

*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

Gail Melix and Lewis Randa

## A Native American Land Reparation Pledge

**R**eparations to Indigenous Peoples can take many forms. Through our work with Massachusetts' Peace Abbey, we have developed one action that might work well for others, the Native Land Reparation Pledge (NLRP). The pledge states one's intention to donate 1% of the sale price of our homes (when we sell) to the Indigenous tribe whose ancestral homeland we now own and from which we financially benefit.

The origins of the Native Land Reparation Pledge arose from the Quaker-inspired Native Land Preservation Action. In 2020, the Trump administration took the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe's 321 acres of land out of trust. A reservation is key to self-governance, housing, health care, education, judicial services, and language reclamation. As a result, Friends gathered signatures to reinstate the tribe's land trust and sent them to the Department of the Interior. The action says, if our land is protected, then certainly the Mashpee Wampanoags' land should be. How could we accept otherwise?

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 3**



## BEFRIENDING CREATION

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER - VOL. 35 #03  
JULY - AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2022

### In This Issue:

**A Native American Land Reparation Pledge** by Gail Melix and Lewis Randa ..... 1 & 3

**QEW's Summer Activities** ..... 2

**Following Spirit, Despite Fear** by Eileen Flanagan ..... 4

**Simplicity and Right Relationship** by Bill Cahalan ..... 5

**The Climate Justice Movement Must Be Anti-War** by Jasmine Butler ..... 6 & 7

**Green Your Life: Where to Start** by Alice Andrews and Laird Holby ..... 8

**The Call for a Fossil Fuel Nonproliferation Treaty** ..... 9

**Moving Corporate America Toward a Sustainable Economy** by David Ciscel ..... 10 & 11

**Frontline Communities Call on Biden to Declare a Climate Emergency** ..... 11

**A Workshop: Ecological Grief** ..... 12

**Image Above:** Popponesset, Mashpee, MA by Christopher Ryan.



This July, Quaker Earthcare Witness hosted five afternoon workshops at Friends General Conference's virtual Gathering. Seven community members shared wisdom on our relationship with the Living World in 2022 and how to take Spirit-led action. We offer their queries to you:

- » "What if we could identify the basic building blocks of powerful action, and develop routines that strengthen the skills that will help us become more effective and agile peace, justice and climate activists?" - Pamela Haines
- » "How do we live in right relationship with each other and the Living world? How could our work for justice be impacted by an increasing sense of our own sacred nature?" - Hayley Hathaway
- » "How might our lives change if we were to apply our Quaker Testimonies of Unity, Equality, Integrity, Community, Simplicity, and Peace to the entire Living World rather than only to our relations with human beings?" - Mary Ann Percy
- » "How can a yearly meeting and monthly meeting mutually support climate actions?" - Pat Finley and Ruth Darlington
- » "What does human population growth have to do with climate change?" - Dick Grossman and Stan Becker

On July 14, Cai Quirk presented their workshop, *Naturally Beyond Binaries*. Cai used stories, photos, and poems to show how nature invites us to expand beyond binaries and reconsider humans' supposed separation from the natural world.

Earlier this summer, our co-clerk Beverly Ward invited us to learn about the global racial wealth gap. She asked, "How can we interweave the relationship between climate change, racial justice, environmental inequality so they become part of our everyday conversation?"

Consider inviting one of our speakers to visit your meeting for a virtual or in-person workshop. Visit [QuakerEarthcare.org/workshops](https://QuakerEarthcare.org/workshops) to learn more.

**DONATE by sending a check to Quaker Earthcare Witness, P.O. Box 6787, Albany, CA 94706 or at [QuakerEarthcare.org/donate](https://QuakerEarthcare.org/donate)**

## Stay in Touch

Editor: Hayley Hathaway,  
[hayley@quakerearthcare.org](mailto:hayley@quakerearthcare.org)

General Secretary:  
Shelley Tanenbaum,  
[shelley@quakerearthcare.org](mailto:shelley@quakerearthcare.org)

Technical Administrator:  
Emily Carroll,  
[emily@quakerearthcare.org](mailto:emily@quakerearthcare.org)

Clerks: Beverly G. Ward,  
[phdant@gmail.com](mailto:phdant@gmail.com), and Brad  
Stocker, [bstocker@yahoo.com](mailto:bstocker@yahoo.com)

## 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.

Quaker Earthcare Witness is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization; contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law. Donate at [QuakerEarthcare.org](https://QuakerEarthcare.org).

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The spirit behind the reparation pledge is rooted in the awareness that the land we live on, in nearly all cases, was forcibly taken from an Indigenous Tribe many years ago and we, being the beneficiary of this wrongful act, wish to make reparation. All contributions are made by the homeowner directly to the Indigenous Tribe. This is an act of conscience, and though it is not legally binding, it is a sacred promise. In most cases the contribution is tax-deductible, though this is not charity. Reparation explicitly seeks to make amends for injustices done in the past. Acts of aggression, subjugation, domination, relocation, pillage, war, broken treaties, and genocide are the mosaic of the Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny.

The Doctrine of Discovery is a 1493 Papal decree that provided a framework for Christian explorers, in the name of their sovereign, to lay claim to territories (in the Americas and other countries) uninhabited by Christians. If the lands were “vacant,” then they could be defined as “discovered” and sovereignty claimed. In 1823, the US Supreme Court case *Johnson v. McIntosh* reached the unanimous decision “that the principle of discovery gave European nations an absolute right to New World lands,” converting the Indigenous owners into tenants. This doctrine remains the law of the land.

Manifest Destiny is the idea that the United States is destined and sanctioned by God to expand its dominion and spread democracy and capitalism across the entire North American continent. The philosophy drove 19th-century US territorial expansion and was used to justify the forced removal of Indigenous Peoples and other groups from their homes.

Making the decision to pledge 1% of the sale price of our home when sold is based on our coming to terms with the awareness that the result of settler colonization has led to subjugation and poverty for Indigenous Peoples. It has created post-colonial trauma for generations of Indigenous Peoples. We invite you to join us in this pledge as individuals and as communities.

Gail Melix is a member of Sandwich Monthly Meeting and serves as co-clerk of NEYM Earthcare Ministry, and is a board director of Native Land Conservancy, an Indigenous-led land trust. Lewis Randa is a member of Wellesley Meeting and Director of the Peace Abbey. Contact them at gmelix@comcast.net and admin@peaceabbey.org.



Gail Melix and three Quaker friends from East Sandwich Quaker Meeting during the Mashpee Wampanoag pow wow.

## TAKE ACTION: Native American Land Reparation Pledge

To All Whom It May Concern,

Be It Known That: \_\_\_\_\_,  
residing at \_\_\_\_\_,  
respectfully pledge to donate 1% of the sale  
price of our home to the \_\_\_\_\_, within  
whose ancestral land this property is located. I  
realize that the land, including the air, water, and  
biological life, is a natural relative to the tribe, and  
no amount of money can repay them for it having  
been wrongfully taken from them centuries ago.

I intend to fulfill this sacred commitment,  
embraced in the spirit of personal responsibility  
and reparation, when the day comes to sell  
our home. Until then, I will continue to care  
for the land and its inhabitants with ecological  
integrity and respect, and will honor it as our  
natural relative, for we are stewards of creation.  
Ultimately, the land belongs to Mother Earth.

Homeowners:

Date:

**Whose ancestral tribal  
homeland are you living on?  
Find out at [Native-Land.ca](http://Native-Land.ca).**



Eileen Flanagan

## Following Spirit, Despite Fear

### Remembering John Woolman in the Vanguard Campaign

On October 7, Delaware Valley Quakers and other members of Earth Quaker Action Team (EQAT) will gather on a suburban street in front of a large white home with black shutters and a manicured lawn. One of us will be designated to assure the waiting police that we do not plan to block traffic or otherwise disturb the neighbors, while the rest of us center ourselves for meeting for worship outside the home of Tim Buckley, CEO of Vanguard.

With approximately \$8 trillion under management, Vanguard is one of the top investors in fossil fuels, as well as in companies engaged in environmental racism, deforestation, and the violation of Indigenous rights. EQAT is part of a global campaign to pressure the asset manager to push the companies in its portfolio in a more just and sustainable direction. If Exxon, Chevron, and many others don't make serious strides toward the goals of the Paris Climate Summit, we want Vanguard to stop investing its customers' money in them. CEO Tim Buckley has a central role in deciding whether Vanguard uses its power in this way, which is why EQAT's board feels led to bring the weight of our concern about climate justice directly to his doorstep.

EQAT has visited the homes of corporate executives before, so we know it can be uncomfortable for our members, most of whom were raised to be non-confrontational. In a recent conversation with one such Friend, I noted that Quaker abolitionist John Woolman often felt led to visit Quaker enslavers at their homes and to challenge them "in a friendly way," as he put it in his journal. After mentioning Woolman, I felt an intuition to do an internet search on him, and discovered that October 7 will be the 250th anniversary of Woolman's death. We had already chosen that week for the meeting for worship to coincide with a global week of climate action by people of diverse faiths. The coincidence of Woolman's anniversary felt like an affirmative sign.

Although challenging the greed of the powerful is central to both Woolman and EQAT, he was focused on changing Quaker participation in slavery, not taking on a global corporation. He used moral suasion rather than deliberately building collective pressure through public actions, as EQAT does. However,

as I revisited *The Journal of John Woolman* with our October 7 action in mind, I felt a deep resonance. At his core, Woolman was a Friend who, distraught by a great wrong, sought to be faithful to divine guidance, even when it led him to do things that were scary. That is true of many in EQAT. Our spiritual struggles are remarkably similar, despite the differences in our outward circumstances.


One difference is the degree to which it is possible to extricate ourselves from the wrongs we seek to challenge. In today's industrialized economy, living free from what Woolman called "the seeds of war" in our own possessions is frankly impossible. Even though I buy renewable electricity, hang my laundry to dry, and take other steps to reduce my use of fossil fuels—actions I think of as spiritual practices—I know that my food, clothing, and the electronic tools of my work keep me complicit with environmental injustice. So does the money I have saved. In fact, the vast majority of our financial institutions profit from environmental and climate destruction. That's why EQAT is focused on getting those institutions to change, not just individual Friends. Although we anticipate a moment when we will ask Friends to move any funds they have with Vanguard, we will urge them to do so as part of a public collective effort, which will be much more likely to make an impact than solitary acts of conscience.

Easier collective action is one advantage of our modern economy. Through Zoom, Friends from across the US can join us as we worship at Tim Buckley's house, while British Friends hold a simultaneous action at Vanguard's London offices. As I close my eyes on October 7 and pray for divine assistance in our efforts to change Vanguard, I will honor Woolman's faithfulness in following leadings, no matter how socially uncomfortable or scary. May we all honor that legacy today.

Visit [QuakerEarthcare.org](http://QuakerEarthcare.org) and [EQAT.org](http://EQAT.org) for upcoming trainings and information on how to get involved in this campaign.

Eileen Flanagan is the interim campaign director and former board clerk of EQAT. She is also an award-winning author who speaks and teaches online courses on effective and spiritually grounded nonviolent direct action.




 Bill Cahalan

## Simplicity and Right Relationship

I agree with Wendell Berry, who wrote in his 1977 book, *The Unsettling of America*, that the United States is an unsettled country. We, not only in North America but in all the industrial world, are disconnected from our natural sources. So most of us only vaguely feel our dependencies upon the non-human, natural world. Even if we understand some of them, we tend not to experience them in an immediate way. I've been struggling with this for decades. If I don't sense my dependencies, how can I truly experience the gratitude and energy I need for living in right relationship or harmony?

I think we Friends need to develop our testimony of Simplicity to include the ideal of reconnecting with our sources, by getting more of what we need within our home regions. As families, neighborhoods, and meetings, we can grow, buy, or barter for more of our food close to home, and engage in growing practices that preserve the topsoil and the water. We can harvest rainwater from our rooftops to fill tanks for watering our lawns, meadows, and gardens— even, with the right filters, for drinking. We can get wood for heating from local dead trees or downed limbs versus burning gas from highly destructive fracking. Household electricity can come from solar cells and wind systems rather than, as often occurs, from blown-up mountain tops. Bodily waste can, through compost

toilets, return nutrients to soil versus flushing it into sewage treatment plants where some is incinerated, some land-filled, and some passed through to streams. Otherwise, “our heads don't know what our hands are doing.” We don't see how we deplete distant lands when life necessities are brought in via many middlemen from long-distance.

We have an “out of sight, out of mind” economy. It results in our enclosure within a techno-bubble which is seductive because, if you have the money, it makes life quite plush and easy. No wonder it is addictive, and we tend to become highly focused on getting along well as workers and owners of property. Nature is our property which we manage, rather than a living community or “great family” which we belong to and serve or tend. When life is focused in such a way, we have tunnel vision in relation to non-human nature. It ceases to be a primary focus, shifting to background awareness. We tend to see it as an “environment,” not a sacred, interdependent, intelligent community which is essential not only for physical sustenance but spiritual fulfillment. “The fate of our times is characterized by intellectualization, rationalization, and above all by the disenchantment of the world,” wrote Max Weber a century ago, in *Protestantism and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

So living simply includes non-attachment to belongings and “stuff,” but also communion with the creation. This means the living and sacred world is recognized as alive and as having the right to exist, evolve, and thrive for its own sake, not just for the sake of one of its species, our own. And this does not imply any one theology. It can just as well involve the sense of a divine Creator who is both beyond as well as within all things, as it can a self-organizing universe.

No matter what happens in coming decades with human-generated climate chaos, or with the ceaseless unraveling of Earth's web of life, we can live with simplicity and integrity as we move toward right relationship. We can move toward a conversational, “listening,” and regenerative relationship rather than a controlling and domineering one with non-human nature. But we need to engage in this journey with each other, not only in our families and larger local communities, but also as neighborhoods. This is what many in my own neighborhood have been trying to do for several decades as an ecocommunity or “ecovillage.” We have a long way to go, and we've had our ups and downs, but for me it has been a grounded and fulfilling way to live.

Bill Cahalan is a psychologist who includes relationship with Earth in therapy and retreats. He is a member of Community Friends Meeting in Cincinnati, and lives in an aspiring ecological neighborhood.



Jasmine Butler, Power Shift Network

## The Climate Justice Movement Must Be Anti-War

### Notes from Anti-War Organizers

*Power Shift Network is an intergenerational network of organizations and campaigns that center the diverse young people most impacted by the climate crisis. [They generously let QEW reprint this article.](#)*

**N**o matter your specific organizational or ideological affiliation, anyone who cares about climate change today ought to understand the critical connections between war, imperialism, and the climate crisis. In the 21st century, where conflicts between the world's rich and powerful are often waged via the lives of the poor, we have to look at the human and environmental impacts of war and refuse any claims that war is ever a necessary evil.

We've seen again in recent months how the United States and other powerful nations use military power to gain control over resources, particularly oil, and capital. While issues such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine are incredibly nuanced, with much blame to go around for both Putin and NATO's aggression over time, it is important to remember that those who suffer in times of war are poor and working-class people.

To usher in a new climate future where all people have access to the resources and support necessary to survive and thrive, and where no one has the power to use others as pawns in militant games, we must put an end to war and imperialism everywhere.

Power Shift Network spoke with three organizers across two generations who are committed to ending war and imperialism in our lifetime. They shared their thoughts about the connections among war, imperialism, and the climate crisis as well as lessons gleaned from their time as anti-war organizers. Their insights are crucial for understanding why the youth climate justice movement must also be anti-war and anti-imperialist.

Most climate activists today can recite a list of facts and numbers on climate change's biggest drivers, key components being natural resource extraction and the disruption of biodiversity and Indigenous lifeways. Each organizer we talked to placed the US military towards the top of their list of guilty parties, noting that it consumes more liquid fuels and emits more CO<sub>2</sub> than dozens of small countries—making it one of the biggest polluters in the world.

"These facts alone should be enough to get people to understand that climate justice has to be anti-militarism/war and that our military and the Pentagon need massive budget cuts."—Samir Muhammad, a junior at DePaul University and current President of Chicago Area Peace Action Depaul.

The environmental impact doesn't just come from military vehicle emissions either. The complex upkeep of global US military operations requires multiple avenues of extraction, degradation, and control. The US empire's modern iteration as a "pointillist empire" means that the US strong-arms its way into controlling small areas of land across the globe to carry out its military operations wherever it pleases, oftentimes using economic and militant force.

"The maintenance of US military bases, a means through which the US imposes its will on the global south, emits a highly unsustainable amount of carbon in the atmosphere...In addition, the machinations of US empire accelerate the climate crisis. The US, along with other Western nations, engages in imperialism in order to enrich itself through the extraction of value from the global south. This results in deforestation, habitat loss, and the destabilization of entire ecosystems."—Rushi, a journalism and political science student who is involved with CODEPINK's youth cohort, the Peace Collective.

The direct environmental impacts of global military operations carried out by just one nation are enormous, and these impacts only get worse when we include other nations' military operations as well. The monstrous impacts of militarism don't end with pollutants and extraction. The Black, Indigenous, and poor peoples of the world usually bear the brunt of US military violence abroad. Noor Mir reflects on the toll that military violence has on communities and community knowledge:

"I think a lot about who bombs target and whose land is seen as disposable. Sometimes all we see on the news is when a bomb hits a city. But the truth is that we forget about communities in rural areas around the world that are primarily poor and working-class farmers, mill, and factory workers, whose livelihoods really are destroyed, and whose stories never make the news. We're talking about centuries of farming

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**



## CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

practices, families with livestock and small dairy farms who have so much to teach us about how to live and grow and eat sustainably. One of the stories that is seared in my mind is one of a grandmother who was picking okra on her farm when a drone strike hit. She was killed. Her family must have lost so much wisdom in that moment, wisdom that we need to combat capitalism and extraction and over-production. I think about that a lot.” – Noor Mir, a D.C. based organizer and strategist with the consulting firm, DC Action Lab. She’s currently supporting Black, AMEMSA [Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian] and Nepali migrants in their fight for citizenship with wearecusp.org, working with Palestinian advocates on their campaign strategies and building up networks to resist government surveillance.

Colonialism is an ongoing project that actively threatens sustainable, ancestral Indigenous lifeways and knowledge of being in good relation with the land. This, too, is climate justice and anti-imperialism—the understanding that there are real people and environments on the other side of the military operations who are harmed in complex ways by the military-industrial complex.

Back home, the US government works hard to make us forget about the lives on the other side of military operations. Through its relationships with Hollywood and the media, the military works to normalize war and terror in media, creating narratives of benevolence around US involvement abroad. They also work hard to crush domestic dissent through propaganda, policing, and more. Together these tactics work to dispel the truth about the military’s contributions to the climate crisis and human rights abuses.

Despite the laundry list of warmongering tactics deployed by the military, war has never been universally accepted by those of us living in the US. In reality, there have been people who have fought against it tooth and nail and pushed us to imagine a world without war. Rushi offers the reminder that “working-class people are overwhelming[ly] receptive, if not already in agreement, with anti-war stances, simply because our views are the most beneficial to the most number of people.” The global war on the poor unites many of us against war, everywhere. There is a powerful lineage of anti-war organizing in the US that seeks to end war and imperialism everywhere, disrupt US global economic domination, and roll back the military-industrial complex.

Noor Mir reflected on how even a decade ago, being staunchly internationalist and anti-war wasn’t always a popular stance even in movement spaces:

“It’s amazing to me to see how sharp and centered the politics of young anti-war leftists are today.” Gen Z-ers entering anti-war organizing today are in many ways entering an entirely different playing field both in terms of the scale of global terror they’re up against and the tools available for fighting back. “Now with tools such as social media and the Internet, my generation is speaking up and exposing the truths of this country . . . [their ubiquity] has allowed people to read, understand, and be angry with the issues going on in this world and within our country, motivating them to fight for change,” says Samir.

At the same time, opposing war can also be a very dangerous stance to take, and the revolutionary ideals of anti-war movements are being co-opted by governments almost faster than they can form and take shape. “The revolutionary potential of past generations (such as those that led protests against the US invasion of countries such as Vietnam or Iraq) has been scrubbed by the ruling class. Many communist, internationalist leaders of past generations were disappeared, incarcerated, or even killed,” shares Rushi. We’ve all seen just a few grisly admissions of US terror tactics against its enemies domestically and abroad, but we’ve hardly scratched the surface of what the government and military have done for our “safety and security.” When it comes to war, there are no heroes or winners no matter what elected officials tell us. There are only losers—the majority, the global poor, those who lose their lives and livelihoods.

There are very real challenges to organizing for peace, and these organizers offer us a few words on sustaining ourselves and the anti-war movement at large. “Individualism only contributes to exhaustion and slows us down,” says Noor. Her advice to folks wanting to get organized today is to do so in community, leaning on each other for support and to prevent burnout.

Similarly, Rushi leans on revolutionary optimism or the belief that only through pushing back against nihilism and engaging in collective struggle does a better future become possible and even tangible. By leaning on their organizing communities for support and motivation, both Rushi and Samir have managed to sustain themselves and help build a powerful peace movement.

As those living in one of the most powerful nations in the world, our responsibility to our peers abroad is to campaign for a world free of war and imperialism.

Learn more at [PowerShift.org](https://PowerShift.org).



Screenshot from PBS documentary, "How Americans Can Change Their Mindset about Wasting Food."

Alice Andrews and Laird Holby

## New Jersey Friends Take Action At Home

The idea for Medford Meeting's Earth Day workshop "Green Your Life: Where to Start" came from a member of our Climate Change Group who, only too aware of the bad news, wanted to learn about changes she could make in her own life immediately. Our group agreed that a focus on practical steps could help address feelings of helplessness and offer hope. We narrowed the focus of the presentations to plastics, food waste, and advocacy.

The Plastics Committee from the local GreenFaith group, in which several of us participate, gave a well-honed history of plastic production and its entry into almost everything we use, ending with a show-and-tell of alternatives to plastic and plastic-packaged household items. Then we changed the pace with a very good ten-minute PBS documentary, *How Americans Can Change Their Mindset about Wasting Food*.

This PBS film highlights how households are responsible for 40% of the greenhouse gas

emissions from food waste. The segment covered shopping and cooking, and showed how communities can reduce food in landfills. After the film we handed out a sample food waste audit that participants could use to track what is happening in their own kitchens.

For the advocacy part of our work, we learned how to use the Friends Committee on National Legislation's online tools for lobbying and talked about why advocacy is necessary if we are going to prevent the worst impacts of climate change.

We also produced informational leaflets on a variety of topics and laid them out for taking on tables labeled, "plastics, food, electric cars, solar power, energy efficiency, gardening, and advocacy."

Over the last five years, Medford Meeting has held several climate change events related to local community interests. Attendance ranged from 40 to 70 people. Our first was an all-day film festival co-sponsored

with the Pinelands Preservation Alliance; the following year we hosted a film-showing and lunch on farming and the food system co-sponsored with the Northeast Organic Farmers Association, NJ Chapter; then we organized a panel presentation on socially responsible investing and banking, including speakers from Friends Fiduciary. We also watched Joanna Macy's spiritually moving discussion of "The Great Turning" to a sustainable future. Most recently we held a public meeting about the proposal to transport fracked gas from Pennsylvania to a terminal in Gibbstown, New Jersey, for export.

Now we are discerning what's next. We could take this most recent program to other meetings or organizations; we could organize similar events to go in depth on other topics. Whatever we decide, it seems right that we stay local and reach out to our neighbors.

Alice Andrews and Laird Holby are longtime members of Medford Meeting in New Jersey. They are both retired from working in Quaker organizations and are now active gardeners and grandparents.



**What's your meeting working on? Let us know!**



FossilFreeTreaty.Org

## Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation

Oil, gas and coal are the root cause of the climate crisis and despite the destructive reality of fossil fuels, as well as the constant warnings of the scientific community, there is no binding mechanism to limit their production.

The Paris Agreement, important as it is, does not reference fossil fuels once and has failed to constrain production. The commitments made by states to reduce fossil fuel consumption are indispensable, but to think that they will lead to a decrease in production is false.

Therefore, a complementary agreement is needed. Just like fifty years ago, when the world used international treaties to defuse the threats posed by nuclear weapons, today, the world needs a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty to phase out fossil fuels, support dependent economies, workers and communities to diversify away from fossil fuels, ensure 100% access to renewable energy globally and promote a just transition that leaves no-one behind.

Frontline communities, particularly those from the Global South, are paying the highest price of fossil fuel exploitation and climate change, yet are the least responsible. All over the world and for decades, frontline struggles have shown leadership in resisting the plundering of their territories.

In response to this crisis, an early proposal came from officials and civil society leaders in the Pacific for a moratorium and binding international mechanisms specifically dedicated to phasing out fossil fuels in the Pacific. In 2015, in the Suva Declaration On Climate Change, issued from the Pacific Islands Development Forum Third Annual Summit held in Suva, Fiji, decision-makers called for: “a new global dialogue on the implementation of an international moratorium on the development and expansion of fossil fuel extracting industries, particularly the construction of new coal mines, as an urgent step towards decarbonising the global economy.”

In 2016, following a summit in the Solomon Islands, 14 Pacific Island nations discussed the world’s first treaty that would ban new coal mining and embrace the 1.5C goal set at the Paris climate talks. Another important step was the call made by the least developed countries for a fossil fuel phase-out.

In 2017, the Least Developed Countries (LDC) group made a joint closing statement at COP23, chaired by Fiji and held in Bonn, in which they stressed the need for: “an increase in ambition by all countries to put

us on track to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius by strengthening our national contributions, managing a phase-out of fossil fuels, promoting renewable energy and implementing the most ambitious climate action.”

At the international level, civil society actors also mobilized actively for a global phase-out. This led to the Lofoten Declaration, written in 2017 at a gathering in the Lofoten Islands, Norway, with academics, analysts, and activists. The declaration recognized the emergency to stop the expansion of the oil and gas industry in order to achieve the Paris climate goals. It also called for action to be taken first by countries having benefited the most from fossil fuel extraction, having thus a historical responsibility for the climate crisis, but being also the best positioned in terms of capacity to take concrete climate action for a global just transition away from fossil fuel production.

The declaration stated: “It is the urgent responsibility and moral obligation of wealthy fossil fuel producers to lead in putting an end to fossil fuel development and to manage the decline of existing production.” During the discussions around the Lofoten Declaration, analogies to the weapons treaties were already included since some treaties banning landmines and nuclear weapons are important inspirations.

Based on the best practices of former treaty campaigns and existing struggles led by frontline communities, the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative started in 2019 through a Climate Breakthrough Project award.

Today, it is carried by a diverse Steering Committee, an international support team, more than 750 organizations, 12 cities, over 2,500 scientists and academics, Parliamentarians across the world, youth, senior faith leaders, Indigenous movements, as well as 101 Nobel Laureates including the Dalai Lama.

A rising chorus of voices is calling for a Fossil Fuel Non Proliferation Treaty, in order to phase-out fossil fuels and build a globally just transition for every worker, community and country.

Quaker Earthcare Witness joined this call in 2022 and invites you to learn more at [FossilFuelTreaty.org](https://FossilFuelTreaty.org).



David Ciscel

## Moving Corporate America Toward a Sustainable Economy

**H**ow do we get to a livable and sustainable world, starting from the economy that we are living in? That is an incredibly difficult job for many reasons. But one issue rises above the many others.

The key institution in the modern global economy is the large, multi-product, international-sourcing corporation. The typical corporation involves thousands of individuals, no one of whom (including the CEO) is indispensable. The rules of corporate behavior are opaque and complex, and they are not democratic. Hierarchical decision making is the norm. Its cancer-like growth continues until it dies, like Sears, or until phoenix-like, it has a second or third re-birth like General Motors or United Airlines. Most progressives dislike the corporate world, but tend to, simultaneously, live in non-profit or governmental versions of that corporate bureaucracy. So, we have to take into account the necessity of modern corporate life as we begin to move toward an ecological economy.

Interestingly, the corporate economy is not static. While it won't change its inherent desire to grow or its constant manipulation of the modern consumer, it does—like its modern giant container ships—slowly change direction.



The efficient use of energy resources by the corporation has improved dramatically. Fortunately, consuming intangibles, from education to vacation services, has partially replaced buying or leasing products and, consequently, reduces resource waste. Products and investment goods, like electric cars, solar panels, and wind turbines are now part of the corporate economy. Even some energy companies pretend to be green.

None of these changes is large enough to stop the destruction of biological diversity or the movement towards unsustainable climate change, but it shows that the real, existing corporate world does in fact change ecological directions. So how else could we influence this world?

Moving away from our current way of living is difficult for most of us in the US and Canada. While modern consumption patterns may be unsustainable, they also free us from many of the difficulties of pre-modern life.

First, isn't it time to build a day-off for the Earth? Just fifty years ago, most places in the US had laws and ordinances that required

non-essential businesses to close for First Day. Reviving those old ways would bring Earth Day every week by eliminating the search for stuff one-seventh of the time. That is, getting rid of the economy for a day saves us from the ravages of the economy for that day.

The public sphere is full of product promotions. Sports teams, universities and colleges, and not-for profits all promote more consumption by naming buildings, celebrities, and activities after products or services. If you go to the symphony, you are reminded that it is time to paint your home or apartment. Making all aspects of life commercial increases our fascination with getting more stuff. As many of us do when we buy streaming services, it is time to turn off the commercials part of the time.

Second, ecologically minded progressives often promote the opposite of what is needed to live sustainably with such a large population of humans. We talk about the joys of nature, but we must get humans out of the business of destroying biodiversity. The most effective way to reduce the human impact is to concentrate the ways we humans

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**

## CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

live. Compact, dense cities mean that apartments and homes can share heating and air conditioning systems. People can walk to stores and entertainment. Mass transportation systems have the population density to be effective. Rural and suburban living is a nightmare of wasted energy. But people have been leaving rural places for years. Policies that continue to encourage urban migration can also solve energy issues.

Third, we need to live with a certain level of waste. The technological change that has produced solar panels, wind turbines, and electric cars is based on industries that use huge amounts of energy. Just like bio-fuels, these experiments with moving away from fossil fuels will often fail as long-run solutions, but the goal is to find new ways of maintaining the benefits of an urban, industrial economy without losing the Earthly foundation of our existence.

Over the long twentieth century, the economy delivered a world characterized by abundance for many in the Global North. And that abundance is usually produced and delivered by giant corporations. It is time to nudge those corporations to add sustainability to that list of positive outcomes, converting a real, existing corporate world into a real, existing ecological economy.

David Ciscel is long time climate activist with QEWW. He is a member of Memphis Friends Meeting. David is a retired economics professor from the University of Memphis.

## Climate Justice Alliance

# Frontline Communities Call on Biden to Declare a Climate Emergency

**C**urrent legislative efforts to pass sweeping climate policy are dwindling. With rumors circulating that Biden is considering declaring a climate emergency, we call again on the President to immediately declare a climate emergency and invest in safe, clean, and local Just Transitions to wind, solar and other community developed renewables.

Declaring a climate emergency under the National Emergencies Act would just be the first step and should be utilized now; it will unlock special powers to fast track renewable projects that will benefit us all, especially those most impacted by the climate crisis. Earlier this year, and together with 1,140 organizations, Climate Justice Alliance issued a letter calling on President Biden to do just that in addition to banning all new oil and gas contracts on federal areas while stopping the approval of fossil fuel projects.

Elizabeth Yeampierre, Executive Director of UPROSE & Co-Chair of the Climate Justice Alliance says, "This is a no-brainer if the White House really is serious about its commitment to frontline communities and the rest of the world who have been devastated

by the irresponsible actions of the US in creating this crisis in the first place. We must resource those on the ground who are creating clean and scalable community controlled solutions to climate change; we must also replicate them at a rate never before seen."

Juan Jhong-Chung, of the Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition, adds, "Black, Indigenous, People of Color and low-income communities in Michigan are already facing the consequences of climate inaction from our elected leaders. We are experiencing record-breaking heat waves and flooding; our energy bills are skyrocketing; our families are made sick by emissions from dirty industrial facilities; our water is contaminated with lead; and our lakes are threatened by oil spills from Line 5...Everyone, no matter their race or zip code, deserves to live on a planet where they can thrive!"

It is time for Biden to stand true to his commitments to our communities and build a truly safe, clean and just future for us all. Declaring a climate emergency is just the beginning.

Visit [ClimateJusticeAlliance.org](https://ClimateJusticeAlliance.org) to learn more.



**CLIMATE JUSTICE ALLIANCE**  
COMMUNITIES UNITED FOR A JUST TRANSITION





P.O. Box 6787  
Albany, CA 94706  
*Address service requested*

Info@QuakerEarthcare.org  
Follow us on Social Media: @QuakerEarthcare

**Name**  
**Address 1**  
**Address 2**  
**City, State 00000-0000**

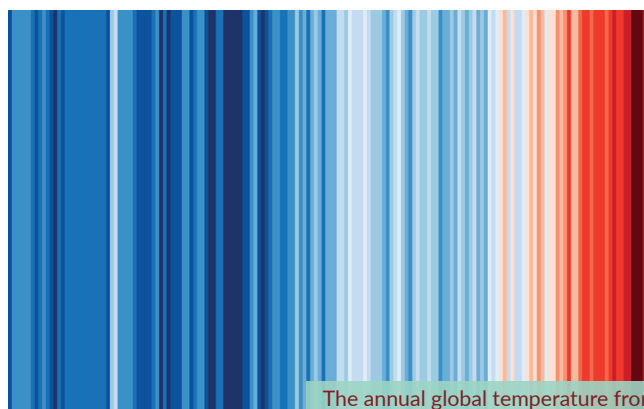
Join Quaker Earthcare Witness for  
**Ecological Grief: Engaging  
with the Emotional Impacts  
of Climate Change**

with Gayle Matson & Hayley Hathaway  
Thursday, August 25, 7pm Eastern on Zoom.

Ecological grief is all around us. Whether we recognize it or not, we all carry it with us.

Joanna Macy writes, "Feeling pain for the world is as natural to us as the food and air we draw upon to fashion who we are. That pain is the price of consciousness in a threatened and suffering world. It is not only natural, it is an absolutely necessary component of our collective healing. The problem, therefore, lies not with our pain for the world, but in our repression of it."

This 90-minute experiential workshop will be an introduction to the phenomenon of ecological grief: what it is, how to engage with it, and why it's



The annual global temperature from 1850 to 2021 via Show Your Stripes.

important. We'll explore those tender places in our own hearts where ecological grief dwells and offer them sacred attention.

Engaging in the grief process in a spiritual community supports resiliency and helps us more deeply attune to the actions we are called to take.

**Register and see more online offerings at**  
**[QuakerEarthcare.org](https://QuakerEarthcare.org)**