

Quaker Earthcare Witness is a network of North American Friends (Quakers) and other like-minded people who are taking spirit-led action to address the ecological and social crises of the world, emphasizing Quaker process and testimonies.



QUAKER EARTHCARE WITNESS

George Lakey

Fresh Energy for Our Witness

Judging from news accounts of the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, we can expect a fresh dose of anxiety about the future to show up among Friends, even while some of us are reeling from the effects of Covid-19. The report is partly about energy needs for the economy—we might also ask: what about energy needs for human beings who feel called to change the likely scenario for Earth?

In recent dialogue with a Friend about this human energy question, I found myself recalling what I learned from the Scandinavians when researching for my book *Viking Economics*. The Nordics are at the top of comparative national ratings for environmental performance, as well as for other Quaker testimonies like equality, community, and peace. One source of their energy is friendly competition!

The Nordic countries often look over each others' shoulders to find new ideas—they actually like having a learning curve. When one country, for example, sees that another is increasing sales for electric cars by subsidizing them while upping the sales tax on gasoline-driven cars, its own tax policy is likely to change.

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BEFRIENDING CREATION

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Photo above: Walk for Our Grandchildren action. Courtesy of [Facebook.com/2021walk4ourgrandchildren](https://www.facebook.com/2021walk4ourgrandchildren).



“Art thou in the Darkness? Mind it not, for if thou dost it will feed thee more. But stand still, and act not, and wait in patience, Till Light arises out of Darkness and leads thee.” – James Naylor

I know that many Friends and many others struggle with feelings of helplessness and despair as the news worsens. We ask, “What should I be doing?” and find either no answer or too many.

I suspect that the feelings of despair, fear, and inadequacy cause our bodies to tighten and to be less able to feel and receive the Light.

Quakers everywhere are able to offer an alternative to society’s “Can Do” culture of urgency, productivity, and problem-solving because we are, in our practice, receptive. We sit in worship to receive the Light, the guidance of the Spirit. Our lives attest to the certainty that such a Spirit is available to guide us and hold us and give us profound gifts from the Light.

Please know that to be receptive is not to do nothing! It is to bet your life on the truth that there is an energy that is in essence loving that will guide and protect us. Then, and only then, will we know what to do.

As I grow in awareness, I experience these gifts more often. Here is one example. I joined Durham (NC) Friends for a discussion about a David Attenborough video and found myself listening to a man who seemed to know a lot about Earthcare. Not only had he worked for the Environmental Protection Agency, but also he was willing to do a forum for Charlotte (NC) Friends. I did not look for that gift, but I was ready for it when it arrived.

The gift that I would offer to you is that if we are faithful, we can let go of the fear that we are not doing enough. We can breathe deeply and wait in worship and be willing and ready to see what arrives.

What has also arrived for me is the quote from James Naylor. I hold onto the promise that the “Light arises out of the Darkness to lead thee.” It does, and I offer it to you as well.

Mary Jo Klingel

Mary Jo Klingel, Clerk

P.S. Consider joining our monthly online worship sharing September 29, October 27, and November 17. QuakerEarthcare.org/events.

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Our Vision & Witness

WE ARE CALLED to live in right relationship with all Creation, recognizing that the entire world is interconnected and is a manifestation of God.

WE WORK to integrate into the beliefs and practices of the Religious Society of Friends the Truth that God’s Creation is to be respected, protected, and held in reverence in its own right, and the Truth that human aspirations for peace and justice depend upon restoring the earth’s ecological integrity.

WE PROMOTE these truths by being patterns and examples, by communicating our message, and by providing spiritual and material support to those engaged in the compelling task of transforming our relationship to the earth.

BeFriending Creation

We publish *BeFriending Creation* to promote the work of Quaker Earthcare Witness, stimulate discussion and action, share insights, practical ideas, news of our actions, and encourage a sense of community and spiritual connection with all Creation.

Opinions expressed are the authors’ own and do not necessarily reflect those of Quaker Earthcare Witness, or of the Religious Society of Friends. The editor is responsible for unsigned items. Please share our work widely and broadly, always attributing it to Quaker Earthcare Witness.

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Environmentalist Norwegians would love to see their people as much in love with bicycles as the Danes are. I remember sauntering down store-lined streets of Copenhagen and seeing not only bike racks filled, but also big stacks of bicycles leaning against the side of the store! Few people bothered with locks—bikes seem as plentiful as water.

Denmark is flat and Norway is mountainous; Norway will never catch up with the Denmark on its number of bikes per capita. However, not wishing to be outdone by the Danes, the Norwegians built a highway specifically for biking commuters to Oslo. Norway then had “the longest bike highway in the world.” And so the Scandinavians get to joshing each other while playing with ways to respond to the climate crisis. Compare this practice to trying to using fear to motivate people to change practices and policy.

A metaphor I find useful for thinking about motivation for change is the contrast between the energies of expansion and contraction. When we expand we see more, feel more, move more easily, imagine new possibilities, create, and get less tired. Love is the classic energy of expansion; we hear each other say, “My heart is opening.”



When we contract, on the other hand, we become tighter, more rigid. We find it harder to think of alternatives. We may hear someone acknowledge, “My heart is closed.” Fear is, spiritually, the energy of contraction. If we remember times we were fearful, we might remember how exhausting that became.

The good news is that there are many choices we can make that expand us. I recently participated in the Walk for our Grandchildren: Elders and Youth on the Road to Climate Justice, walking (with van hops) from Scranton, PA to Wilmington, DE. Our goals were to encourage local environmental justice groups, make a statement about our stake in the future of our grandchildren, and encourage grandparent and President Joe Biden to go all-out for a decent

climate. There were days when it was very hot. Where could we find the energy to finish the day’s walking?

We somehow knew that telling each other disaster stories wouldn’t work. What worked was turning to the energy of expansion: letting the love grow among us, finding ways to play along the way (including singing), having limited goals that enabled us—each day—to accomplish something, and looking forward to a playful action at the end: sitting in rocking chairs while blocking the doors of Chase Bank, the largest financier of fossil fuels in the US.

I’m 83. There was no way I could have finished the walk by depending on fear and sheer grit. Nor do I think our nations can find the will to change their ways by depending on fear and sheer grit. There’s a better way.

To see us getting arrested (in our rocking chairs, of course!), watch: bit.ly/walkforgrandchildren.

George Lakey is a member of Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting. His *Viking Economics: How the Scandinavians Got It Right and How We Can, Too* is now in paperback. Also *How We Win: A Guide to Nonviolent Direct Action Campaigning*. Both from Melville House Publishing.



George Lakey and friends during June’s Walk for Our Grandchildren. Above: 15 grandparents and allies were arrested while blocking Chase Bank. Courtesy of [Facebook.com/2021walk4ourgrandchildren](https://facebook.com/2021walk4ourgrandchildren).

Stories from the Stop Line 3 Pipeline Movement

Quaker organizations, meetings, and churches are coming together to support the growing Indigenous-led movement in northern Minnesota to resist the construction of the Line 3 tar sands pipeline. Instead of building new fossil fuel infrastructure, we must transition to renewable energy as quickly and equitably as possible. Several Friends participated in non-violent civil disobedience over this past winter in Minnesota. Several more took part in the June 7 Treaty People Gathering and others are at the water protector camps right now. Here they share their stories.



"From the airport, I started fundraising for jail support (knowing that Minnesota counties have been setting outrageous bail amounts) and organizing a solidarity action in Philadelphia for two days later. The idea was to try to raise awareness of what was happening at Red Lake Treaty Camp and Line 3 more broadly by risking arrest myself. Although we were not arrested in Philadelphia, as it happened, 22 people were arrested that same morning at Red Lake Treaty Camp while engaging in a spiritual ceremony. I cried watching video of the violent arrests, confirmed in my commitment to keep speaking out about the Line 3 pipeline, which is catastrophic for the climate, for the rivers of northern Minnesota, and for the Indigenous peoples of this land."

–Eileen Flanagan, Chestnut Hill Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting



"There were dozens of tents set up on the boardwalk, plus donated food, composting toilets, a solar panel so people could charge their devices, and a community filled with joyful solidarity. The group held the boardwalk in constant prayer for eight days before they were forced to leave, but that stopped pipeline construction for over a week. The Beloved Community emerged in that space, and no one had a need. I traveled back home to Oregon with a full spirit, with new information and wisdom, with gratitude for the welcome and spiritual groundedness of the Indigenous activists, and with a network of new relationships to work on climate justice at home."

–Cherice Bock, North Valley Friends, Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends

The situation is changing every day, so to get updates and take action, visit QuakerEarthcare.org

"...The elders organizing the strategy asked me to risk arrest. They were bold and although my body is not young, I had a willing heart. I was asked to lock-down to a 35 foot structure so as to block the drills and blades destroying the Earth's mantle. When 100 of the Protectors landed at the Enbridge construction site in Park Ridge, MN, the workers sped away in their Ford Rangers. They left, and thank heavens, construction stopped for two days. We were jubilant, giddy, dancing in the dust left by the sheriff. I was put in handcuffs and suddenly released. A row of low-flying Canadian geese headed north. We all watched this row of feathered beasts fly below the storm clouds, necks outstretched, at least 20 calling as they passed the locked-down Protectors. Their beating wings bestowed a blessing."

–Minga Claggett-Borne, New England Yearly Meeting

Photos from left: Boat blocks one of the construction access roads. Eileen Flanagan at Philadelphia action. Mississippi headwaters. Photo on page 5: "Treaty People Gathering Chalk Sign on Bridge." Gobonobo, CC via Wikimedia Commons.

Andrea Beane

We Are All Treaty People

I identify as a white woman of European descent and I am a Treaty People. I traveled to Northern Minnesota to join the Treaty People Gathering on June 5-8. The leading was strong and without much notice. I secured travel from Austin, Texas to Minnesota where I would meet up with another Friend.

When we reached the camp on the White Earth Reservation, we were greeted and told where to set up our tent and when to meet for the opening prayer. No other information was given about the details of the action on Monday, yet in the air was an unspoken essence of the intention of why we were there.

We were following the guidance, direction, leadership, and invitation of the Anishinaabe people who have been fighting Enbridge, the company building the pipeline, and other multinational corporations, for the better part of a decade.

We are all treaty people. Non-native people are living on stolen land and continue to benefit from treaties while not honoring them.

It is the responsibility of non-native people to know and respect the obligations included in federal and state treaties. Treaties protect all of us.

– The RISE Coalition

Sunday was direct action training day. Groups divided into levels of arrest risk. Since I was 1,500 miles away from my home, I chose not to risk it. We learned our rights if we were arrested and how to (not) talk to the police. We also learned and sang songs, and were given hand silk-screened patches and scarves to wear at the action. Beautiful banners had been created so that we could carry our unified message at the action.

On the day of the action, we drove for over an hour in a 1,500-person car caravan to a rural site near a bridge that crosses the headwaters of the Mississippi River. At this point, the mighty river is only four feet wide and thigh-high deep. It was here that we staged our action and created a unified voice in song and in strength.

We marched together to the bridge where we stopped for a pipe ceremony and blessing from Ojibwe elders. Others marched on to cross the bridge and found their way across the Mississippi to occupy the privatized Enbridge easement. The encampment has now been named "Fire Light Camp." They continue to occupy as water protectors.

During the action, some stopped along the bridge to create a chalk message to President Biden, "Biden, Honor the Treaties. Stop



Sanya Hyland, Just Seeds Collective.

Line 3." The rally at the bridge included First People Elders, Ojibwe activist Winona LaDuke, and actors Rosanna Arquette and Jane Fonda.

During my time at the camp, I noticed the flight of the dragonflies. They were mesmerizing and magical. They were with us as we entered camp and they flew above us on our day of action. Their presence reminded us that change is transformational and to love, rejoice, and have faith in life even when difficulties lie ahead.

There is still much work to be done. President Biden needs to make the executive decision to shut down Line 3. Go to TreatyPeopleGathering.com for the latest updates. Act now.

Andrea Beane is a member of Austin (TX) Monthly Meeting and a member of QEW's Direct Action Working Group.



Bill Cahalan

Awakening for Earth: An Earth-Body Meditation

Bill Cahalan is an eco-psychologist. His booklet, *Awakening for Earth*, is currently being updated by Quaker Earthcare Witness and will be available to share and download. This meditation is an excerpt. Bill writes, "Here is one version of a guided experience which I have used with weekend retreat participants and with clients, usually in a grassy place with lots of trees around us. It may help enliven your sense of membership within Earth's body, bypassing any rigid separation of 'inner' and 'outer.'"

Sit down and settle into the ground, allowing yourself to comfortably adjust to the Earth's gravitational embrace. Close your eyes. Maybe you can faintly feel blood pulsing in your neck and fingertips. Enjoy this automatic cycling, knowing that it is actually part of the larger water cycling of this region. Just as our blood nourishes us, water is the blood of Earth.

Now notice your breathing, and gently follow its rhythm for a few minutes, relaxing any tightening which may be hindering a full, relaxed in-breath and out-breath.

Like blood pulsing, breathing is mostly automatic, an enjoyable and natural, taken-for-granted life process. Know that all the oxygen you and all animals are taking in at this moment is a gift of green plants, given off by them as they breathe in the carbon dioxide which we and other animals have exhaled.

Open your eyes and see some of the plants which are breathing with you. Feel the temperature and movement of air on your face and hands. As water is Earth's blood, so air is the breath of our larger Earth body.

Now close your eyes again, feeling and savoring your own energy, which may be rising as your breathing has deepened. Notice also any stiffening you may be doing to interrupt the free movement of energy in you. Know and appreciate the source of this energy, which is the sun.

Open your eyes now and take in the sunlight. See the contrast of light and shadow. Allow yourself to slowly take in the landscape, plants, and sky, rather than quickly skimming over what you see. This sunlight energy in you is released with each heartbeat and each breath, having come to you from plants through your food chains.

Now use your energy to slowly stand up....Begin to walk slowly, feeling the ground, savoring each step. See the sunlight, which is present even if the day is cloudy. Let your breathing regulate its own pace and depth. Look again at the plants and whatever else is here. Look at each plant, bird, or insect as a

fellow participant in this symphony of life, in the self-regulating and evolving body of Earth.

Feel your interaction with the ground as you stand and walk, scanning your body slowly from your feet to your head and back, and releasing any tensions which may be blocking free, pleasurable movement. Enjoy lightly placing each foot, shifting your weight, and moving into the next step. Walk silently, with a "stalking" attitude, looking around the landscape and knowing that animals that may be near will be less likely to flee.

As you walk, begin looking at the trees, large and small. Notice their shapes and textures. Notice your bodily-felt responses to each tree and see which trees seem to attract you.

Eventually find one tree which you feel called to know better. Stand at a distance and just take in the shape, texture, colors, and movement of this tree as it reaches up to drink in the light and carbon dioxide, and reaches down with its roots for water and nutrients.

Notice your feeling response, and how you may be numbing or tightening yourself to interrupt it. How do you feel moved to respond? You may want to walk to the tree and learn more through touching and smelling it. Then empathetically enter the life of this fellow being, imagining that you are this tree. Reach up to the sky, and then feel your roots absorbing soil and water. Maybe sway like the tree in the breeze for a few minutes.

Then come back into your human identity. Sense how you are affected in mood and body sensation. Step back and take one last look at this tree so that you can recognize it again in the future if you want to visit again.

When you return to your starting place, you may want to write down, draw, or dance some of your lingering emotions or impressions, or talk about them with a friend. This will help you carry the life force and lessons of the wider world back into your everyday life in the human community.



Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Climate Sprint

At Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's annual sessions this July, Friends came under the weight of the climate emergency as a yearly meeting priority and accepted and approved the Climate Sprint Report, "Moving Together in the Face of Climate Change," excerpted below. To read the full commitment, visit [PYM.org](https://pym.org).

This statement stretches us beyond our past positions and actions. We will maintain a vision of the long-term in our decision-making and address the interdependent economic, environmental, social, and political systems that drive the climate crisis and climate injustice.

Specifically, we are called upon to expand our work in five areas:

1. Activism: Most vitally we will put our beliefs into action through advocacy, direct action, and public witness. The yearly meeting will regularly speak as a body on specific issues and possible legislation impacting climate change and the fact that the burden of climate change falls disproportionately on poor and minority communities. Quarterly and monthly meetings and individuals will work together to develop effective voices to be heard by federal, state, and local governments. We will strive to broaden our collaboration with all Friends' organizations, also welcoming the diversity of religious and secular groups committed to addressing the climate crisis. Friends will also consider situations where group direct action is appropriate, as for example the work of the Earth Quaker Action Team (EQAT).

2. Education: We commit to reaching a shared understanding of the causes and costs of climate change. We will offer education to every member of the yearly meeting about how we can respond to this crisis. Those members

of the yearly meeting with particular knowledge of Climate Change and Eco-Justice issues will provide online information, webinars, workshops, and traveling ministry for all of us. Quarterly and monthly meetings and their members will commit to making use of those resources to increase their awareness of the needs and opportunities to act to interdict the climate catastrophe.

3. Reducing Our Carbon Footprint: We will take steps to reduce our impact on the earth, as individuals and a community, by such means as making changes to our property and finding ways to use less energy in all the aspects of life. We recognize that making significant reduction in carbon emissions also requires taking action for systemic change.

4. Finances: We will recognize the effects our collective purchasing and investing choices have on climate change, and act accordingly.

5. Mourning Loss and Instilling Hope: We recognize that bold work to address this crisis requires spiritual grounding and the support of a community.

...Recognizing that monthly meetings will be at the heart of this work, they are specifically encouraged to determine how best to keep these commitments before the eyes of the meeting. This could be in the form of a committee to plan actions and report regularly, or an individual charged with those responsibilities.

Did your yearly meeting take action on Earthcare this summer?

Send us an email to share your updates:

Info@QuakerEarthcare.org

The entire yearly meeting is under the weight of this urgent concern. This means that each of us is asked by our religious community to carry it into the yearly meeting, quarterly meetings, monthly meetings, and our individual lives. This also means that we do not have to process our fear, grief, and exhaustion alone. We are called to support, teach, and encourage each other. We hope every member of PYM will rise to this challenge.

Respectfully,
The Climate Change Sprint:

*William Cozzens (Germantown),
Ruth Darlington (Medford),
Christie Duncan-Tessmer (Chestnut Hill),
Patricia Finley (Old Haverford),
Robert L. Greene, Clerk (Princeton),
.O (Central Philadelphia),
Kathryn Metzker (Willistown),
Christy Tavernelli (Earth Quaker Action Team Board member),
Shelly (Liyiran) Xia (Eco-Justice Collaborative member).*



Photo by Doubichlou14/
FLICKR.

Gayle Matson & QEW's Publications Committee

Divestment as Lived Faith

“O that we who declare against wars, and acknowledge our trust to be in God only, may walk in the light, and thereby examine our foundation and motives in holding great estates! May we look upon our treasures, the furniture in our houses, and our garments, and try whether the seeds of war have nourishment in these our possessions.” —John Woolman, c.1770

Friends around the world are taking steps to make their lives reflect changes crucial to the survival of life on Earth. Many consider divesting from fossil fuels as one such step that is consistent with Quaker values and testimonies. Friends are not alone in this consideration; other religious denominations have divested, along with colleges, universities, foundations, and even city and county governments.

How does divestment help us live our faith even as we continue to consume fossil fuels? Refusing to profit from an industry whose products are clearly destructive to God's creation is an important act of conscience, but divestment is also a tool for non-violent social change. Our dependence on fossil fuels makes it difficult for us to completely boycott their use, but we can protest against the industries that extract, refine, or use them.

Fossil fuel divestment is the act of relinquishing financial investment in companies that are in the business of extracting, refining, or generating electricity from fossil fuels. For some Friends, that means screening out the top 20 “carbon majors,” those companies responsible for more than a third of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. For others it means avoiding the 200 largest owners of carbon reserves in the world, while still others may wish to avoid all companies that produce, refine, sell, or even transport fossil fuels.

Divestment is not an “all or nothing” proposition. Individual Friends may not be able to control the investments in their retirement plans, for example. Ultimately divestment's power for social change comes from the attention it brings to the issue of climate justice and the consciousness it raises along the way. There are

simple ways to magnify the impact of your individual or meeting's conscientious act of divestment. (Visit QuakerEarthcare.org for more strategies and tools.)

Friends' History of Ethical Investing

Friends have a long tradition of ethical investing and aligning our testimonies with our finances, understanding that how we direct our resources is a moral choice. In fact, Wikipedia notes: “the origins of socially responsible investing may date back to the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).” Being good stewards in God's world calls on us to examine the ways in which our testimonies interact to guide our relationships with all areas of life, including finances. Without that clarity of financial intention, the money flowing through our lives can become fuel for human suffering and environmental destruction.

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Divestment and Quaker Testimonies

No reasonable person today denies the relationship between the burning of fossil fuels and climate change. Here are some of the areas where profiting from the fossil fuel industry is incompatible with Friends' testimonies:

Environmental stewardship. God calls upon us to care for all creation. Fossil fuel emissions threaten life for people around the world, and for plants, animals, seas, skies, and ecological systems.

Violence and suffering are direct consequences of climate change. Competition for scarce, arable land and other natural resources is already leading to increased conflict and war.

Truth/Integrity. Fossil fuel companies have polluted the public discourse with dishonesty about the effects of climate change and with disinformation aimed at creating climate change denial.

Fossil fuel companies' huge financial contributions to elected officials undermine our democracy and thus the equality of all citizens. Friends hold deep concern for the disproportionate impact climate change is having on children, the elderly, those living in poverty, and future generations. Those who suffer most are often least responsible for the emissions of greenhouse gases.

Divestment Basics

Divestment is an organized movement as well as an individual act of conscience. The organization 350.org and its subsidiary gofossilfree.org have led this movement, serving as a central resource for divestment news and tools, and maintaining a registry for individuals and organizations making the

commitment to divest. The three elements they consider as part of a divestment commitment are:

- » An immediate freeze on any new investment in fossil fuel companies,
- » Divesting from direct ownership and any commingled funds that include fossil fuel publicly traded equities and corporate bonds within 5 years,
- » Reinvesting as appropriate in clean energy technology.

Search the organization list at GoFossilFree.org/divestment/commitments with the word "Quaker" to find other meetings or Friends organizations that have made the commitment and consider contacting them about their divestment experience.

First Steps for Friends' Communities *(Adapted from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, EcoJustice Collaborative)*

As you open to more Light about this issue in your Friends meeting or church, we suggest the discernment process include opportunities to:

- » Become familiar with the most recent climate data and information regarding fossil fuel reserves to understand the urgency of action.
- » Consider your testimonies and review where your funds are invested. Do your current investments reflect your testimonies and principles?
- » Consider where to begin the conversation (Finance, Social Concerns, Earthcare, Business Meeting, etc.).
- » Ground your reflections and worship in testimonies and previous minutes.
- » Understand the financial need of your meeting or organization and seek a transition that will continue to meet its needs.

Another great resource is StopTheMoneyPipeline.com.

The financial sector is funding, insuring, and investing in the climate crisis.

Stopping this money pipeline is one of the most important ways we can address the climate emergency.

- » Recognize that aligning investments with your values can occasion the need for sacrifice.
- » Consider options for reinvestment that meet your values.
- » Minute your concern and decision.
- » Divestment is most impactful as a public act. Share your minute and decision with the wider community, QEW, and your elected officials as appropriate.
- » Follow up on the decision.
- » Consider other witness opportunities.

Possible Queries for Worship Sharing

- » In what ways do moral implications enter into the investments we make as Friends?
- » How do Friends' testimonies and queries provide spiritual guidance in the ways we invest our money?
- » In what ways is our money invested for purposes we really support?
- » Does our meeting or church serve social, economic and environmental justice in its investments?
- » What is our financial involvement in the fossil fuel industry? How are we led in regard to these investments?
- » Is our commitment not to profit from investments in fossil-fuel businesses now a part of our Lived Faith, and are we ready to minute that commitment?

Ralph Jacobson

Red Lake Nation's Path to Solar Energy

The people of Red Lake Nation, in northwestern Minnesota, had been talking for over a decade about ending their dependence on electricity generated from coal. This is a story about their journey toward renewable energy.

Mercury falls into the water of midwestern lakes from plumes of smoke that float eastward from power plants out west. This slow build-up of mercury in Red Lake's water will eventually ruin the fishery from which the community derives a large part of its income. The people of Red Lake also know that to save their fishery, many other communities will have to end their dependence on coal too. That's a call to leadership, a tall order for a poverty-stricken, rural Indigenous community. But the people of Red Lake are strong-willed; they did not sign the Indian Allotment Act, so their land base was not taken from them. And they are resisting Enbridge's Line 3 tar sands pipeline.

The tribe began to study wind power around 2007, but the local utility was not encouraging and financing never materialized. In 2014, tribal chairman Darrell Seki went to a conference and saw what some Indigenous communities were doing with solar in California. In the winter of 2016, I was hired to conduct a feasibility study for placing solar arrays atop ten of the public buildings in the community.

There are three easily discernible benefits for our Red Lake Solar Project: protecting the water of Red Lake, long-term energy sovereignty, and job training for tribal members who could then be employed in solar power system installation elsewhere. Now that's using solar energy for robust economic development!

While I was working on the feasibility study and solar designs, two financing efforts by others failed to materialize. I had the knowledge from twenty-five years in the solar industry, and a little money, so I decided to try my hand at financing the smallest of the Photovoltaic (PV) systems: 67 kilowatts on the Nation's government center. Five banks declined to consider loans to the project, although by 2017 solar was well-established as a solid asset for debt-financing. I couldn't help but think that if I were to consider

four hundred years of United States history, who would I rather make a deal with: the US government or an Indigenous tribal nation?

And then I attended the 2017 Transition USA Conference at Macalester College in Saint Paul, MN. There I found a creative option for our project: crowdsourced microloans were being used in places like South Detroit, Oakland, and Atlanta to help fund projects that benefited communities, but were unattractive to government and big capital. What ensued was nine months of deep conversations among people in the Twin Cities Quaker and Unitarian communities. We raised \$115,000 through twenty-three "microloans," and I added \$15,000 of my own money to build the system on the government center (and an additional \$11,000 for a top-notch attorney to put the deal together correctly).



To install the solar, I had been planning to bring one of my crews from the Twin Cities to Red Lake and hire local community members. But then I met Robert Blake, an urban member of Red Lake who was working in the solar industry and dreamed of starting his own solar installation business. He formed the Solar Bear company and found very talented tribal members to work on the crew. Aside from my design and commissioning of the system, they did the entire installation.

Almost precisely on the winter solstice, December 20, 2018, that first PV system began generating power, and for almost three years it has provided about 25% of the electricity requirements at the Red Lake government center.

A definition of integrity that resonates with me is "doing what you say you are going to do." The history of relations between European American settlers and Indigenous Americans demonstrates a profound lack of integrity on the part of my own ancestors. It has been a great honor to demonstrate integrity in my work with the Red Lake Nation as they move forward with their aspirations for sustainability.

Ralph Jacobson is a member of Prospect Hill (MN) Friends Meeting and the founder and CEO of IPS Solar. He and his team have completed over 1,000 renewable energy projects.

Photo by Kathy Barnhart.



Mey Hasbrook

Homecoming

Stirring,
 sap rises
 into burgeoning buds
 whose edges unfurl, like fingers
 opening in friendship.
 Leaves reach between gaps,
 become mounds.
 Earth caresses
 every curve,
 sings across seasons:
 Awaken Love! Open wholly!
 Embrace Beauty!
 From slumber, undulate
 in Harmony.
 Children,
 this is Memory: Love is Holy!
 And you are Home already,
 for always.
 Already,
 for always, you are Home.

Mey Hasbrook is a member of Kalamazoo Monthly Meeting, Lake Erie Yearly Meeting, and has a traveling minute to share her ministry. Read more at femestiza.com.

Shelley Tanenbaum

Human-Caused Climate Change is “Unequivocal”

If the catchword for 2020 was “unprecedented,” then 2021 follows as “unequivocal.” That is how the 2021 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports scientific evidence that human activities are the cause of climate change, that the climate will be getting worse for several decades, and that no new fossil fuel sources or infrastructure should be constructed. The report has been giving people nightmares, but it also describes a clear path forward. The IPCC tells us that climate change can be limited to under 1.5 degrees Celsius if we get close to 100% renewables by 2040-50, and that the technology exists today to get there. None of this is news to most of our readers, but it is good to have this document to back us up! Very few of us will read all 3,500 pages of this report, but a succinct and readable [39-page summary](#) is available. It is good to know that 200 of the world’s top climate scientists corroborate these findings.

What to do? Lookout for Paul Hawken’s latest book *Regeneration: Ending the Climate Crisis in One Generation* (available mid-September). He takes his previous book, *Drawdown*, several steps further, focusing on what all of us can do to promote renewable energy, electrify everything, create equitable communities, and transform our human relationship with food, forests, and the oceans.

Save the Date: QEW Steering Committee Meeting October 21- 24 via Zoom

Join our online meeting to learn more about QEW, see how we do business, and join in fellowship, learning, and reflection. All are welcome.

Worship with Us

Quaker Earthcare Witness is hosting monthly online worship sharing groups in partnership with Friends General Conference via Zoom every last Wednesday of the month. Visit QuakerEarthcare.org/events.

QEW Online Workshops: Invite us to your Meeting or Church

QEW staff, Steering Committee members, and Friends are offering workshops on a wide range of Earthcare concerns. If you are looking for a way to connect with our work and host an engaging session for your community, visit QuakerEarthcare.org/workshops or email hayley@QuakerEarthcare.org.



DONATE to Quaker Earthcare Witness

We rely on your support to keep growing this movement of Friends caring for the Earth and each other. Please make a donation at QuakerEarthcare.org/donate or send a check to Quaker Earthcare Witness, P.O. Box 6787, Albany, CA 94706.



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Jennie Ratcliffe

A Vision From Our Divine Source

Any and all of us who've held a vision of transformation grounded in what really sustains us—remembering that we don't live by bread alone, but by the divine All That Is, that bread is sacred too, and there is no ultimate separation between them—are being called to stand up and hold to our witness and our deepest love during this turbulent time.

No one can pretend that we won't continue to experience grief, struggle, and despair, that we won't suffer along with all that is being destroyed and lost. The times are too hard to bear these alone without a spiritual ground and a loving community. Nor can we pretend that the work is easy; it requires collective spirit-led will and wisdom, courage, and endurance.

But it seems that as climate chaos accelerates, the awakening of our dependence on the planet and our kinship with all life is also accelerating.

I believe we are, albeit with much struggle, being led to the next stage of our spiritual and earthly evolution, in which glimpses of a more abundant life are coming into deeper realization: of sufficiency, of unity and kinship with all, of the primacy of wisdom, joy, love, and peace, as well as bread.

As within, so without, and as our inner vision is clarified, and as we are open to the power and love from our divine Source, so too can our lives and the wider natural world around us be healed, restored, and transformed.

Jennie Ratcliffe wrote this reflection after QEW Communications Coordinator Hayley Hathaway's workshop "A Vision from 2050" for Durham (NC) Friends Meeting. Jennie writes, "It evoked much of what so many of us yearn for now and in the future, in this age of climate crisis and pandemics and more." See more at QuakerEarthcare.org/workshops.



Photo by Kathy Barnhart.