



# BeFriending Creation

A Publication of

## QUAKER EARTHCARE WITNESS

Affirming our essential unity with nature

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## The Global Climate Action Summit *From the Row behind the VIP Section*

By Mica Estrada

“OUR PLANET IS NOT for sale! Our air and water are not for sale! Our land is not for sale!” This chant rose from the audience as Michael Bloomberg took the stage at the Global Climate Action Summit (GCAS) held in San Francisco, September 13 and 14th, 2018. Behind him was a colorful moving background, music and an announcer’s voice characteristic of the Academy Award show. Bloomberg, a co-chair of the GCAS, watched as several people raised a large banner and started the chant. Security, receiving little resistance, escorted the mostly brown-skinned protesters out of the room. Bloomberg quipped something like: “Only in America do environmentalists protest at an environmentalist conference.” This moment captured the complexity of the gathering and the ongoing struggle to command and define the most effective approach to messaging global climate action and a “climate-safe” future.

As a Latina behavioral scientist who studies social influence, and the Director of Climate Education Partners (CEP), at the University of San Diego, perhaps I observed the GCAS through a unique lens.

CEP provided climate education and worked with leaders in business, politics, health, transportation, Latinx and Tribal communities. As such, I have spent many years focusing not just on local climate impacts, but on how to do effective messaging (aka education) that results in increased engagement and action among diverse leaders in the San Diego region. Through this lens, I watched the GCAS. As I sat one row behind the VIP section and observed the plenary that included a highly choreographed parade of the elite, it was clear the key message was that significant progress is occurring towards the goals set in the Paris Agreement and these were the reasons why:

1. The US federal government may be hostile and resistant to the Paris Agreement, but US states and cities are completely committed and can show tremendous progress towards those goals. Numerous political leaders described the actions they were taking towards establishing carbon neutral cities and states. California was highlighted as a leading example, showcasing

*Read more on page 3*



We Rise for All Creation. People all over the world joined to “Rise for Climate, Jobs, & Justice” on September 8th, 2018. Here they march in San Francisco, CA. Photo: Shelley Tanenbaum

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## BeFriending Creation

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We publish *BeFriending Creation* to promote the work of Quaker Earthcare Witness, stimulate discussion and action, share insights, practical ideas, and news of our actions, and encourage among Friends 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 (Quakers). The editor is responsible for unsigned items. Please share our work widely and broadly, always attributing it to Quaker Earthcare Witness.

**Interested in being a member of QEWW? Membership** is open to all who demonstrate a commitment to support the work of Quaker Earthcare Witness and who support its work at the Monthly or Yearly Meeting levels, or through other Friends organizations. Quaker Earthcare Witness is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation; contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

### 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

**January 15, 2018** Deadline for articles for Jan-Feb-March issue

## From the Clerk's Table

Dear Friends,

"Think globally, act locally." I remember the relief I felt when I heard that advice. For me, the downside of thinking globally was that I also FELT globally. Each issue hurt—the plastic in the ocean, the loss of ice on Everest, lack of water in Africa, the desperation of coal miners, the plight of polar bears and manatees. It was all so wrong and painful.

I grieved for days for the loss of the last northern white rhino. I was also angry—how could these magnificently ugly animals become extinct in our time? In my anger, I muttered, "He has a NAME. His name is Sudan. He is dead now." It is still painful.

With the anger and the grieving came an immense sense of helplessness. I can never do enough to heal or reverse these failures. What I do is one drop in a massive, polluted ocean. I understand people who just cannot see the results of climate disruption—it is too hard.

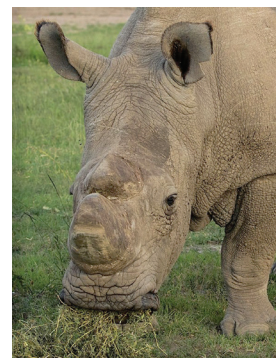
I want to share what I have done to be able to keep on with this work. I have given up outcomes. I do not do what I do because of what I will achieve, or because I will make sure the earth gets through this crazy time. I do not do what I do for the future. I do it because that is who I have decided to be. It is who I choose to be.

I have had the gift of many teachers on this path, some of whom I know only from the books they have written. Margaret Wheatley is one such teacher. I offer you some of her words from the book *So Far From Home: Lost and Found in our Brave New World*.

"The Brazilian theologian Rubem Alvez defined the source of discipline: 'We must live by the love of what we will never see.' Yet as I walk down this path, I do see things that inspire me to maintain discipline. I see not only the pain and suffering, but the natural goodness, compassion and intelligence of people. Even though we're not going to save the world, we human beings are worth struggling for. And in the midst of the struggle, there are still great pleasures to be found, especially moments of joy. There is joy because we humans are meant to be together, we are together, we were never separated. That was just a terrible optical illusion. In the worst times of loss and grief, when everything has been swept away, we're still here. We have not lost our compassion or intelligence. We're still together, just humans, being."

Mary Jo Klingel

Clerk, Quaker Earthcare Witness



**Can you make a donation to support Quaker Earthcare Witness? Visit <[quakerearthcare.org/donate](http://quakerearthcare.org/donate)> or send a check to Quaker Earthcare Witness, P.O. Box 6787, Albany, CA 94706. Thank you.**

*Continued from page 1*

Governor Brown's recent signing of a bill to transition California to 100% "clean energy" by 2045, but ignoring his more controversial "corporate friendly" decisions to support fracking.

2. Economic prosperity and profit have been decoupled from carbon generation. Former Vice President Al Gore emphasized this message, stating with a booming tenor, "We have decoupled emissions from economic prosperity," which summarized days of messaging by numerous CEOs and business leaders describing the economic boom they achieved while staying committed to carbon neutral buildings, supply chains, and corporate practices.

3. Worldwide positive things are happening which have exponential impacts to bring the world to carbon neutrality (and arrest the exponential destabilizing impacts resulting from the current trajectory). There was emphasis on technologies and interventions that can grow rapidly, and be effective in addressing the mitigation challenges currently faced. I listened on a simultaneous translation headset as international leaders came forward to describe their efforts, with China having the most impressive imagery of vast fields of solar panels.

As with the work I did with CEP, the summit de-emphasized the terrible impacts of climate change in the world today and instead focused primarily on progress. However, with CEP, we gave equal voice to the people most impacted by climate disruptions, who also have creative solutions to addressing these challenges. At the summit, the plenaries rarely acknowledged how the dominant value of the powerful creates and perpetuates an economy

that rests on resource and human exploitation and carbon emissions.

Overall, however, it was an impressive show and it DID feel like a show.

No matter how many beautiful graphics were displayed, it seemed that the heart of the matter was never addressed. To many of us, this is the sense that "the overall increase in global temperatures is the symptom of an underlying spiritual malaise." Spiritual maturity leads individuals to act with a knowing of interconnection, kindness, generosity, and care for all living things. This orientation to the world provides a practical, material reflection of what mystics throughout the ages have proclaimed: We are One.

**At the summit, the plenaries rarely acknowledged how the dominant value of the powerful creates and perpetuates an economy that rests on resource and human exploitation and carbon emissions.**

Dr. Jane Goodall brought refreshing truth-speaking when she described the deep knowledge and wisdom of indigenous people with whom she has worked, stating, "They understand the spiritual nature of the forest...They haven't got into our greedy, unsustainable lifestyle... They haven't got into a cycle of using up more of the natural world than nature can replenish." Goodall concludes that we all need a more intimate relationship with nature to guide our consciousness and the decisions we make. Her statements, along with breakout session panels that included strong indigenous, youth, African American, Latino, and African voices, ultimately gave a much-needed counter balance

to the two-day summit plenaries that otherwise emphasized the agenda of financially powerful change agents.

The voices arising from the community of highly impacted groups, wounded by and not invested in the status quo of what author and activist Joanna Macy calls the Industrial Growth Society, provided truth and ideas for equitable solutions. However, in the main GCAS plenary, this was definitely not central to conveying progress and momentum. Similar to William Penn, current elected officials, business leaders and international investors will continue to wear their sword (expressing ethically driven choices, while taking abbreviated actions that are less likely to threaten the economic status quo) as long as they can.

*Mica Estrada, Ph.D. is a member of Strawberry Creek Meeting in Berkeley, California. She is an Associate Professor at UC San Francisco and Director of a National Science Foundation funded program, Climate Education Partners.*

*Useful edits provided by Carl Magruder, MA, MDiv, BCC, is a member of Strawberry Creek Meeting in Berkeley, California. He is the Director of Spiritual Support Services at ResolutionCare.*

**Read more about the Global Climate Action Summit on page 10 and on our website.**





# QUAKER EARTHCARE WITNESS IN 2018

THE UNITED NATIONS Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) frightening report provoked new conversations and realizations about the terrifying realities of climate disruption and the urgency of our committed action. With each new study or news story, we at Quaker Earthcare Witness reaffirm the power of our vision, "to search for that life which affirms the unity of all Creation," and "to participate in the healing of the Earth." We are summoning our own spiritual power and helping each other move toward faithful action.

In October, the Quaker Earthcare Witness Steering Committee met at the Dumas Bay Centre in Federal Way, WA, on traditional lands of the Coast Salish people, with renewed energy and a plan to strengthen our work in the year to come.

## In 2018, Quaker Earthcare Witness has:

- Produced four issues of *Befriending Creation* that we hope inspires reflection and action;
- Funded meetings' and organizations' environmental projects throughout all branches of Quakerism with mini-grants;
- Sponsored a forum on water and the African Diaspora in New York City, affiliated with the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent;
- Promoted and coordinated participation in the Rise for Climate, Jobs, & Justice march;
- Hosted the Earthcare Center at the Friends General Conference Gathering;
- Written new pamphlets on climate change, eco-justice, and population concerns;
- Updated our Earthcare for Children curriculum for First Day Schools;
- Visited monthly and yearly meetings, offering workshops and presentations.



QEW's Steering Committee and guests meet in Washington.  
Photo: Hayley Hathaway

**Join us to be part of a Friendly response to climate disruption as we create an ecologically sound future rooted in justice and respect for Creation.**

## How can you and your meeting get involved in 2019?

- Share your Earthcare ministry with us. What projects is your meeting working on? What concerns do you hold?
- Share *BeFriending Creation*—display it at your meetinghouse.
- Become a Quaker Earthcare Witness representative for your yearly meeting. Each yearly meeting nominates one or two representatives to be a liaison between our group and Friends in your region.
- Start an Earthcare group at your meeting. We have the tools to help you get started.
- Use Quaker Earthcare Witness materials in your First Day school.
- Share our literature, like pamphlets on key environmental issues, with your meeting, and at special events.
- Apply for a Mini-Grant to support a project.
- Make a donation on your meeting's behalf to support our work.

Contact us at [shelley@quakerearthcare.org](mailto:shelley@quakerearthcare.org) or call 510-542-9606 to get involved.

## Donate Stock for Earthcare

Are you one of those fortunate people who is both over 70 and has a need to donate part of your IRA each year? If so, we would be happy to be the recipient of your “required minimum distribution.” We will put your donation to good use!

We can accept your donation directly as stocks or you can ask your broker to send us a check based on the sale of the stock, to meet your Qualified Charitable Distribution.

Contact our General Secretary to arrange for a transfer at [shelley@quakerearthcare.org](mailto:shelley@quakerearthcare.org) or leave a message at 510- 542-9606.

Our policy is to sell the stock as soon as feasible so that we can use the proceeds to immediately fund our work.

## Apply for a Mini-Grant

Do you have an earthcare project at your meeting or in your broader community?

Apply for a Quaker Earthcare Witness mini-grant to help fund your project.

Find more information at [www.quakerearthcare.org/minigrants](http://www.quakerearthcare.org/minigrants).

# Going Green is Easy and Cheaper Now

A Peek into Quaker Institute for the Future’s new book *Energy Choices: Opportunities to Make Wise Decisions for a Sustainable Future* by Bob Bruninga

Review by Judy Lumb

WE ARE NEVER MORE than a few years away from making a major personal energy decision: • when we pay our electricity bill • when we buy a new car • when our roof needs replacing • when our water heater quits • when our furnace needs repair • when we move to a new house.

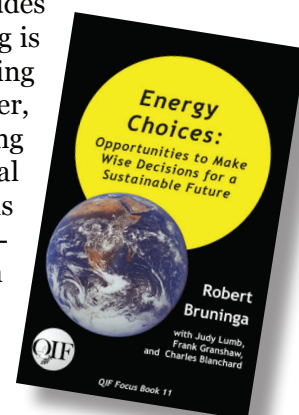
Our current lifestyle is simply not sustainable, not in energy, population growth, water use, nor the food we produce. Nor are the impacts of high-consumption lifestyles borne equally by all—indeed, those who consume the least are typically exposed to the highest levels of air and water pollution. Each of these concerns is paramount to our long-term survival on this planet Earth, and they can be managed if we have the will to seek truth and balance in our stewardship.

For many people, the changes required to move from fossil fuels to clean energy seem insurmountable or less pressing than our individual day-to-day concerns and daily challenges, but recent changes make going green relatively easy. The price of solar power has dropped 100-fold since 1970 and 10-fold just in the last decade. Not only do we see the demise of coal at hand, and the amortized cost of clean solar energy now less than half the price of electricity from the utility, but also we are eight years into the electric vehicle (EV) revolution with cars that are better, faster, cleaner, cheaper to operate, and cheaper to maintain than fossil-fueled vehicles when used in local travel and commuting. We have a sustainable path to a bright future if we will consider our choices and make the right decisions with a prepared mind. Where to begin?

The switch to electrical devices is the first step toward renewable energy. Water heaters, leaf blowers, snow blowers, chain saws, trimmers, edgers and cutters all have excellent electrical equivalents. Once the fossil-fueled devices are replaced with electrical ones, renewable sources can supply the electricity.

Electric vehicles open a whole new paradigm for changing energy consumption to clean renewable possibilities. If a vehicle has a plug, it can run on any form of clean renewable electricity. That includes EVs and plug-in hybrids. But a hybrid without a plug is still a gasoline car that runs on fossil fuels. Commuting and daily transportation can be done cheaper, cleaner, better, and more conveniently with EVs than continuing our century of inefficient gasoline-burning internal combustion engines and dependence on gas stations and foreign oil. In 2018, there are more than 40 full-sized electric or plug-in hybrid models available in the U.S. market.

*This book is packed with practical and current information that you haven’t seen before. Visit [quakerinstitute.org](http://quakerinstitute.org) for more.*





# First Nation - Farmer Climate Unity March



## A Reflection

By Peter Clay

WHAT RESONATES FOR ME as the central experience of the First Nation – Farmer Climate Unity March? Broken relationships and beginning to learn what is required to move into healing.

The deepening of existing friendships and the beginning of new friendships across the divide was part of my experience on the march. I am very grateful for these friendships. But let us not underestimate what is now required of us. While it is essential for the descendants of settler-colonists and indigenous peoples to examine together how the destruction and violence caused by colonization and empire continue today, harming all of us, the work is very hard.

After the march, I was left with awareness that true healing will require much more of all of us than we may even be able to imagine, from the place where we are today.

I accept that for humans to again understand the interdependence of all beings, of all life on Mother Earth, healing the broken relationships among the peoples of the Earth is essential. There is much consideration today of what decolonization, including decolonizing our minds,

looks like. As I walked, I saw how the implicit bias of our colonized minds denigrates and tokenizes the achievements, culture, and even the creation stories of indigenous peoples. Today, the elimination of indigenous peoples from the landscape of what they call Turtle Island continues in numerous ways. The violence continues, reproduced and replicated over and over and over again. This is simply unacknowledged by the overwhelming majority of those of us who are the descendants of those who came from Europe. It was our relatives who brutalized the indigenous peoples living here, who used violence to steal their traditional lands from them and who stripped the people of many nations of their very identities, including their language, their spirituality, and their agency to still be truly sovereign in the place of their ancestors.

How can all of us living today even begin to heal from such brutality and savagery? It is a mistake to minimize the difficult and painful path before all of us. Was this March part of the way forward? I think so, but it is, and will be, a long journey.

*Peter Clay is Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative)'s representative to QEW and Jeff Kisling attends Bear Creek Meeting. Read more and see more of Jeff's photos at <kslingjeff.wordpress.com>.*

## An Introduction

By Jeff Kisling

From September 1–8th, Friend Peter Clay and I walked on the First Nation – Farmer Climate Unity March in Iowa. A group of thirty people that included a dozen Native Americans walked 94 miles along the route of the Dakota Access Pipeline. One of the goals of the march was to bring attention to a case before the Iowa Supreme Court about the improper use of eminent domain to force Iowa farmers to allow Energy Transfer Partners' construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline on their land.

After walking between 9 and 15 miles each day, we joined community forums in the evening to discuss topics such as farming practices or the consequences of the pipeline construction. During this march, Quakers in my local meeting, Bear Creek, often sent email messages of encouragement, and held us in their prayers. We stopped for prayers every time we crossed the route of the Dakota Access Pipeline. I was honored to be given the opportunity to give prayers at the pipeline crossing just before we reached Pilot Mound. I briefly described Quaker worship, then our circle, holding hands, worshiped in silence for a while.



# Birds, Bees, and Butterflies

## Monthly Meeting in Fayetteville, Arkansas Creates New Habitat for Wildlife

By Eric Fuselier

LAST YEAR FAYETTEVILLE Monthly Meeting's Quaker Earthcare Witness Committee started a project to improve the grounds at our meetinghouse, the OMNI Center for Peace, Justice & Ecology, to include more habitat for wildlife, with the ultimate goal of the Center becoming certified as a wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation.

Many of us in our monthly meeting appreciate the benefits that pollinators provide to both the ecosystem and to our society, so we decided that we wanted to do our part to help provide them with the resources they need to live in the urban environment surrounding our meetinghouse.

From the beginning, we involved the children from our First Day School by having them conduct an assessment of what wildlife habitat was already present at the OMNI Center, as well as what habitat we were lacking.

For the first stage of our project, we replaced a section of the lawn on the south side of the building with a native wildflower garden that, in addition to the benefits it would provide for pollinators, would also provide thick, dense cover for small animals seeking shelter from predators. Friends planted native wildflower species such as black-eyed Susans, firewheel, lanceleaf coreopsis, plains coreopsis, purple coneflowers, partridge peas, butterfly milkweed, and American beautyberry.

Friends also installed a nesting box for bluebirds, feeders containing birdseed and suet, and a bird bath.

Members of our monthly meeting and our greater community donated many of the items.

To get the work done, we periodically organized workdays and invited our meeting to help plant the native wildflower species and install the bird boxes and feeders, and then maintain the area and keep it free of invasive species. Removing the non-native and invasive species seemed to be constant work, but it was important to not let these species out-compete the native plants.

We also started a composting project next to the wildflower garden. A local community member donated the barrel and offered us a free composting workshop. Now we are bringing our food scraps to add to the composting barrel and will purchase a second one soon, thanks to the demand.

We reached our goal and obtained our wildlife habitat certification by the National Wildlife Federation last August. The wildflowers have been providing a beautiful show of colors all growing season, as have the birds, butterflies, and other pollinators.

**For more on native plants, butterfly habitats and permaculture, visit <[quakerearthcare.org/nativeplants](http://quakerearthcare.org/nativeplants)>.**

Almost as soon as we started planting native vegetation and installing the bird house and feeders, we noticed a significant increase in the number of pollinators that began visiting our new wildlife habitat. We started keeping a log of all of the species we have seen and have learned so much more about the natural history of our area by doing so. It's been an exciting project for everyone involved.

*Eric Fuselier is a member of Fayetteville Monthly Meeting and is South Central Yearly Meeting's Representative to QEW.*



Friends at Fayetteville Monthly Meeting in Arkansas gather to celebrate their new official Wildlife Habitat.



# A Fight for the Yintah

By Daniel Kirkpatrick

THE THIRTY OF US STOOD in a quiet circle in the gravel on a sunny, cool morning. Wood smoke rose toward the sky from the adjacent lodge, and boreal forests surrounded the clearing. A First Nations elder, Lht'at'en, spoke in her Wet'suwet'en dialect, offering a prayer before the morning meal. As she invoked the spirits of the land and of the ancestors, two eagles appeared, flew a loop directly overhead, and flew off.

It was the only time I had seen eagles at the Unist'ot'en Healing Lodge, in forty or so days working there as a volunteer. The morning circle is a tradition in which Indigenous and settler people gather before each meal to offer blessings and check in with each other. The land is remote enough that wildlife sightings are common. But eagles? Circling directly over our group? It was hard not to imagine that Lht'at'en had called the eagles forth as part of her blessing.

At least three petrochemical giants plan to build pipelines through the territory of the Unist'ot'en people. These lines would carry liquefied natural gas and/or tar sands oil from Alberta to the British Columbia (BC)

coast for export to Asia. Bitumen is a dense sludge found under the vast quilt of forests, wetlands, and bogs of Alberta's north country. Natural gas is a byproduct of bitumen production. Since bitumen is surface-mined, it is one of the dirtiest and most expensive forms of fossil fuel.

For the companies to make money, the product must get to market. The proposed pipelines would each cross hundreds of kilometers of wild

land and livelihood that fossil fuel development promises. And since they have never signed away their land rights, the Yintah, or vast sacred territory of their clan, is theirs to defend.

The Yintah is a forested, foothill region on the east slope of British Columbia's Coast Range, roughly halfway between the town of Prince George and the BC coast. The woodlands are primarily spruce, the rivers are cold and clean, and wild animals, including bear, moose, deer, marten, beaver, and grouse, are abundant. Some logging has taken place in the area, but the remoteness of the territory has left it largely pristine. The Unist'ot'en plan to keep it that way.

Starting around 2009, a group of committed First Nations people

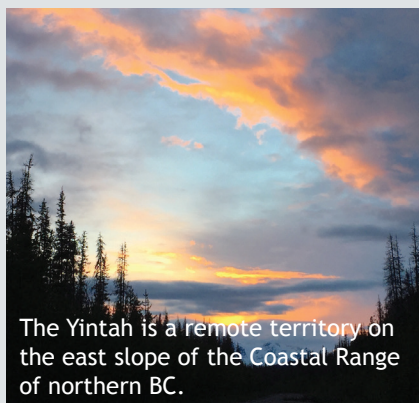
erected a gate across the primary road access into the Yintah. Led by the Hereditary Chiefs and their spokesperson, the tremendously courageous Freda Huson, the Unist'ot'en people began reasserting their territorial rights. Once the claim was established, they began building a settlement directly in the surveyed path of the pipelines. A cabin and traditional pit house

**“Our people’s belief is that we are part of the land. The land is not separate from us. The land sustains us. And if we don’t take care of her, she won’t be able to sustain us, and we as a generation of people will die.”**

**— Freda Huson, Unist'ot'en Spokesperson**

land, effectively turning forests into industrial sites. And there is no way to ensure that there won't be spills.

Easements for much of the route have been secured from communities that have yielded to intense economic pressure from the oil companies. However, the Unist'ot'en people refuse to cooperate. The hereditary chiefs of this clan recognize the irreversible impacts upon their



The Yintah is a remote territory on the east slope of the Coastal Range of northern BC.



Knedebease, the hereditary chief, talks with the author.



Donated labor and materials are what made the Healing Lodge a possibility.



Frieda Huson carries a pile of beaver pelts.



*Continued from page 8*

were constructed, followed by a bunkhouse in 2014 and now a large healing lodge, built in three phases in 2015, 2016, and 2017.

Nearly all the labor and supplies have been donated. As a volunteer, I valued the opportunity to spend time with Unist'ot'en elders, and to work alongside volunteer carpenters from BC, Washington, California, the Navajo Nation, Sweden, Israel, Japan, and many other locales. This disparate group shared a commitment to Indigenous rights—and to informing the petrochemical companies that the environmental and cultural cost of their pipelines is unacceptable.

The diversity of the volunteer work crew makes for a delightful job site. Unlike in commercial construction, impromptu breaks often occur to allow for discussions of gender rights, cultural identity, or the future of capitalism. And since many of the workers are new to carpentry, much time is spent teaching, helping, loaning, and borrowing. In this unusually affirming context, the Unist'ot'en Healing Centre rose from the ground to become a powerful symbol of First Nations' sovereignty and Indigenous refusal to yield land to development.

The lodge is becoming a place where Unist'ot'en people can come to recover from whatever befalls them, with the beauty of the Yintah and the traditional practices of living on the land complementing therapy as healing forces. Having spent time there as a settler ally, I can attest to the amazing courage of the Unist'ot'en and the powerful peace that emanates from the wild beauty of the Yintah.

*Daniel Kirkpatrick is an educational consultant and writer residing in Bellingham, Washington, and the Canadian Gulf Islands.*

# *A Simple Freedom or Was it Just a Dream?*

By Avotcja Jiltonilro

Once upon a time when the world was green  
When this Earth was heaven  
The trees used to sing to us & we sang their praises  
Danced in honor of their beauty  
And reveled in the millions of gifts they gave us  
Life was a simple, but complicated symphony  
When lovesick Leaves sang & romanced hungry Wind Spirits  
And Clouds pregnant with the promise of tomorrow  
Kept us drunk on the sweet wine of her Rains  
Then came the invasion  
Wood-eating devils that make termites look like angels  
The Lakes, the Streams, the green...all gone  
Forests of dreams destroyed  
The simple beauty of millions of yesterdays eaten by greed  
And lifelessly regurgitated into the ravaged soil  
As echoes of green cry in the shadow of what once was  
Tree Spirits hidden behind ancestral tombstones  
Their seedless offspring roam thirsty Deserts  
Beside invisible uprooted generations  
Trying to remember days when Nature reigned  
And all Her green gave the world Oxygen to breathe  
And got the World drunk on the fruit of their love  
Days when trees romanced the clouds  
And Rain was the Wine of heaven  
Now their ghosts silently scream  
Wide awake nightmares  
Restless Spirits hidden in the sands of a long ago time  
A time  
Before "they" came  
Like an atonal swarm of hungry Locusts  
Suicidal wood-eating demons that looked like angels  
But took joy in the devastation of uprooted generations  
In the destruction of  
Sacred medicinal Flowers that once perfumed the Air  
And now  
The Lakes, the Streams, the green...all gone  
In their place grow tearful memories  
Crying echoes  
Dancing in the weeds with Hurricanes & Earthquakes  
Shades of days when this Earth was heaven  
When happiness was  
Being able to safely lie in the grass & just breathe  
And be serenaded by a chorus of singing Frogs & Birds  
It was a simple priceless freedom, or  
Was it just a dream?  
Once upon a time when the world was green

*Avotcja Jiltonilro is a poet/playwright/multi-percussionist/photographer/teacher and member of Strawberry Creek Meeting. Visit <avotcja.org>*

## We Raise our Voices

ON TUESDAY OF THE GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION SUMMIT in San Francisco, the Women's Earth & Climate Action Network (WECAN) sponsored a forum of women from all over the world who are working to create a just and ecological society. These women are activists, creators, indigenous leaders, entrepreneurs, farmers, and advocates.

In the concluding panel, the question was raised as to whether we should support the formal GCAS because it is an environmental counter to the current federal goals and policies, or should we resist and protest the GCAS because it does not go far enough. The speakers offered this advice: for those on the inside, don't be taken in by false solutions; for those on the outside, offer solutions. Here is a sampling of the richness of that day:

**This is no time to sit on the fence—that time is done.**  
*Corinna Gould, Ohlone spokeswoman*

**The temperature is rising and so are we.** *Osprey Orielle Lake, WECAN*

**The system is about making the wealthy wealthier. I'm done with that.**  
*Penny Opal Plant, Idle No More Bay Area*

**Climate change is a manmade problem that requires a feminist solution.**  
*Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland*

**No one puts their children on a boat unless the water is safer than the land.** *Jacqueline Patterson, NAACP*

**I am not afraid because I come from the Earth.**  
*Maria Dorsee*

**I am unapologetic about my anger about being left such a mess; I am unapologetic about expecting more. We need a green New Deal.** *Marissa Zuckerman, Sunrise Movement*

**We should shift all the oil and gas pipeline workers to water pipes—make them water protectors.** *Antonia Juhasz, journalist*

**We are bringing people back to relationship with the land.** *Doria Robinson, Urban Tilth and Climate Justice Alliance*

**It is painful to see negotiations taking place without heart.** *Leila Salazar, Amazon Watch*

**The solutions are so old that they are new.** *Michelle Cook, Din'e attorney*

**People farming on less than 2 acres produce 70% of the world's food.**  
*Elizabeth Kaiser, Regenerative farmer*

**With every seed they plant, they recover a memory. This is my time to take care of the land.** *Dr. Gail Myers, Farms to Grow and Freedom Farmers Market*

**The Earth does not belong to us; we belong to the Earth.** *Casey Camp-Horinek, Ponca Nation, Oklahoma*

**We can't hear the forest speak anymore (on land destroyed by the Tarsands). We need to decolonize our minds to reaffirm our relationship with mother Earth.** *Eriel Deranger, Indigenous Climate Action*



Casey Camp-Horinek speaks at the forum lead by the Women's Earth & Climate Action Network. People mobilized to protect the sacred during the week of action. Grace Cathedral hosting an interfaith service. Photos: Shelley Tanenbaum



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and Governor Brown signed it into law just prior to opening the Global Climate Action Summit.

As part of my work with Quaker Earthcare Witness, I helped promote interfaith events alongside the GCAS. I co-led a workshop at Grace Cathedral on bringing about a spiritual transformation on our relationship with the Earth community. Instead of choosing between raising up progress on renewables or protesting lack of progress on keeping it in the ground, I dug deeper. Do we embrace the wisdom of indigenous communities (and many of the early teachings of other religious traditions) that say “we are all related” or do we continue to see the natural world as a “resource” that is available for extraction?

I co-led this workshop with Sara Jolena Wolcott, a Friend and an ecotheologian, starting with a physical reminder of where we live. We displayed and passed around water from the mountains and pinecones from Californian native trees. We talked about the ongoing fires burning throughout the west, and how a reductionist, controlling mindset formerly practiced fire suppression rather than allowing some fires to burn, as western forests are adapted to regularly occurring natural fires. We led this interfaith group in Quaker worship-sharing with the queries: What spiritual gift or gifts does your faith bring to the challenges of the Anthropocene? What spiritual practice or belief does your faith currently retain that is a barrier to facing the challenges of the Anthropocene?

Faith communities are hungry for this kind of dialogue and are on the verge of making this kind of spiritual transformation. Our workshop attracted over 85 engaged and committed participants. This high level of interest points to the clear need for more spaces where people can dig into their own faith traditions, engage with the challenges therein, and find solutions together in both cross-denominational and multifaith spaces.

An interfaith service was also held in the European-like Grace Cathedral (Episcopal) on the eve of the GCAS. Green Men\* on stilts led each faith tradition as they processed down the long aisles. Faith leaders described their love for the Earth community and made commitments for ongoing actions. Will this change come soon enough?

\*The Green Man is a mythological figure in European paganism, who embodies the spirit of the forest. At the interfaith service, the Green stilt walkers were gender neutral.

*Shelley Tanenbaum is QEW's General Secretary. Sara Jolena Wolcott creates spiritual development courses that remember the history of climate change into the history of colonization. Learn more at <[sequoiasamanvaya.com](http://sequoiasamanvaya.com)>.*

## *Spirit Moving by the Bay*

**By Shelley Tanenbaum**

WHAT BETTER WAY to start off the Global Climate Action week in San Francisco than to participate in an indigenous-led water ceremony at the time of the new moon. We met at the water's edge, at Cupid's Span—a large, bright red sculpture of cupid's bow and arrow firmly rooted in San Francisco soil. The sculpture may be a contemporary way to show love for this space where the City meets the Bay. The water ceremony is meant to deepen our connection to the natural world and empower participants to live fully into that spiritual connection.

Love for each other and for our land and water was abundant for all of us participating in the ceremony. We were led by Penny Opal Plant, of Yaqui, Mexican, Choctaw, Cherokee and European ancestry, and Casey Camp-Horinek, from the Ponca Nation in Oklahoma; both women are known internationally for their spiritual activism.

We were gathered at first in a large circle, that through the steps of the ceremony, grew closer and closer together. The center-most circle of women reached out to a basin of water—this water had been gathered from many of our home lands. The rest of us connected to the inner circle with our hands on the shoulders of the women in front of us. The men stood in the outer-most circle, facing outward.

At this point in the ceremony, my physical body responded in a way that was new to me. The power of our group (possibly several hundred) became physically present. I felt actual warmth in my heart that soon spread to the rest of my body. It wasn't scary and it wasn't dramatic; it just was what it was. I was calm and amazed at the same time.

I have felt a mystical connection to nature from time to time, and I have felt a mystical connection with Friends in gathered meetings, but I have never felt the phenomena of warmth spreading throughout my body as a result of a group experience like this. The experience left me feeling an outpouring of love for all of us committed to creating a new relationship with our natural world. I also gained a new understanding that our Earth will be helping us as we forge that new relationship. The week started off for me with the glow of love.

**Quaker Earthcare Witness**

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## Seeking Grace

By Shelley Tanenbaum

WE CAN'T FULLY ADDRESS A TRANSITION from fossil fuels to renewables without limiting fossil fuel extraction. That is the message delivered in countless street actions (including 30,000 people during an art-inspired march on a perfect California day) and unofficial workshops held throughout the Bay Area, first as part of the worldwide Rise Up for Climate, Jobs & Justice mobilization on September 8th, and then as a response to the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco a few days later.

Limiting fossil fuel extraction is a dilemma faced by activists, technical wizards, and politicians, whether they were meeting in the restricted zone of the official Global Climate Action Summit (GCAS) at the Moscone Center, in the numerous affiliated and unaffiliated workshops, or on the streets in protest. When it comes to supporting renewable energy (wind, solar, geothermal, and small-scale hydro), California is a world leader, with ambitious goals for increasing our renewable electrical energy portfolio, and electrifying as much as possible. However, the state government has not done much to limit fracking or deny oil and gas permits. Of course, this is a state that threw out a former governor when he tried to increase gas taxes. Politically, the path to promoting renewables is still a struggle, but is still much more doable than directly confronting the monumental oil and gas industry or the gas-driving public. It was a struggle to get the CA legislature to approve a bill calling for 100% renewables by 2045, but it passed after a two-year challenge,

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Friends march in San Francisco with the Rise for Climate, Jobs & Justice mobilizations a few days before the start of the Global Climate Action Summit. Photos: Shelley Tanenbaum