



BeFriending Creation

Newsletter of Quaker Earthcare Witness
Affirming our essential unity with nature

Volume 28, Number 5 • September-October 2015

Creating Campaigns: EQAT's Process of Discernment

By George Lakey

On March 2, 2015, PNC Bank said it would give up financing mountaintop removal coal mining. The New York Times and the Guardian joined other media outlets in announcing the outcome of EQAT's campaign demanding that PNC "Bank Like Appalachia Matters!" (BLAM!)

The final phase of the campaign included Quakers taking coordinated action in over a dozen states from Florida to Wisconsin to Massachusetts and down the Eastern Seaboard. EQAT (pronounced "Equate") coordinated 125 actions in the course of its five-year campaign.

In June, 2015, EQAT's board settled on its next campaign: to challenge energy companies to take responsibility for creating jobs and benefitting poor communities by making a major shift to relying on locally generated solar power for electricity, beginning with PECO, a utility in eastern Pennsylvania.

EQAT's discernment process, however, had already begun five months before PNC's March announcement. The group believed that PNC, the seventh-largest bank in the U.S., was ready to change.

At first EQAT simply asked a board member to become the "point person" for conversations about the next campaign. At that point—September 2014—the organization was preparing decentralized training and organizing to raise the stakes for PNC, building upon the wide participation of Quakers and others during FGC's Gathering in confronting PNC headquarters in Pittsburgh in July. EQAT had already organized nearly a hundred actions in the Middle Atlantic States, and now wanted to show PNC that Friends across a larger



swath of the bank's footprint were concerned enough to mount actions.

Conversations in living rooms about the next campaign led to an online discussion on EQAT-Discuss, the group's lively dialogue venue that includes a larger geographical area. EQAT's board then transferred the job of guiding the process to the Next Campaign Core Team, a group of volunteers assisted by EQAT's two staff members.

EQAT members eagerly participated in a session in which the group grounded itself in its primary values, including the intersection of climate justice with economic justice. Another contextual exercise was discussing the pluses and minuses of EQAT as an action organization: its strengths, weaknesses, and areas where members wanted to develop new capacity.

Wary of a process that might become too linear and leave out the creativity that invites Spirit-led intuition, an EQAT session at Haverford College included a chaotic outburst of Post-Its with brainstormed ideas!

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BeFriending Creation

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VISION AND 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.

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Earthcare Calendar

October 20, 2015. Deadline for article submissions for November-December 2015 *BeFriending Creation*.

Snapshots from Washington, DC

A number of QEW Friends made the trip to Washington DC in September to participate in interfaith events and hear Pope Francis speak. Here are a few snapshots from those events. ☞



Resources on EQAT Campaign Structure & Process

For more on the structure and process of EQAT's campaigning, check out the following resources:

- The art of choosing a goal and a target: <http://wagingnonviolence.org/feature/targets-matter-small-action-group-took-mighty-bank-won/>
- Choices that matter—inviting non-Friends, consciously empowering members, and organizing for nimbleness: <http://wagingnonviolence.org/feature/small-quaker-group-forced-pnc-bank-stop-financing-mountaintop-removal/>
- How training has shaped EQAT's organizational culture: <http://wagingnonviolence.org/feature/what-makes-effective-white-allies-training-not-shaming/>



Campaigns, from page 1

EQAT is aware that its organizational culture suffers from limitations imposed by the previous socialization of its members, especially race, class, and gender. Such limitations are barriers to fully discerning the divine presence. For that reason EQAT turns to external facilitators to assist the group to expand its cultural boundaries and dissolve inherited rigidities. As part of the Next Campaign process, Training for Change facilitator Erika Thorne led a large session focused on racism, which in turn led to follow-up activities including Erika coaching EQAT leadership.

A variety of issues

As the spring of 2015 lengthened, individual members advocated a variety of issues for the next campaign: fracking, pipelines, freight trains carrying tar sands oil, the destruction of rainforest in Indonesia for palm oil, making the electrical grid sustainable, and others. The Core Team formalized consideration of these by encouraging subgroups to form to do research, using EQAT's monthly general meeting as an opportunity to recruit new volunteers. Staff members were available to assist researching members.

At one of the general meetings the facilitator asked for a show of hands from those who had ever designed a campaign before from scratch. Only two raised their hands. The Core Team gave subgroups a template to support their work in the art of campaign design. The template looked like a fill-in-the-blank chart with questions to be answered in the blank spaces provided. An example of a question on the template was: which allies could be anticipated in this campaign?

Along with the template's question was written the answer that the BLAM! campaign had given to that question, then a blank space so the subgroup could fill out the corresponding answer for their campaign proposal.

As the weeks passed, half the Core Team members joined subgroups to bolster proposals while the other half kept track of the larger process. The increased rigor supported by the template helped eliminate some of the suggested proposals. Others were dropped when the central idea failed to stir sufficient interest to do further research. Seven proposals became five, and then three. These three proposals were offered to the May general meeting where further questions were asked of the proposers.

In light of the May general meeting, two of the subgroups withdrew their proposals from consideration, leaving one remaining. Up until then over 40 EQAT members had participated in at least one face-to-face Next Campaign event, with 12-20 participating in research and formulation to varying degrees. During the spring, input increased via the email forum of EQAT-Discuss, and the Core Team reached out by phone

to some Quakers and BLAM! activists to keep a channel open to EQAT supporters who live at a distance from Philadelphia.

At its May meeting the EQAT board gave the remaining proposal a kind of clearness process and decided to hold over its decision until June, to give the proposing subgroup time to respond to questions and hesitations through research, dialogue, and re-formu-

lation, and allow for a late-starting proposal to come forward.

EQAT's commitment to nimble, effective action allows the board to make decisions without consensus. In its June meeting, however, the board united in its intention to challenge energy corporations to create jobs and benefit poor communities by making a major shift to relying on locally generated solar power for electricity. The board stated its intention to keep jobs and racial/economic justice in the forefront of all campaign strategy.

Is this a recipe for others, for campaign discernment?

Not really. This process worked for a group that already had a success with a strategically designed campaign, and had been shaped by that experience. Further, the group had a pro-training culture, with ample practical experience of using external and internal expertise to unleash its creativity. The group's confidence was supported by the experience of having been through hard and scary times together, the humility of knowing its limitations, and the inclination to research strategic questions. Finally, the group was practiced in relying on Spirit, turning to divine inspiration even in the midst of confrontation with police and handcuffs. We had no reason to doubt that way would open.

However, for groups that are new to designing a strategically effective nonviolent direct action campaign, finding a coach to support you through your first campaign is wise. The stakes are high. ❧



A Path to Changing Hearts

An Interview with Alan Burns



By Jeff Meyer, Charlotte Friends Meeting

QUAKERS HAVE JOINED WITH MANY other groups and people of good will in the effort to do something about climate change. We want to be better stewards of the environment, combat global warming, stop poisoning the environment, reduce our use of fossil fuels, and so on. But what can a single individual or a small group of people really accomplish? The political and financial forces that push back against policies that might change the environmental equation are enormous. We see them in the inertia and discord that have prevented any of the international meetings on the environment from achieving their goals. The following interview is meant to describe how one individual has followed his own leading to do something about the environmental crisis, something much more public and “heroic” than many of us are willing to undertake.

On Sunday, April 5, Alan Burns presented the forum at Charlotte Friends Meeting. A long-time attendee of the meeting, he described his participation in a 625-mile walk for the environment in the Philippines. He was the only foreign participant. He also explained his new practice of fasting on the first day of every month, in solidarity with many others around the world seeking to combat climate change.

Alan spoke for about 20 minutes, and then opened the floor for questions. The first question, although politely posed, was jarring. “What does walking a long way in a distant country have to do with combating climate change?” And I thought to myself, “yes, and what does not eating for a day each month have to do with it?” The following interview with Alan is an attempt to answer these questions.

Alan, could you tell me how you first got interested in environmental issues?

AB: It was probably around 2000 that I became aware of global warming as an issue. I’d become a serious environmentalist some 40 years ago when I became a vegetarian.

Before we get to the walk in the Philippines, could you describe some of the actions you have taken since getting interested in the cause of the environment?

AB: I guess the first was joining the state group fighting against Duke Energy’s plans to build two 800MW coal-fired plants. We eventually managed to reduce that to one. In 2001 I helped develop the North Carolina Green Party since the two-party system seemed paralyzed in confronting pollution. By 2006 I was fully investigating climate issues, and in late 2008 launched *thinkglobalgreen.org*, a web site I update daily to educate people about the causes and solutions to climate change.



Tell me about the origin and purposes of the Philippines march.

AB: In the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan, the world’s strongest storm ever to make landfall, the Philippine Climate Commissioner, Naderev Yeb Sano, made a passionate appeal at the Warsaw COP talks for world action to halt climate change. He fasted there 14 days with widespread support around the world. Over time Yeb developed the 40-day walk (1,000 kilometers) from Manila to Tacloban, his family’s home and where Typhoon Haiyan made landfall on November 8

Continued on next page

2013. With the walk he hoped to bring world attention to show the Philippines as one of the leading nations in the world affected by extreme storms. He had hoped to bring this action to world leaders' attention at the following month's COP-20 talks in Lima, Peru. (However, the U.S. and Europe exerted pressure to have him removed from the commission, so he did not attend.)

How did you get involved in the march?

AB: Late in 2013, I'd been asked by Dr. Jill Stein, 2012 Green Party presidential candidate, to develop a 10-day global fast as part of the Global Climate Convergence she was developing for Earth Day to May Day 2014. I quickly realized I needed to contact Yeb Sano to make this a possibility if I was to reach outside the United States. Gradually Yeb and I joined each other's fasts and in April, Climate Action Network (CAN), a global environmental organization, collaborated with Yeb to develop the Fast for the Climate (FFtC). In short, CAN then asked me to head up FFtC in the U.S. Subsequently I learned of the Climate Walk for Justice beginning in Manila October 2

What did you find most difficult?

AB: Before the walk, getting the extended visa from the Philippine Consulate was a headache. On the walk itself, the hardest part was acclimating to the tropics, as I had never been that far south or to Asia. Not understanding the Tagalog language prevented me from knowing what was going on most of the time. As a result, I was unsure where we would arrive each night or where we would sleep. The regular hard floors most of the time didn't make for a good night's sleep. The humidity I was adapted to before going, but rarely being able to have dry clothing was tough. Over time, thigh problems from daily walking caused pain and finally a shin problem three days out from Tacloban prevented me walking for two days. That was very upsetting as I'd hoped to complete the whole journey.

What gave you the greatest satisfaction?

AB: Being accepted by the Filipinos as one of them. Despite dreadful Internet connections in the country, being able to send back reports to Charlotte bloggers and FFtC did make the trip over there positive in that respect. I found Yeb to be a soul-mate in the sense that our temperaments and outlook were so similar. Also, the countryside was so beautiful and the people, though third-world impoverished, were generous and friendly.

Do you see your participation as a religious act or an act of social protest? What do you think you accomplished?

AB: It wasn't an act of social protest. As with the fasting element, it was a spiritual journey. Both the fasting and undergoing extreme conditions is taking upon oneself the suffering that so many in the third world are obliged to endure because of climate extremes caused by the rich world's arrogant use of fossil fuels for selfish ends. Although the Filipinos were predominantly Catholic and may have viewed their participation in a religious context—especially Yeb—this is not how I perceived it. My participation was more an extension of my attempt to educate others in a more meaningful way than I had been doing sitting behind a computer researching. I needed to witness what climate destruction was like first-hand.



It's not easy to define what I accomplished. Because of interviews and blogs perhaps I helped educate more people about what was actually occurring because of extreme climate. Perhaps in producing a 60-minute YouTube program and a book about the walk, my experience will reach a wider audience.

What about the future? What are your plans?

I hope to have the local public access TV program aired by mid-August and on YouTube soon. The book has taken more time and is now available on Amazon. My plans are in late September to join in Rome the Filipinos I walked with in Asia and join the People's Pilgrimage from the Vatican to Paris in time for the COP21 talks in Paris. I'm particularly looking forward to a stopover in Assisi where the walkers will meet with Pope Francis who has committed himself to a desire to influence the Paris talks. With better equipment for recording the progress of the walk, thanks to a generous offer that provided me with a laptop and smartphone, I hope to report back more stories along the way. In

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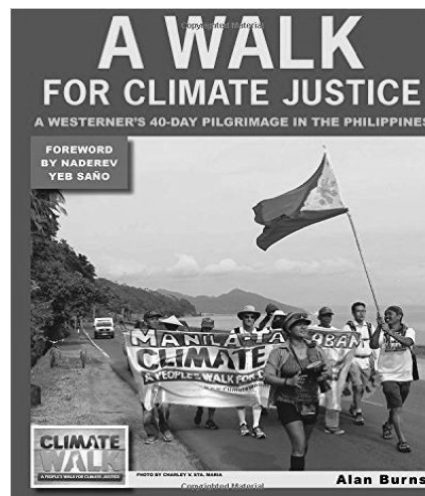
Changing Hearts, from page 5

Paris I expect to assist during the two weeks of the talks to again support the FFtC working group as I did in Lima during COP20.

How does fasting and walking aid the cause?

AB: This is the unknown factor. Yeb alluded to Gandhi's Salt March as a vision of the Tacloban walk, but there is no way to know what the outcome will be. The object is to change the hearts and minds of people and world leaders—not to specify certain outcomes. The global fast I was involved with in 1983 on the nuclear arms race provided me with evidence that such acts—particularly fasting—can be very powerful. In walking we are meeting with people along the way, and, we trust, getting media attention as to the reasons climate acts are so necessary right now. Inasmuch as it is non-violent, as Gandhi showed, it doesn't attract resentment; there is no harm being done to others or property.

In the end, I go back to the original questions: "How does walking a long distance in a foreign country help the environment? How does fasting help the environment?" Reflecting on Alan's responses to my questions, it is clear that there are no easy answers. But his responses do indicate to me his understanding that whatever answers there are to our environmental problems, they go beyond technological solutions. We already know the technical fixes. The vexing



Alan's book, *A Walk for Climate Justice: A Westerner's 40-Day Pilgrimage in the Philippines*, is available now on Amazon.com at <http://tinyurl.com/poyq4fa>

problem is people and issues that lie in the human heart. Pilgrimage and fasting are ancient methods of changing the heart, first of the walkers and fasters, and then of those who open themselves up to being inspired by them. These methods are appropriate even in the 21st century. They create a spiritual solidarity that can be contagious. If so led, we Quakers should consider trying them. ☞

Both Alan Burns and Jeff Meyer, a retired professor, attend Charlotte Friends Meeting.

Upcoming Events: Mark Your Calendars Now!

OCTOBER 22-25, 2015
Come to the **QEW Fall
2015 Steering Committee**, Ben Lomond Quaker
Center, CA

The Ben Lomond Quaker
Center is a non-profit
retreat center located
on 80 acres of redwood
forest, near Santa Cruz,
California.
www.quakercenter.org

NOVEMBER 1, 2015
Participate in
**24 Hours of
Meditation for the
Earth!**

This worldwide effort
from <http://24earth.org>
has a goal of waging a
peaceful, world-wide sit-in
on November 1. Find out
more on the Events page
of our website!

Podcasts from Friends

"Doing the Work of Noah: Growing the Ark"

Tom Small, co-clerk of the Publications committee, was interviewed on Northern Spirit Radio in August, talking about responding to species extinction and creating habitats with native fauna. You can listen to the interview here: <http://www.northernspiritradio.org/episode/doing-work-noah-growing-ark>

"Nicaragua Inter-oceanic Canal - NO!"

Tere Campos and Brad Stocker, QEW Friend, were also interviewed on Northern Spirit Radio, talking about the potentially disastrous plan for the Nicaragua Inter-Oceanic Canal, which could imperil the ninth largest lake of the Americas if the plan proceeds. Listen to the interview here: <http://www.northernspiritradio.org/episode/nicaragua-inter-oceanic-canal-no>



In Quaker Silence

Reflections on QEW's Recent Week in Washington, DC

By Russ Adams, North Columbus (Ohio) Monthly Meeting

IN QUAKER SILENCE, do I hear our humanitarian ancestors, our abolitionist ancestors, our pacifist ancestors, crying out to us to pursue full sustainability for ourselves and our children and all folks yet to come... while there is time?

Perhaps an all-for-peace Manhattan project could be organized around a Full Sustainability Commission? Perhaps nothing less can bring together the scientists and other visionaries needed to very carefully, very sensitively usher in a new age?

In Ninth month, Fourth week, Pope Francis recognized environmental sustainability as among our highest golden-ruled goals. The former Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio invited all to "hear the cry of the poor" and "enter into dialogue with all people about our common home."

We can be thankful that an influential global religion-business has come out so powerfully for environmental sustainability. Yet, toward "dialogue," there is so much more to be done.

In Quaker silence I discern Fox's "pure religion" as a way we strive to bring all our decisions and behaviors in line with golden rules. "Do unto others," including children yet to come, "as we would have others do unto us" (Matt. 7:12). "Love others," including tomorrow's children, "as much as we love ourselves" (Mark 12:30). Different religions provide many such behavioral

guides through many diverse forms of words. Perhaps Brother Bergoglio's "dialogue" invites all people of all faiths to compete in imaginatively and dedicatedly bringing golden-ruled sustainability to life?

In Quaker silence, do we hear the poor cry out for food sustainability? In the November 1995 issue of *Scientific American* (pp. 46, 52), Carl Safina warns us in "The World's Imperiled Fish," that fish production worldwide "contributes more to the world's supply of protein than beef, poultry, or any other animal source," yet world fish catches have been falling since 1989.

World Watch adds that with 80 percent of the world's calories coming from farmed grains, per person grain production has been falling since 1984. We now add a billion hungry mouths to the world's population every 13 years.

In Quaker silence, do we hear the poor cry out for energy sustainability? Engineer Dave Rutledge at Caltech estimates that we will exhaust 90 percent of all our conventional fuels by year 2060.

"Our world is facing a refugee crisis of a magnitude not seen since the Second World War," Bergoglio observed. In so many news stories we see third-world brothers and sisters savaged by poverty in lands where for far too long, babies have been born faster than jobs.

Do the poor cry out for inexpensive birth controls? Do their still small voices explain why 86 percent of

Continued on next page

our dear Catholic brothers and sisters who worked on the 1966 Papal Commission on Population and Birth Control identified contraceptives as mandated by golden rules? Are the poor crying out for population sustainability, everywhere?

Too often, genocide and war flow from failures of sustainability. Götz Ali's *Hitler's Beneficiaries* shows that the Nazi Party bought loyalty of some Germans by re-distributing confiscated wealth from murdered minorities and foreign countries. Today, many American politicians buy loyalty through borrowing at rates projected to bankrupt Social Security and even the value of currency. In Quaker silence, are the poor crying out that we should pursue welfare-state sustainability and currency sustainability as keys to economic sustainability?

In the Jewish book of Genesis, Adam and Eve violated God-given golden rules for protecting Creation. God warned (Genesis 2:17), "[Y]ou must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," from that ancient symbol of sustainability. Adam and Eve ignored God's guidance and lost both paradise and God's favor (Genesis Ch. 2). Noah honored golden rules that protect creation for all folks yet to come. That's how Noah earned high approvals (Genesis Ch. 6).

Are the poor crying out to us to revive ancient faiths' golden rules; to build the first fully sustainable societies since Adam savaged Eden? In Quaker silence, do I hear our humanitarian ancestors, our abolitionist ancestors, our pacifist ancestors, crying out that we should pursue full sustainability for ourselves and our children and all folks yet to come...while there is still time? ☞



Russ Adams

Russ Adams worships with North Columbus Monthly Meeting (OH), where he clerks the Peace and Social Action Committee and represents the Lake Erie Yearly Meeting with QEW. He wrote a study of slavery and genocide called *A Letter to Dear Children: On Our Overpopulation-Violence Connection*. He and his wife Susan enjoy four grandchildren, two miniature Yorkies, and an uppity white parakeet named Coco.

My Time in Washington

By Mary Gilbert

On Wednesday night, with the Pope to speak the next day, QEW Friends participated in the interfaith program and the overnight vigil organized by the Franciscan Action Network (<https://franciscanaction.org/>). Can you imagine a gathering of Jews from differing communities, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, Protestants, Catholics, Buddhists, and Friends?

There we all were, paying attention and experiencing our common ground for hours and hours. There were speeches and sermons and songs, even some colorful religious garb.

At the end of all that was the hour given to us Quakers for programming, and our program was the practice of silence. Roy provided a reading, I sang one song (with my eyes closed), and Laura provided a statement she had considered, but then we explained silence and speaking from the silence and we sat down, leaving the live microphone turned on. It was slow getting going, and it did require another explanation of what we were doing together, but then speakers did approach the mic and say what was on their hearts.

You've heard of popcorn meetings, right? Our more-than-an-hour meeting had maybe a dozen and a half speakers, but the quality of reverence was not disturbed.

There was some silence as one speaker left the mic to sit down, and the next decided they were actually going to stand and approach the mic and speak, but I think it was okay because we had all just spent hours together in various forms of worship. We were all present. And in our whole time together the Quaker time was the only place where individuals were invited to tell each other what was "not just a good idea you are having, but something on your heart that just might be ministry for all who are here." It was beautiful. I think it will be remembered. ☞



Mary Gilbert (far left)

Over planned and under organized: On target but missing the mark

By Roy Taylor, Clerk of QEW

THE RELEASE OF THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL earlier this summer set the stage for his historic visit to the United States and his address to both houses of Congress. What a perfect opportunity for the interfaith community to respond with multiple corresponding events in Washington DC that week, both before and after his address. The Moral Action for Climate became the central group organizing or at least reporting on the various events that were materializing. I am sure that there were all sorts of logistical problems working with the various agencies of the National Park service for the use of the National Mall, police and other security, and the City's departments and Metro. I am sure that money or a sense of lack thereof played a role in the delayed decisions and commitments to the layout of events and timing. Without the confidence of knowing what was going to happen—where, when, and how many would participate—it seems that many people decided not to join those of us who had committed to the events that week.

Two weeks before the event, the organizers moved the overnight vigil to a new location. Only two days before the vigil, I found out that there were only two faith groups signed up to lead an hour of prayer that night. This was not shaping up to be the exciting build up to the Pope's speech that I thought it might be. While nice, the group of 200 or so attendees that were there for the first set of presentations had dwindled to around a hundred for the two prayer sessions. Maybe 10 of us spent the night to finish the vigil.

Earlier that evening we were discussing whether we would have to move the Friends' meeting spot because of the anticipation of crowds. When we arrived at the



location a little before the appointed time, it was evident that there were plans by many for a lot of people to be joining us on the Mall. Huge jumbotron video screens and speaker towers had been set up to serve the expected crowd from the stage area just west of Third Street all the way to Seventh Street. It was equally evident that there were not enough people moving in to meet those expectations. The pre-speech presentations started at 7:30 AM and by the time Moby was leaving the stage just before the speech, there were several thousand of us there to watch. We were vastly outnumbered by the ticketed area set up on the west lawn of the Capitol that held roughly 25,000 seats.

During the lead-up time I remembered an old poster that read "Suppose they gave a war and nobody came?" Suppose climate change is real and nobody came?

Friends, we have our work cut out for us. ☞

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Share your Quaker witness for climate justice!

We have started a new video project, called "What Canst Thou Say?" and we're asking Friends to send us short (3-minute or less) selfie videos that answer two questions: (1) What is your biggest concern for the planet? and (2) What solution do you suggest? We will be posting all the videos we receive on our YouTube channel to share our voices in advance of the UN Climate talks in Paris in December. Join us!

Questions? Email Katherine at katherine@quakerearthcare.org.



NEYM's Public Response to Pope Francis

In his address to the U.S. Congress and to our nation, Pope Francis invited us to pray for him, and to pray together.

On behalf of the Quaker faith communities in the six New England states, we offer our prayers for the healing of the world. We join our voice with all who strive to meet our sacred obligations to the planet we share.

Francis reminds us that all creatures are connected, that each must be cherished with love and respect. We are dependent on one another. It is through our relationships with each living being that we make real our love for God and for Creation. Francis challenges us to accept the urgency of the crisis created by human-caused climate disruption, recognizing it as a central challenge of our time. This work cannot be left to the future. Responding to the climate crisis requires of us a serious and clear-eyed recognition of the severity of our impact on the planet and the devastating effects already being experienced, especially by the most vulnerable. Our actions today determine the world our children will inherit. We welcome Francis' message and his conviction that acting together we can still make a difference.

It is the testimony of Quakers that we are divinely required to respond with courageous and responsible efforts to avert the most serious effects of environmental deterioration caused by human activity. At our best, we seek the deep healing of the world. As a faith community, Francis' words confront us with the question, "Are we prepared to bear the burden of this truth?"

We know there is a place for us in this work. We are called to act in hope, with persistence, courage and charity.

We witness Francis' visit with gratitude for his faithful engagement with the people of the United States, both as a nation and personally. We pray that all people will hear and heed the important challenge this servant of God has brought to our country. We call on faith communities and people of faith to take up this burden as together we find the way forward.

Fritz Weiss, Presiding Clerk
Noah Baker Merrill, Yearly Meeting Secretary
New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
9/27/2015



YES, I'd like to show my support for QEW!

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____ City _____

State/Province _____ ZIP/Postal Code _____

I want to contribute \$100____; \$200____; \$500____; Other _____

My check/cheque is enclosed. Payable to QEW, P.O. Box 6787, Albany, CA, 94706

____ I'd prefer to pay by my credit card: MC____; Visa ____; Amount _____

Name on Card: _____ Security Code _____

Credit Card Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

____ I would like to give monthly. Please charge my credit card \$_____ each month.

Thank you, Friends!

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aren't just holding our breath: people everywhere are mobilizing to make this a turning point in our collective history. Actions to move from a fossil-fuel based economy to a carbon-neutral (or negative) economy are needed not just at the international level; it is exciting that local and statewide efforts are gaining in momentum.

Earlier this year, mayors from around the world committed their communities to climate action. Transition Town ideas are becoming a reality in several communities. States are taking up the climate change challenge—New York, Hawaii, and California have each enacted significant changes to move toward carbon neutrality, and Massachusetts is seriously considering a carbon tax.

In the lead-up to Paris, we in grassroots efforts also are not just holding our breath. We will be gathering to express our concerns and raise our voices throughout the fall. Events were planned around the Pope's visit to Congress on September 24 and his visit to the United Nations in New York. Many localities supported companion gatherings along with the Washington, DC and NYC events.

October 14 is the People's Climate Movement National Day of Climate Action and events are planned for several cities including New York, Washington, DC, Miami, Denver, and San Francisco (see www.peoples-climate.org). Marches are planned in Paris on the

day before the UN conference begins, November 29, and after the conference, on December 12. QEW has initiated a project to raise our Quaker voices on climate change—we are collecting 3-minute videos from Friends and distributing them widely, asking the questions: What is your biggest concern for our planet? What is your solution (or where should we begin)? See https://youtu.be/_zdUqubccKk to add your voice.

Californians are not just holding our breath about the weather. We recognize that major changes have to be made in how and which crops we grow, how we distribute water throughout the state, and what kind of "lawns" we plant. Our Governor told urban water users we had to reduce summertime water consumption by 25 percent and we responded by reducing our use by 30 percent. Agriculture (80 percent of water use in the state) is a much longer story, although it is interesting to remember that almonds got bad press a few months ago because they are such water hogs. Those almonds were planted during and after the last big drought in former cotton fields because they used less water than cotton. This time around, even less thirsty crops and more water conservation ideas need to be part of the future (for instance, California is one of the few states that still does not regulate ground water use).

Climate change tells us that drought is no longer a 15-, 50-, or 1,200-year event. All of the west needs to be prepared for hotter, drier, and longer summers. ♻

Canadian Happenings

CYM Signs Interfaith Declaration on Climate Justice

Canadian Yearly Meeting has signed on to an interfaith declaration seeking action on climate change, poverty reduction and justice for aboriginal peoples. The seven-page declaration "On promoting Climate Justice and Ending Poverty in Canada; Faith Communities in Canada Speak Out," was released by the Canadian Council of Churches on September 25. It describes global warming and poverty as a "spiritual, moral and ethical human crisis." You can read the joint statement here: <http://tinyurl.com/nufws27>

Sign the LEAP Manifesto

Yesterday the LEAP Manifesto was released in Toronto. The LEAP Manifesto is a document that calls on Canada to move to a 100 percent renewable energy economy, acknowledge the rights of Indigenous peoples, and build a socially just society. Both individuals and organizations are invited to sign on. You can find the text of the manifesto, a list of signatories and a space to sign by going to www.leapmanifesto.org.

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Expectant Waiting— Expectant Doing

by Shelley Tanenbaum, QEW General Secretary

It feels like the entire state of California is holding our collective breath as we wait for El Nino to water our thirsty crops, reservoirs, shrunk lakes, and trees. In the city, trees deprived of winter rains for the past four years are dropping leaves in August. Lawns have gone brown. We keep our favorite plants alive with buckets of water from kitchen runoff and gray water from the bathtub. How bad is it? We are told that even the mighty redwoods, trees that have had 240 million years to adapt to life on the planet, might need a bit of water to make it through (at least those in our backyards, like this one).

In the great central valley farmlands, California's bounty of fruits and vegetables grows this year by draining 20,000-year-old aquifers, while normal irrigation allocations have been severely limited or cut-off entirely. So, we hold our breath and pray, waiting for the rain and snow that meteorologists promised and didn't deliver last year, hoping they will be right this year.

In much the same way, people all over the world are hoping and praying for an historic agreement at the climate conference in Paris—the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, November 30–December 11. But we



This 20 -year old redwood tree has grown to 80 feet tall in my backyard

[**See Expectant on page 11**](#)