

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

Shelley Tanenbaum

The UN's COP27 Where Are We Now?

After 27 United Nations Climate Conferences, and even earlier conferences and agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol (1997) and the Rio Earth Summit (1992), why are we so far behind in dealing with climate (and biodiversity and desertification)? That is the question that hovered over Quaker Earthcare Witness' recent forum featuring five participants involved in the United Nations' 2022 Climate Change Conference (COP27).

As an accredited non-governmental organization with the United Nations, QEW can designate 'observers' to attend UN-sponsored events. For several decades, we have offered passes to two to four Friends (and friends of Friends) to attend these events. We brought together this year's observers to share their reflections and experiences, asking them to consider these questions: What was the most valuable result of COP27? What experiences felt the most compelling to you? What do you plan to do as follow up?

These observers included Peniel Ibe (American Friends Service Committee) and Wes Gobar (Yale University) who attended in-person, Frank Granshaw (QEW and Portland State University) and Clarence Edwards



BEFRIENDING CREATION

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Image Above: Friend Ruth Darlington (left) joins activists from GreenFaith, Food & Water Watch, and Delaware Riverkeeper Network to "birddog" Governor Murphy in Mt. Laurel, NJ about new liquid natural gas efforts. Photo courtesy of Food & Water Watch. Read more on page 8.



Dear Friends,

Quaker Earthcare Witness is the only Quaker organization solely dedicated to work on Earthcare and witnessing for Earth's survival. QEW's actions are always spirit-led. All our work is accomplished on an operating budget of less than \$200,000 a year. Currently, the organization is falling short of operating costs.

When we are asked to give money, it is important to know what it goes toward. This is well documented in our 2022 Annual Report, which you can find [online](#).

Our operating costs include the salaries of our exceptional staff whose work is reflected in the annual report—we are making this appeal on their behalf. Frankly, we need to improve their benefits and salaries.

So, we are asking you for a few very specific actions:

- » We are asking that you make an immediate personal monetary donation.
- » We ask that you set up a monthly donation of at least \$5 each month by visiting QuakerEarthcare.org/donate.
- » We ask that you use our resources to bring Quaker Earthcare Witness' work to the attention of your monthly meetings, churches, and yearly meetings and request an annual corporate donation to be in their budgets.

Resources and support for these actions are available on our website. There are ready-made presentations and other printable, easily shared materials to help showcase QEW's important work. Also, staff and clerks are willing and able to help you.

Please do not wait. Quaker Earthcare Witness needs your support right now. Thank you,

Beverly G. Ward and Brad Stocker
Co-Clerks, Quaker Earthcare Witness

**DONATE by sending a check
to Quaker Earthcare Witness,
P.O. Box 6787,
Albany, CA 94706 or at
QuakerEarthcare.org/Donate**

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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.

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.

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(Friends Committee on National Legislation/FCNL) who attended or followed the proceedings remotely, and Lindsey Cook (Quaker United Nations Office/QUNO) who attended in person under the auspices of the Friends World Committee on Consultation (FWCC). This is Lindsey's 9th Climate Conference, and she serves as climate representative for QUNO. Clarence is the Legislative Director for Sustainable Energy and Environment for FCNL. Peniel and Wes attended as part of the Black Hive, a cohort of the Movement for Black Lives with a focus on climate and environmental justice. Frank has been instrumental in connecting Friends to the COP.

All of our forum participants applauded the establishment of a way to address Loss and Damage during COP27. Loss and Damage refers to what is often termed climate justice. Finally during this COP, the Parties (participating countries) acknowledged that countries that had done the least to create the climate problem are often hurt the most by how the climate is changing, and they have the least resilience when tragedy strikes. Recent devastating flooding in Pakistan is a powerful example.

The most compelling question came when Peniel asked Lindsey what good is all the reporting and word-smithing that goes on at these conferences and through the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change after all these years? I heard in this question the frustration that we all are feeling—after decades, all we have to show for this global effort is the Paris Agreement, a framework that gives us no commitments, and now, thanks to this year's COP, the bare-bones structure to address Loss and Damage. These agreements are like the studs in

a wall, but without the walls. We are still seeking hard and firm commitments from every country to reduce emissions in line with keeping temperature rise to 1.5°C, and we are still seeking serious funding for both the Green Climate Fund and now for Loss and Damage.

Lindsey acknowledged the frustration that we all are feeling, and shared that she has seen the importance of the reports and agreements in countries where civil society is limited by repression; they serve as a way to empower people to hold their leaders accountable. Lindsey pointed out that this was a humbling COP, and the Parties were able to hear the moral and courageous call that was coming from both civil society and developing countries.

Peniel talked about how she was struck by the disconnect between how much global youth are looking to the COP to do something, and how COP responses fall far short of expectations. Both she and Wes appreciated the spaces where coalitions could gather and the cross-sharing among coalitions such as the Black Hive, climate justice grassroots groups and indigenous peoples coalitions. She advised that we be wary of counting on establishing a robust Loss and Damage Fund in the near future, and that we need to address these needs as soon as possible, however we can.

Clarence promised that he and FCNL will be working on legislation that would put some real money into the Loss and Damage Fund. He is committed to working



Top Photo: The Black Hive at COP 27, courtesy of Peniel Ibe. Bottom Photo: From Top Right: Frank Granshaw, Shelley Tanenbaum, Lindsey Cook, Peniel Ibe, Wes Gobar, and Clarence Edwards at QEW's panel discussion.

on implementation of the US's recently passed Inflation Reduction Act (for both domestic and international climate policy), to seek new legislation on emissions reductions domestically, "energy poverty" (lack of access to modern energy services) internationally, and climate finance in developing countries.

Frank would like to facilitate connecting the rest of the world with the COP. He sees this as a primary way that all of us can put pressure on governments to strengthen their commitments and live up to them. This work also comes in response to the inaccessibility of the space for most people who care about addressing climate change.

A recording of the COP forum is available on our website. We are extremely grateful to these five individuals and the many thousands of others bearing witness and seeking way forward.

Shelley Tanenbaum moderated the forum and is the General Secretary of QEW.

Kathy Barnhart

Taking Collective Action with Third Act

At the beginning of each Meeting for Business at Strawberry Creek Meeting in Berkeley, California, a committee responds to one of the Advices and Queries in our Pacific Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*. Last month our Communications Committee responded to the advices and queries on "Harmony with Creation." They concluded: we need to continue our individual actions, such as reducing our own individual carbon footprints, but we also greatly need collective action to bring about bigger, faster change. I am planning to participate in such an action with an organization called Third Act.

On the spring equinox, March 21, 2023, Third Act is planning a big, national action to protest the four banks contributing the most to the financing and expansion of fossil fuel development: Wells Fargo, Chase, Citibank, and Bank of America. Environmentalist and writer Bill McKibben founded Third Act, which is about a year old with over 33,000 members around the United States. Local actions are being planned around the country, and each area will decide what to do. You can find out more at their website: ThirdAct.org.

The name Third Act refers to the stage of life over age 60. In general, if we are lucky, we have made it to the last third of our lives. We are often retired, or "rewired" as a friend likes to say. We care deeply about the state of the planet that we are leaving to our children and grandchildren. Many of us have had experiences over the years protesting various wars and working on behalf of a better, more just, and sustainable world. With this experience, and often with

time and resources, our age group can support the work of younger people working for climate justice and remain active in our "golden years."

As Bill McKibben said, "Money is the oxygen on which the fire of global warming burns." Since the Paris Climate Accords, banks have invested



A protest outside of Citibank calling on banks to "start banking on our future." Courtesy of ThirdAct.org

more than three trillion dollars in coal, gas, and oil companies, despite solar and wind power being the cheapest, cleanest way to generate power. Fossil fuel companies will continue to make record breaking profits unless collective action pressures them to leave the coal, oil, and gas in the ground and turn towards sustainability. While younger activists might have more physical energy to fight these companies, older activists have other gifts and statistically more money in their bank accounts.

Sometimes it is hard to imagine banks changing, and they do engage in greenwashing to stall. But we received good news recently about the largest bank in Europe, HSBC. On December 14, 2022, it agreed to stop funding new oil and gas developments globally. With collective pressure in the United States, we could also see a shift where the banks put their resources into forms of clean, renewable energy and away from fossil fuels.

Third Act is also sponsoring other actions, such as writing letters to banks or to media outlets, and it offers online workshops to do so effectively. Please consider participating in the March 21 action to make the four big banks hear our voices. On February 22, I also spoke at a webinar hosted by QEW on this topic. Visit QuakerEarthcare.org to watch the recording.

As our Strawberry Creek Meeting committee summed up its responses to the Advices and Queries, "Our way of life threatens the viability of life on Earth, particularly human life. What is called for is collective political action."

Kathy Barnhart is a member of Strawberry Creek Friends Meeting, a grandmother, and nature photographer. She loves spending time outdoors and cares deeply about our beautiful earth and its inhabitants.

On the spring equinox, March 21, 2023, Third Act is planning a big, national action to protest the four banks contributing the most to the financing and expansion of fossil fuel development.

ThirdAct.org

“Move Your Money if Your Bank Won’t Move Away from Fossil Fuels”

The fossil fuel industry polluting our atmosphere can’t exist without money from banks and investors. If we stop the Big Four Banks - Bank of America, Chase, Citibank, and Wells Fargo - from lending, we help shut down the industry. We don’t want our money and savings to be used to bankroll the climate crisis. Seventy percent of the country’s financial assets belong to Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation. Who can influence the banks? We can.

We are powerful when we act together. But, don’t move your money or cut up your credit card quite yet. The big banks won’t notice if you quietly move your money on your own. When the time is right, we will make good on our pledges together, en masse, and we will be providing you with lots of information to make it easy for you to switch your accounts and stop banking with companies invested in climate chaos.

Visit Third Act’s [Banking on our Future](#) page to learn more about why we must pressure big banks to invest our money in environmentally and socially conscious projects. If you are a customer with an account or credit card at Bank of America, Chase, Citibank, and/or Wells Fargo, please visit [ThirdAct.org](#), read and sign the pledge form below.

Banking on our Future Pledge

We, the undersigned, are account holders at Chase, Citibank, Bank of America, or Wells Fargo. We do not want our money to support lending for fossil fuel companies and projects responsible for the climate crisis. Therefore, if these four big banks continue to lend our money for fossil fuel exploration and development beyond March 1, 2023, we pledge collectively to move our accounts out of these four big banks into more environmentally and socially conscious banks and financial service providers, including checking, savings, and/or credit cards.

Our request, and our hope, is that Chase, Citibank, Bank of America, and Wells Fargo will reform their lending practices so that we will continue to be customers. Still, we are unwilling to have our resources used to fund climate destruction. Move your money, or we will move ours.

TH!RD ACT



Photo by Kathy Barnhart

Nan Fawcett

Waking Up

Imagine a future where we are all heard, where we all listen to each other, not only to our human siblings but to everything, the large and small inhabitants of our home planet, listening to everyone’s voice.

Imagine a life where we are open to new thoughts, where we listen instead of lecture, where we are eager to explore, where learning is utterly important and the status quo does not exist.

Imagine a future where we don’t have to be martyrs to a present that doesn’t work, a present that denies our life force and is leading to a dangerous precipice. Imagine that we turn around in time.

Imagine taking that curve into the future, letting go of competition, of rigid beliefs, pausing before defending, opening our minds to possible multiple bright outcomes, moving toward a wide horizon of change.

What have we got to lose?
We have seen enough bleak days.
Now it’s time for bravery and courage.
No more cowering, sadly accepting a flawed world.
Time to imagine, listen, engage.

And we are not alone on this curving path.
The whole living world can be our partners.
They’re already experts in compromise and adaptation,
learning and responding to the wider environment,
seeing and feeling the whole.

Together we can move ahead.
We don’t have to know the destination.
We can evolve as we go,
paying attention, adjusting, imagining, listening.
Following a path to a wide sunny meadow
of renewal, regeneration, and Life.

Nan Fawcett helped to create the first cohousing community in Iowa, Prairie Hill. She and her neighbors focus on living sustainably on their eight acres in the heart of Iowa City.



Hayley Hathaway

Holding Space for Ecological Grief

In fall 2022, QEW launched its first 10-week course on ecological grief. The course came after organizing two popular online workshops on the topic: over 200 Friends registered from across North America. At these workshops, Friends shared about feeling alone with their emotions of dread, fear, and sadness related to climate disruption. They were seeking a place to share. At QEW, we discerned that this kind of work spoke to our strengths: bringing friends together and creating contemplative spaces to connect on deep concerns.

Gayle Matson of Chico Meeting in California and I trained with the [Good Grief Network](#), whose 10-step model offered a graceful entry into the topic of ecological grief. Their model is inspired by the 12-Step family groups and is designed to “help folks recognize, feel, and process their heavy emotions, so that these feelings may be transformed into meaningful action.”

10-STEPS TO PERSONAL RESILIENCE & EMPOWERMENT IN A CHAOTIC CLIMATE

- 1 Accept the Severity of the Predicament
- 2 Be With Uncertainty
- 3 Honor My Mortality & the Mortality of All
- 4 Do Inner Work
- 5 Develop Awareness of Biases & Perception
- 6 Practice Gratitude, Witness Beauty, & Create Connections
- 7 Take Breaks & Rest
- 8 Grieve the Harm I Have Caused
- 9 Show Up
- 10 Reinvest in Meaningful Efforts

goodgriefnetwork.org
[The Good Grief Network's Ten Steps](#)

Thirty people applied to our course, and thirteen people of diverse ages and geographies joined. Most of the people in the group had experience with climate activism, the facilitators included. We were used to asking ourselves, “what can I do?” In this space, we focused on asking, “how do I feel?” We used check-ins, poetry, queries, music, worship sharing-style reflection, journaling, and grounding exercises each week to dig into ten themes, like “Being with Uncertainty,” “Grieving the Harm I have Caused,” and “Reinvesting in Meaningful Efforts.”

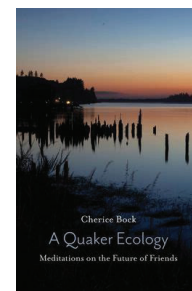
One Friend shared about their experience in the course: “It was very enriching and healing to deeply share in a sacred space our concerns, fears, sorrow, righteous anger, dreams, joy, and hope about the environment. It filled my heart with strength to hear the testimony of the inner struggle of other Friends. It made me feel less alone in this. It motivated me to share with people around me who are also suffering from all of this and who for the same reason are discouraged from making commitments, who fall into despair or worse.”

Britt Wray, author of *Generation Dread*, writes, “Rather than bury our heads in the sand and suppress our discomfort, we can harness and transform the distress we feel into meaningful actions and forms of connection.” Our hope was to offer that discomfort the sacred attention it deserved and build connection in the process.

Hayley Hathaway is the director of QEW and editor of this publication. Visit GoodGriefNetwork.org for more.

Upcoming Workshop A Quaker Ecology With Cherice Bock

Join Quaker ecotheologian Cherice Bock in sharing about her newest book, *A Quaker Ecology: Meditations on the Future of Friends* on **Tuesday, March 14 at 7pm – 8pm Eastern/4pm Pacific**. She writes:



In our best moments, Friends have been in the middle of the action around the social justice issues of each time period, discerning to the best of their abilities the direction the Inward Light leads and speaking truth to power. In our own time, climate justice can no longer be ignored if we want to have a healthy planet to live on and if we want to participate in the heart of the justice movements of the twenty-first century.

To work on climate justice requires Quakers in the United States to revisit the practices and history of the Religious Society of Friends, recognizing the ways we have been complicit in unjust land acquisition, natural resource depletion, the intersecting injustices surrounding environmental racism, classism, and gender disparities, and the impacts of globalization. This book offers a series of meditations on the Quaker ecology, both internally in our denomination as well as in our connections to the world around us. It forms an invitation to participate in an Eco-Reformation, altering the trajectory of our Society through re-memorizing our history and reimagining our future as participants in the community of all life.

Sign up at QuakerEarthcare.org.

Pamela Haines

How to Host a Climate Potluck

As I was pondering how to release more energy for addressing climate and environmental justice issues in our Quaker meeting, I had the idea of setting up an informal gathering where we could hear what others were doing and support each other to take a next step. I reached out to someone I thought would be interested, and together we planned and held a very simple online potluck. It was a nourishing evening on all fronts.



People talked about things they were doing that none of the rest of us knew about, suggested resources that were thankfully received, and shared hopes for bigger impact that others were eager to support. I believe this simple model holds promise, both for follow-up in our own meeting, and for replication elsewhere. So I'm sharing the recipe for what we did, with text from the invitation, the plan, and the follow-up message.

Invitation:

Reflecting on all the concern for the environment that is present in our meeting community, the two of us have been inspired to think freshly about how best to support that concern. How might we feel more connected to one another as we face the existential threat of climate change? Be heartened by each other's efforts and inspire one other? Get support as we take steps and set intentions? Become aware of resources we didn't know existed?

We are excited about what might come from giving some attention to all the love, energy, and yearning for impact that is present among us!

Please join us for a Zoom dinner where we can share the ways, large and small, that we are already in motion around environmental justice and the climate emergency, the obstacles we face, and the intentions we would like to hold going forward. This could be followed by opportunities to connect in smaller buddy/accountability groups, and perhaps other dinner conversations after that. Everyone is welcome. (Just bring yourself, your hopes, and your dinner!)

Evening plan:

Welcome: No matter at what stage you are in thinking about or taking action on climate change, we can all use support to engage with this big issue. Our goals are that everyone will leave with a next "stretchy" or growing step to take and at least one buddy to help you be accountable to your own goal.

First round: Share two things you are up to and pleased with in relation to climate change and environmental justice.

Second round: What would you take on if you had more courage, support, or knowledge? (We are hoping to support people in their aspirations or growing edges.)

Small groups of two or three: What do you need to help you to take the next step?

Closing: Check if people have buddy plans, announce availability of list of participants and upcoming opportunities, invite everyone to share resources with others on the meeting e-list.

Follow-up:

What a pleasure to be together last night! I love how we built on our connections and our shared concern about the earth to support and inspire each other to imagine that more is possible. I have a vision of our community claiming each person's contribution as part of our shared response and seeing ourselves as making a difference together.

Attached are some notes from the evening and a link to the Friendly Households grid developed by folks in the EcoJustice Collaborative of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to remind people of the different possibilities for taking action, from personal to household to community and beyond.

Let's all share our successes, big and small, with the wider community. Let's not let any good news stay hidden! In these hard times, there may be nothing we need more than a sense of connected forward movement. I'm looking forward to the first post on the community e-list—maybe it will be yours!

Pamela Haines, a member of Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, has a passion for the earth and economic integrity, loves repair of all kinds, and has published widely on faith and witness. Her newest publication is a poetry collection, *Encounters with the Sacred and the Profane*. She blogs at pamelahaines.substack.com.



Ruth Darlington

New Jersey Meetings Organize To Stop Export of LNG From Gibbstown

Liquid Natural Gas Tanker by Lens Envy/FLICKR

When Priscilla Adams and Maria Esche learned about the plans of New Fortress Energy to export Pennsylvania fracked gas from a terminal in Gibbstown, NJ, they took notice, and then they took action.

It all started when organizers at Food & Water Watch (FWW) asked Medford Friends Meeting member Ruth Darlington if she knew anyone at Haddonfield and Moorestown Friends Meetings who might take a resolution to their meetings for approval. (Medford Meeting had already worked with Food & Water Watch the previous year to pass a faith group resolution opposing the terminal.) Ruth contacted Priscilla and Maria, Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting's climate liaisons for Haddonfield Monthly Meeting and Moorestown Monthly Meeting. A meeting was arranged between the two liaisons and South Jersey organizers from FWW, where the liaisons learned why many communities in New Jersey and Pennsylvania are so concerned about the proposed liquid natural gas (LNG) terminal.

First, it prolongs fracking in Pennsylvania, with all its associated risks to local communities and water sources. Second, it continues the extraction of fossil fuels

when the climate crisis calls for keeping fossil fuels in the ground. And finally, and of immediate concern to many communities along the route, it requires the dangerous transport of liquid natural gas (essentially methane) by truck and train routes near many PA and NJ communities.

After meeting with the FWW organizers, Priscilla and Maria went back to their meetings asking for approval to host a gathering to alert other local meetings to the LNG project and discuss how to oppose it. With that approval in hand, they worked with FWW to plan the informational session. Thanks to their hard work, a request to two meetings grew into an invitation to every Quaker meeting in southern New Jersey to a virtual session on November 15th, 2022. At this event, speakers from FWW and Delaware Riverkeeper Network presented the history of the LNG terminal project, the science and social justice issues behind opposition to the project, and the strategy for grassroots action.

The meeting was well attended, with representatives from several Quaker meetings, as well as members of other faith communities. Many participants were inspired to take resolutions back to their congregations. Some

also considered taking municipal resolutions to their local officials. Since the November 15th information meeting, Moorestown Friends Meeting has approved a resolution opposing the Gibbstown project. Maria said, "the Meeting members were deeply concerned about the project and enthusiastically supportive of the resolution."

"We have sent copies of our resolution to President Biden, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, and the Army Corps of Engineers, all of whom are in a position to withdraw or block permits needed for the project to go forward, and to the Secretary of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg. At members' request, copies of the resolution were also sent to our two U.S. Senators and our Representative, a New Jersey senator, the NJ Department of Transportation, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the NJ Department of Environmental Protection to inform them of our concern."

Haddonfield Meeting's Peace and Social Concerns Committee chose to use a minute in opposition to the project instead of using the resolution provided by FWW. Priscilla said, "the minute was approved with enthusiasm by Business Meeting." Now they are working on sending it out to

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government and environmental groups, all the Quaker meetings who were invited to the original informational session plus the Quarterly Meeting and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting environmental committees.

When asked why this issue resonated with their meetings, Priscilla said "Haddonfield Meeting Peace and Social Concerns Committee has wanted to do environmental projects. However, we struggled to find projects that would have an impact and seemed possible for a small committee of busy people...this was a way to work together with other meetings as well." And talking about the significance of taking action on the issue, Maria said, "...members of the meeting thanked me for bringing this to their attention. Our members were eager to take action once the issue had been presented together with a way to take action."

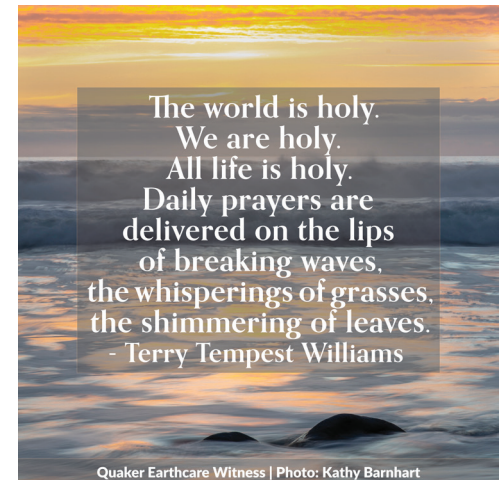
Early efforts to get township resolutions passed have not met with the same success. A year ago Ruth got on the agenda of Medford Township's town council meeting to ask them to pass the resolution. Despite the supportive presence of other Medford residents and a member of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, council members asked no questions and took no action then or later. More recently Maria approached Moorestown's Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) to present a resolution. It had been suggested to both Ruth and Maria that the resolution might be better received if it came from the town's own environmental advisory committee. In the case of Moorestown, the town mayor was also in attendance as the council's liaison to the EAC, and she made it clear that she would not support passing a resolution, since resolutions were simply symbolic and

ineffective. This, by the way, goes against Food and Water Watch's experience that such resolutions have been effective in New Jersey, which is why using them has been a preferred FWW strategy for stopping the Gibbstown terminal. Knowing that change does not always come easily, Maria said, "I will continue to talk this up with my Moorestown friends and connections in the hope that one or more of them might be better connected than I and can break through. I have always believed that all change comes through relationships, and I will keep trying to build them."

Other plans include following up with all the participants in the Nov. 15th informational session to learn what they may have accomplished and brainstorm next steps. It has also been suggested that Quaker meetings that have passed a resolution or minute opposing the LNG transport might contact other congregations in their communities to see if they would do the same. Asked if she was discouraged by the lack of success getting municipal resolutions passed, Ruth said, "Much of the work we do to fight climate change and environmental injustice doesn't bear fruit right away. While being strategic about where we put our time and energy, we can always lay the groundwork and watch for a path to open."

Ruth Darlington is a member of Medford Monthly Meeting in New Jersey. Since retiring in 2017, she has made addressing climate change her work. Ruth has worked with Medford Meeting's climate change group, Phila. Yearly Meeting's Eco Justice Collaborative, Earth Quaker Action Team (EQAT), Quaker Earthcare Witness, Medford's Green Team, the GreenFaith chapter of southern New Jersey, and several local non-profits. She is currently serving on the steering committee of Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting as its climate action coordinator.

And thank you to Priscilla and Maria for their input on this article.



Worship Sharing

"The world is holy. We are holy. Daily prayers are delivered on the lips of breaking waves, the whispering of grasses, the shimmering of leaves."
- Terry Tempest Williams

On January 24, Friends gathered online for QEW's monthly worship sharing. We reflected on the above quote and worshiped on these queries:

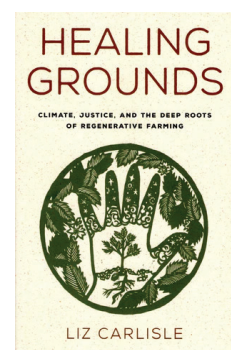
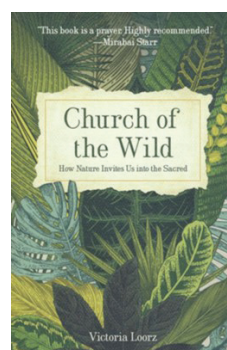
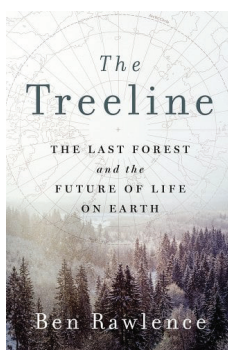
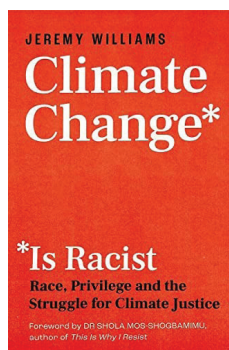
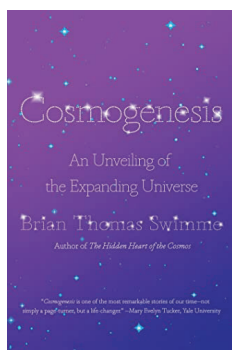
- » How do you experience holiness? How do you understand it?
- » How would you describe your relationship with the More-Than-Human world? How does this impact your faith and your witness in the world?

We hope you join us next time! Sign up on our website.

Apply for a QEW Mini-Grant

Quaker Earthcare Witness organizes a mini-grant program that gives matching grants to help Friends complete eco-friendly projects. Our goal is to encourage and support Friends groups, meetings, churches, and organizations that are looking for ways to enhance their practical and spiritual relationship with Earth.

QuakerEarthcare.org/mini-grants



What We're Reading (And Listening To)

We asked our QEW network about their favorite books, podcasts, and media from 2022. Here's what they said.

Multiple Friends recommended *The Nutmeg's Curse* by Amitav Ghosh about abusing nature's bounty and colonization, and also *Wilding: Returning Nature to Our Farm* by Isabella Tree.

Pamela shared, "I loved *Healing Grounds: Climate, Justice, and the Deep Roots of Regenerative Farming*, by Liz Carlisle. The deep roots she talks about are in the indigenous, Black, and immigrant communities in our country."

Climate Change Is Racist: Race, Privilege and the Struggle for Climate Justice by Jeremy Williams was also on the list as "an easy-to-read primer on how systemic racism and climate change overlap. If you still don't get the connections, read this."

Laurel, a professor at Drew Theological School wrote, "Of the things I taught, Robin Wall Kimmerer's writing is always a favorite and I would recommend *The Spirit of Soul Food: Race, Faith and Social Justice* by Christopher Carter. My students, all of whom are in religious ministry/leadership, also really appreciated Jim Antal's book *Climate Church, Climate World*."

Carol writes, "My favorite this year is *For the Love of Soil* by Nicole Masters and *What Your Food Ate* by David Montgomery and Anne Bikle."

RE recommended *Cosmogenesis: An Unveiling of the Expanding Universe* by Brian Swimme. Swimme says, "We humans are not only economic, religious or political beings; at the most fundamental level, we are cosmological beings." RE writes, "Brian Thomas Swimme, mathematical cosmologist, brings us a New and Ancient Story of Home, of a living Universe and Cosmos....a page turner, potential life changer, and must read."

Church of the Wild: How Nature Invites Us into the Sacred by Victoria Looz was also recommended. The description reads, "With an ecospiritual lens on biblical narratives and a fresh look at a community larger than our own species, *Church of the Wild* uncovers the wild roots of faith and helps us deepen our commitment to a suffering earth by falling in love with it—and calling it church."

Mary writes, "I am still under the spell of *The Treeline* [by Ben Rawlence], which is a powerful statement about this planet as an organic whole entity, whose complex systems are not separate, but are really one even more complex system in which we participate. The author traveled our northern treeline through Europe, Siberia, Alaska, Canada, and Greenland. I strongly recommend that you get hold of this book and read it. I predict it will wake you up."

Friends shared a few podcast recommendations: *Refugia* and the *Emergence Magazine's Podcast*, especially Robin Wall Kimmerer's "The Serviceberry, An Economy of Abundance" episode as a "special favorite."

Other books mentioned included:

- » *The Origin of Capitalism: A Longer View* Paperback by Ellen Meiksins Wood,
- » *Sacred Nature: Restoring our Ancient Bond with the Natural World* by Karen Armstrong,
- » *Climate Chaos: Lessons on Survival from Our Ancestors* by Brian Fagan,
- » *Nature's Best Hope* by Douglas Tallamy,
- » *Losing Eden* by Lucy Jones,
- » *Water Always Wins: Thriving in an Age of Drought and Deluge* by Erica Gies, and
- » *Mini-Forest Revolution: Using the Miawaki Method to Rapidly Rewild the World* by Hannah Lewis, with an introduction by Paul Hawken.

What's on your list?

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become resilient to flooding, drought, heat waves, and forest fires. The plants and trees in healthy landscapes hold onto water and draw enormous amounts of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. Their roots pass the carbon along to the underground web of microbial and fungal communities. The carbon can remain underground indefinitely if soils are not bare or disturbed, and roots are alive. Soil fertility increases, and more food and pasture can grow.

And this is happening all over North America. People are preparing for changing conditions by working cooperatively and freeing themselves from the corporate system. They're restoring barren landscapes, establishing wildlife corridors to connect ecosystems, planting edible urban forests, raising backyard chickens, composting, encouraging native plants and trees in place of lawns, and more. Some are "rewilding" degraded land by planting what grew there a few centuries ago, and bringing back an essential part of any ecosystem: predators. Species are returning. This list of some regenerative principles and practices may be useful:

- » Keep soil covered with mulch, compost, and cover crops such as nitrogen-fixing clovers and a variety of crops.
- » Keep living roots in the soil as often as possible.
- » Plow or till as little as possible.
- » Increase biodiversity by planting pollinator gardens with native plants, fruits, nuts, deep-rooted grasses, perennials, and constructing ponds or wetlands.
- » Support managed grazing. Animals are moved from pasture to lush pasture before they overgraze it.

George Fox wrote, "I saw also that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness." We know this darkness: despair, fear, hate, lethal addictions, and suicide. Yet many people, especially younger ones, are turning away from the darkness, to the joy of earth regeneration. May we all together become the intergenerational re-generation.

Sheree Cammer, a member of Albany, NY Friends Meeting, chairs the meeting's Friends in Unity with Nature (FUN) Committee.



Photos in this article by author. QEW offers workshops for your meeting or church on regenerative agriculture, native plants, and land restoration. Email info@quakerearthcare.org.



Photo by Kathy Barnhart

Carl Grant

Ode to a Coast Live Oak

Bark of alligator skin, moss laden
Your strong, contorted arms spread wide
What faith you have in dropping
Your children to the earth
Where brother squirrel buries some
To grow up down the road
And of others makes a feast.

Bark of alligator skin, moss laden
Your strong, contorted arms spread wide
Welcoming your guests -
God knows how many and varied they are:
Squirrels, raccoons and then those birds!
Like the red-tailed hawk who burst from hiding
In your canopy and with consummate ease
Rose silent on the updraft.
Is she alive because she ate the squirrel
That consumed your progeny?
And do you yet grant her the comfort of your
bosom?
And how many of her siblings have found repose
In your arms, O tree hospitable!

Bark of alligator skin, moss laden
Your strong, contorted arms spread wide
Do you ever resent these visitors
Who arrive random, unannounced?
How about those nematodes and borers?
I've heard you're somehow sentient -
If you were an Ent (not saying you ain't)
What would you say about them?

Bark of alligator skin, moss laden
Your strong, contorted arms spread wide
Performing daily your alchemy of turning
The poison of my every out-breath to
The very thing I must breathe or else die.

Dear faithful friend, live oak,
Would to God my life were half so
True as yours.

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Sheree Cammer

Flipping the Narrative to Earth Regeneration

On a train trip back east last year, my cousin and his wife introduced me to the Wild Winds Buffalo Preserve in Fremont, Indiana. Bill “Three Paws” Elias drove our tour in a pickup truck. I had the best seat: front seat passenger. The herd was placidly grazing, their noses buried in the sweet red clover blossoms. They ambled along together from time to time in the ample fenced paddock, one of seven. They are regenerating habitat as they have done for millennia, grazing the prairie grasses without overgrazing, while fertilizing them with manure. People eat meat from the culls and help care for the herd. “They tell us when they want to move,” Bill drawled. “The whole herd will come up to the gate

and let me know they’re ready for fresh pasture.”

Some buffalo wandered freely over to the truck. One buffalo approached within inches of my face. Our eyes met, frankly, kin greeting kin. The afterimage remains. Those eyes—so big, kind, and wise—transformed me: I am to speak for life. I am to read that gaze, and intuit and convey an urgent call to people everywhere: Regeneration.

Regeneration focuses on the health of interconnected ecosystems and maximizing biodiversity, including animals as an integral part. Regeneration is only possible when human-kind tunes in to the natural world, befriending all life. Regeneration also



The Wild Winds Buffalo Preserve in Indiana

focuses on the surrounding human community and socioeconomic systems that benefit nature and humans.

Communities can come together, regardless of political affiliation, and regenerate landscapes so that they

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