool education wing at Calvary Church, preschool director, Jodi Williams, called our company, Hanselman Landscape, with a unique request: Could we create a play space for the two- and three-year olds in her care?

Her priorities included safety, a tricycle path, and the use of natural elements that would be comfortable for little ones (with a minimum of typical play-

ground structures). James Hanselman, our company's owner and primary designer, was thrilled to apply his love of nature to this unique project. For inspiration, he drew from memories of his own children's joy and excitement as they clambered over giant river boulders in New Hampshire and rolled down grassy hillsides behind their Lancaster County home. "When I left my first meeting with Jodi, we both had visions of children tumbling, sliding, riding, and moving through a garden built just for them," James recalls with a smile.

Now completed, the play garden includes hillsides on which to clamber,

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Long-term relationships and successful gardens fit naturally; everything we do is rooted in that awareness. Earning your lasting confidence is our first priority. You are cordially invited to explore how we might begin to cultivate such a relationship. At Hanselman Landscape, we are dedicated to bringing the joy of natural beauty into our clients' daily experience. Since 1985, it has been our privilege to design, build and nurture a wide variety of gardens in both private and corporate settings in central and southeastern Pennsylvania. Our staff includes craftsmen skilled in maintenance, installation, nursery care, design and management. Several of us have lived overseas, broadening our approaches to garden living. We all share a profound appreciation for the beauty of nature and are committed to crafting high-quality garden spaces. Our mission... to build value for clients, employees and company. Our vision... to improve our world through bringing natural beauty into the daily lives of our clients by devoting ourselves to excellence in garden stewardship.

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sit, or roll; a "canyon" to explore, created using a stone staircase lined with boulders that loom above the heads of the little ones; and a "gravel beach" sandbox for digging and building. Each of these elements is linked with a tricycle path in the "valley" encircling the central hills. This path serves as a mini racetrack on which the children run, walk, or ride. To



ensure safety, James placed seating benches in strategic locations around the tricycle path so child-care attendants can sit comfortably while monitoring the children's play.

"I especially like the way James designed the trike path. It's curvy and hilly and adds so much room for the kids to move around. The



children love it! The parents love it! The teachers love it!" exclaims Jodi.

Perhaps the most unique feature of this children's garden is the use of natural elements rather than typical playground structures. Boulders, grassy hillsides, and a curving pathway provide plenty of opportunities for movement and sensory interaction as the children move around the garden. By incorporating enticing pathways for easy access, spatial and visual interest, and textures that beg to be explored, this garden invites involvement and anticipates movement. In a safe, beautiful, and unique way, the children's garden at Calvary Church extends a joyous invitation for little folks to "Come and play! Come and explore!"

Most of the elements in the children's garden can be incorporated into almost any garden: attractively arranged plants and boulders that present a palette of beauty, strength, texture, and interest to those who view the garden; and a creative access that encourages interaction and movement within the garden.

This is where pathways come into the garden design equation. Pathways that are both functional and elegant are a key to increasing a garden's accessibility, interest, and value.

There are a wide variety of pathway styles and materials. A casual approach can be achieved using natural products, such as stepping stones or gravel. Brick, concrete pavers, or cut stone such as Travertine or Granite suggest a more formal approach. In all cases, the surprising amount of work required to prepare for a stable, long-lasting base yields years of useful

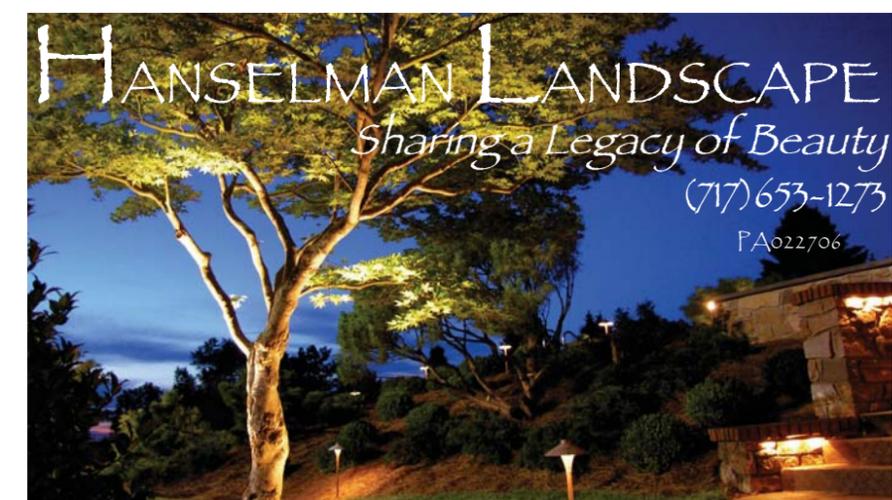


enjoyment. Though easily overlooked, drainage issues also need to be addressed during the design phase so that even in wet times, feet stay dry. It does no good to engineer a path that becomes a channel for rain water!

Garden paths encourage movement through a garden and invite visitors to

"Come and explore!" They encourage use, play, and relaxation. But when a pathway disappears, through a grove of Pines for example, it piques interest, adds hidden depth and leaves that curious sense of wonder that transforms one's garden into a memorable place.

R&A



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