

*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.*



Pamela Haines

## A Living Economy for a Livable Earth

**M**ost of us are intimidated by economics, made to feel too ignorant to understand, question, or challenge its system. But, just as we do with peace, we can step boldly into that arena with our faith and values intact, daring to imagine a living economy for a livable world. Here are six big ideas that help capture the moral issues.

### Center and measure what we value.

With Gross Domestic Product—the sum of all economic activity—we measure many things that don't add to our well-being, and don't measure many things that do. For example, the economic activity of private prisons and predatory lenders are measured as positives. But many things are not measured. In agribusiness, for example, the pollution from farm machinery and transportation, pesticides and herbicides, and the damage to soil, small farms, farm workers and farming communities are all considered externalities, and left out of the balance sheet. And we don't measure the work of caring at all.



## BEFRIENDING CREATION

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**Image Above:** Photo by Kathy Barnhart, Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting.



Photo by Kathy Barnhart.

## From the Editor's Desk

Dear Friends,

Hello! My name is Miche McCall, and I use the pronouns they & them. This is my first issue as the editor of *BeFriending Creation* and my third month as the Communications and Outreach Coordinator at Quaker Earthcare Witness.



Hayley Hathaway, our outgoing Director, has been a nurturing and wise, albeit brief, teacher to me in creating this issue of *BeFriending Creation*. Shelley Tanenbaum, our General Secretary, continues to be an incredible support, and I feel blessed to witness and be a part of the organization they have built.

I am joining Quaker Earthcare Witness as a convinced Young Adult Friend currently attending Brooklyn Monthly Meeting in New York City. I recently graduated from Earlham School of Religion, where I received my Master's in Theopoetics and Writing. I started my Earthcare journey with Quaker Voluntary Service as a Local Clean Energy Organizing Fellow at the Massachusetts Climate Action Network. I hope my spiritually-grounded & justice-oriented leading will help QEW to inspire more Friends to transform our relationships with each other and the natural world.

While this summer of smokey skies and lasting heat waves has brought the realities of climate change to many of our front doors, I continue to be full of hope that our love for Creation and spiritually-led action will help move our planet towards a just transition.

I want to thank Shelley, Hayley, our Steering Committee, and the many others who have contributed to the work QEW has done since our inception in 1987. We are the primary Quaker voice addressing the issues of Earthcare; please consider helping to build a robust, creative, impactful network of Friends taking action to care for each other and the planet. You can do this by getting more involved or donating at [QuakerEarthcare.org](https://www.QuakerEarthcare.org).

Miche McCall

Communications and Outreach Coordinator,  
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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](https://www.QuakerEarthcare.org).



## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

**Replace linear with circular models of production.**

The linear “extract-produce-consume-discard-repeat” story may have seemed workable when our planet was lightly populated and the supply of natural resources and fossil fuel energy appeared endless, but it is not a match for a deeply interconnected web of life on a finite Spaceship Earth. As we align human systems with earth systems, we get to think instead about renewables, about waste from one process becoming a resource for the next, and about building reuse and repair into the design.

**Reclaim the commons.**

Colonialism and the settling of North America was the enclosure of indigenous commons on a global scale. Privatizing the commons for profit is now happening everywhere, in land, water, seeds, “intellectual property”, cyberspace, and DNA. We are transforming caring services into commodities, privatizing public water systems to make them more “efficient”, and buying and selling carbon emissions. We need to reclaim our commonwealth from the rules of private ownership, so we can manage it for the common good.

**Make money a public utility.**

Currently, less than 5% of our money is issued by the government in the form of bills and coins. Private for-profit banks create all the rest when they issue loans, and the need to pay back interest on those loans supports a need for growth. Since interest payments on bonds tend to double the costs of long-term projects, government spending directly into the economy to meet big public needs is better stewardship of our commonwealth. Municipal or state banks can also hold and invest public funds, keeping money at home. Guaranteed basic income, Post Office banking, and accounts at the country’s central bank could help individuals.

**Move from individual to shared rights.**

With our emphasis on individual and property rights, corporations, which exist to make a profit, have gradually amassed more legal rights than workers, communities, or the earth. If we shifted our allegiance to shared rights, we would prioritize human rights; citizens’ democratic rights; worker rights; community rights to decide about shared quality of life and stewardship of their local environments; and the rights of nature—other species, bodies of water, ecosystems—to exist and flourish.

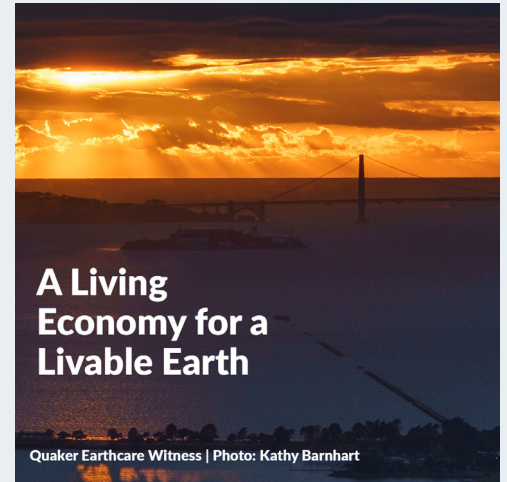
**Live within the “Doughnut”**

If we imagine our economy as a doughnut, the safe space for life is within the doughnut itself. The hole is where we fall short of meeting human needs; the space beyond is where we overshoot the planet’s limits. This idea of Doughnut Economics, from British economist Kate Raworth, can help us see big climate and social/economic issues as interrelated, so as to work on both in a coherent way.

**We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.**

Economics, from its Greek roots, means “management of the home,” and we all can bring our intelligence, experience, and faith values into this arena. We can learn about hopeful new economic experiments. We can imagine. We can speak out and act for a livable future for us all.

Pamela Haines is a Steering Committee Member from Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting. She has developed a QEW workshop to present the ideas from this article and beyond to your Quaker community. See sidebar for details.

**QEW Presents!**

Do you want to host a workshop on climate change, environmental justice, Quaker faith-in-action, eco-theology, native plants, permaculture, or another environmental issue? QEW Presents! offers online workshops on a range of environmental topics for your Friends meeting, church, or community.

Pamela Haines has developed a new workshop:

**A Living Economy for a Livable Earth**

- » This workshop will help us grow in our capacity to apply our faith values to matters of economics; gain clarity on several big ideas that can help demystify the workings of our economy—for better or for worse; and consider how our actions can support an economy that serves Earth and the common good.

To request this workshop, or find out about our other workshops, go to our website:

[QuakerEarthcare.org/workshops](https://QuakerEarthcare.org/workshops)

## Join the QEW Steering Committee Meeting: October 19-22, 2023

QEW's Steering Committee gathers twice a year to conduct business and enjoy fellowship with one another. For the first time since 2019, we will be meeting in-person at Pendle Hill in Wallingford, Pennsylvania.

We are trying something different this fall -- call it lessons learned from 3 years of Zoom Steering Committee meetings! We will focus our time together on what works especially well in-person, and a week later conduct an online Meeting for Business.

Our agenda will include time to get out of our committee/working group silos and share/co-create new ideas. There will also be time for committees and working groups to meet in person, primarily to review the purpose of these committees/wg's and introduce new members. There will be space during the in-person time at Pendle Hill to hear creative ideas and projects that may bubble up during our time together. We will engage in fellowship, share recent accomplishments, and explore future leadings and aspirations for QEW.

All Steering Committees members are encouraged to attend as part of their responsibilities as representatives of their Yearly Meetings—and we welcome visitors. This is a time to connect/re-connect on a deeper level.

A small number of events during the in-person meeting will be held simultaneously on Zoom to allow for remote participation. The online Meeting for Business will occur on October 28, 2023.

Learn more and register at:  
[QuakerEarthcare.org/events](https://QuakerEarthcare.org/events)

# The 2023 Farm Bill: Advocate for a Just and Faithful Bill

Every five years, Congress takes up a massive piece of legislation called the Farm Bill. Right now, the 2023 Farm Bill has an expected budget of \$1.5 trillion, which determines how food is grown, what food is grown, and who can afford it. The bill wields immense power in shaping the future of agriculture and its impact on the environment. We stand at a crucial juncture where we must address the pressing need to sustain farmland, maintain biodiversity, protect farmworkers, and feed families.

The post-World War II "Get Big or Get Out" U.S. farm policy has led to the demise of family farms and the rise of corporate factory farms. Generating over 10% of the US total greenhouse gas emissions, corporate factory farms have significant environmental impacts, including air and water pollution, excessive use of agrochemicals, and habitat destruction. Farming in ways that sustain the Earth and its resources so that all life can be sustained into perpetuity is a sacred task, a spiritual activity, and a social responsibility. Farmers partner with nature to keep the soil fertile, keep the water clean, and grow healthy food.

80% of the Farm Bill goes directly into nutritional assistance programs like SNAP. In response to the Covid pandemic, Congress made these programs more accessible to help combat food insecurity. However, these emergency allotments ended earlier this year, cutting short a program that kept 4.2 million people above the poverty line.

The 2023 Farm Bill has an opportunity to increase support for:

- » Nutritious, healthy, just, and sustainable food support programs for all
- » Regenerative agriculture practices and international aid for world hunger
- » Conservation and land/water restoration for wildlife, forests, soils, and wetlands

- » Small and mid-size farmers who do drive local and organic farming
- » Lower greenhouse gases in industrial agriculture

The Bill comes to a vote at the end of the 2023 fiscal year, September 30th. Here are things Quakers can do in the coming weeks to advocate for a more just, equitable, and sustainable food system:

1. Join AFSC's campaign. Watch previous webinars, get in contact with your Congresspeople, and read more about the impacts of the Farm Bill at: [AFSC.org/just-farm-bill](https://AFSC.org/just-farm-bill)
2. Food & Water Watch hosts Lunch & Learns on the three essential issue areas in the Farm Bill: Conservation, Competition, and Commodities. Learn more at [Mobilize.us/fwa](https://Mobilize.us/fwa)

Special thanks to Jennie Ratcliffe, Peniel Ibe, and Ruth Darlington for their writing on the 2023 Farm Bill.



Gray Cox

# Smarter Planet or Wiser Earth?

**New Quaker Institute for the Future (QIF) Book  
on Human Ecology and Artificial Intelligence**

**C**urrent breakthroughs in Artificial Intelligence (AI) need to be evaluated holistically as part of serious, systematic threats to our human ecology. These threats are intimately related to the economic, political, military, technological, and ethical flaws and institutional flaws that lead to existential threats like the sixth great extinction, the climate crisis, the collapse of democracy, wars of mutually assured destruction, and out-of-control technology.

As Quakers, how should we understand and respond to these developments? A new book from The Quaker Institute for the Future addresses these issues in systematic detail and offers substantive, positive proposals for action: *Smarter Planet or Wiser Earth? Dialogue and Collaboration in the Era of Artificial Intelligence*.

Since the release of ChatGPT in November last year, a stream of exciting but often very disturbing news about AI has flooded forth. There are rapidly growing concerns about whether dramatically more powerful forms of AI will be ethical, legal, and safe. Key leaders in the AI industry express serious concerns about existential threats that may arise from the new Generative AI systems that are being created and deployed pervasively. These may even result in a “singularity” in which super-intelligent AI surpasses and perhaps even

displaces human and other forms of natural intelligence. How can we work to ensure that the creation of “smart” cars, phones, schools, prisons, farms, cities, and a “Smarter Planet” will take into account all the relevant values of all stakeholders – including natural organisms on whose lives our own depend? How can we assure what we achieve is a genuinely wiser Earth?

This will require an expansion of the conception of rationality used in AI technology as well as in mainstream economics, politics, and ethics. This book analyzes the challenges in transforming the ways we reason and proposes systematic dialogical strategies to address them using contemporary research in conflict resolution and peace-making. These include Quaker, Gandhian, Indigenous, and other traditions to articulate methods of collaborative reasoning and ethical choice. It describes specific methods to transform how we teach ethics, run our political economy, and design AI technologies. These offer paths for researchers and activists to collaborate in spirit-led but practical solutions.

The audiences this book hopes to draw into dialogue with each other fall into two groups. One consists of citizens, activists, entrepreneurs, and change agents who are trying to transform their own lives and our shared human

ecology with its component economies, politics, technologies, and moral practices. The other includes programmers, AI researchers, and other technologists creating the hardware and code for devices proliferating in efforts to make our life systems “smarter.”

A hope of this book is that those two audiences can be brought together to transform our world in ways that make it not just “smarter” but genuinely wiser. The aim of the book is to provide vocabularies and frameworks for all of us to engage in collaborative dialogue across the activist/tech divides in every walk of life so we can promote genuinely peaceful, human, ecological, and spirit-led ways of moving towards a Wiser Earth.

Gray Cox teaches philosophy, peace studies, language learning, and artificial intelligence as part of the College of the Atlantic’s program in Human Ecology. He is a long-term member of Acadia Friends Meeting and is also a co-founder and the current Clerk of the Quaker Institute for the Future. QIF is a think tank that supports published research that is both informed by Quaker values like peace and ecological resilience and employs methods of spirit-led, communal discernment.

## Smarter Planet or Wiser Earth?

Gray Cox



*Dialogue and Collaboration in the Era of Artificial Intelligence*



**Find *Smarter Planet or Wiser Earth?* at your online bookstore, or at [Smarterplanetorwiserearth.com](http://Smarterplanetorwiserearth.com)**



Mary Coelho

# The Sacred Depths of Nature

Both Ancient and Modern Traditions Are Held Together

**W**e are invited to continually seek to discern the ways in which we are alienated, often without conscious awareness, from the sacred nature of the natural world. Considering two unexpected sources helps us become more aware of our narrowed consciousness.

Mark Wallace, a Professor of Religion at Swarthmore College, wrote an article entitled “A Beaked and Feathered God.” He shares how deeply moved he is by the wood thrush song in the woods next to his home. He would wait for the return of the thrush in the spring. Moved by this experience, Wallace pays special attention to the significance of birds and other creatures in the bible. In the accounts of the dove at the baptism of Jesus, there is a significant difference in how the story is told. Wallace pays attention to this writing that in The Revised Standard Version, “The Holy Spirit descended upon him as a dove, whereas the New Revised Standard Version prefers a simile: the Holy Spirit descended upon him like a dove.” Wallace points out the significant difference between the Spirit being a dove in contrast to a “temporary bird-like appearance.” Wallace explains that The Revised Standard Version draws on indigenous traditions in the Old Testament, the animist belief that everything is alive with sacred presence.

David Peat, a quantum physicist and the author of the book *Blackfoot Physics* became well acquainted with the traditions of the Blackfoot tribe through extended visits, conversations, and participation in sacred ceremonies. He writes, “I am in the position of being able to have a dialogue between two different worldviews in such a way that I can understand something of those areas in which new ideas in the sciences can bring them toward traditional

indigenous knowledge.” (p. 16) Once when listening to a woman speak about the Blackfoot vision, Peat recognized it was related to the way he had begun to see the world through his studies as a quantum physicist.

Mark Wallace offers a similar insight when he writes about parts of the biblical tradition. Based on his experience of “coming alive with wonder” when listening to the wood thrush song, he became open to recognizing that the Biblical animism traditions that claim that God’s presence at the baptism came in the literal form of a dove. He recognizes that the native Hebrew tradition is close to his experience of the divine when listening to the wood thrush. Wallace cites several examples in Genesis, Song of Solomon, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel of the dove as a living embodiment of God’s protection, healing, and love. Wallace is not surprised that the people present at Jesus’ baptism would take note of and record the presence of a dove.

He proposes that Christianity, in the account of the baptism, draws on the animism of the native Hebrew tradition. Although David Peat does not write about animism, he describes his recognition of the commonality between the worldview of the Blackfoot and the contemporary worldview he knew as a physicist. Both traditions recognize the experience of sacred presence within the natural world. Peat’s ability as a quantum physicist to hear what the Blackfoot tradition was saying and Wallace’s recognition of the native sacred tradition in the Bible that knew the dove was an integral part of a holy event helps us become aware of our alienation from the sacred presence in nature and all of life.

Thomas Berry’s landmark essay “The New Story” identifies the profound and hopeful change in the worldview that is emerging in our culture. The

congruence of Peat’s ability as a quantum physicist to hear the Blackfoot stories and Wallace’s insights into the animism of the native Hebrew tradition offer unexpected occasions enabling an embrace of the transformed worldview of the new story that teaches the presence of sacred depth of nature. We can celebrate the dimensions of a Biblical worldview, and contemporary quantum physics are no longer as opposed as we may have imagined. In fact, they both bring an invitation to embrace and experience the sacred depth of nature.

Listening to the native traditions in North America, those in the ancient Hebrew tradition, the witness of the Celtic tradition, and the revelations of the new physics, QEW’s witness is strengthened. Thomas Berry has told us; western consciousness certainly does need a new story. We are encouraged to seek to experience the sacred nature of the natural world. A cultural change to QEW is offered. The “new story” group at Friends Meeting at Cambridge seeks to explore and celebrate this profound opportunity to help change the secular nature of much of the Western world. Quakerism and QEW can be strengthened and become a strong voice as we awaken to this heartening good news.

*Blackfoot Physics*, F. David Peat, Phanes Press, 2002.

*A Beaked and Feathered God*, Mark L. Wallace, 2014 Tikkun Magazine

Thomas Berry, *The New Story*, Teillard Studies Number 1.

Mary Coelho is the author of the book *The Depth of Our Belonging: Mysticism, Physics and Healing* and is a member of Cambridge (MA) Friends Meeting.

Elsa Hoover

# Cold-Climate Horticulture and a Freed Bee

A Year as a Quaker Voluntary Service Fellow

I just finished as a Quaker Voluntary Service Fellow in Minneapolis. Through QVS, I am worked at the Minnesota State Horticultural Society, aka “The Hort”. To say I did not know what I was getting into when I accepted the position would be an understatement. A week before I began, my young cousin asked me, “What is horticulture?” I told her it had something to do with plants and made a mental note to google it before orientation began. Coming into a position where I knew so little both scared and excited me. Thankfully, the Friends around me were in my corner throughout this experience, allowing me to grow in my new career and spiritual direction.

Last spring, I was working from home and noticed a bee trapped inside. Having just written a blog post about the importance of saving native bees, I considered it my duty to ensure this creature made it outside. I spent the next 45 minutes trying to coax the small insect through the screen while

propping the storm window open with my water bottle. Finally, the bee landed on the piece of paper I was holding. I stuck the paper outside and watched it for a few seconds until the bee realized its newfound freedom and flew away. Even though my position at the Hort did not involve much actual digging in the dirt, my awe and reverence for the Earth and its many creatures has grown exponentially this year through QVS.

Every other Friday, we have a QVS day where we spend the day reflecting on our commitments to social justice, community building, and spiritual growth. QVS days often begin with silent worship. Now that the weather is nicer, we usually spend this time outside. As my eyes are closed, and I connect deeper with myself, I find I can’t help but connect with the environment around me. I feel the sun on my face, hear the different birds chirp, and smell the faint aroma of the basil plant next to me. It has been an amazing experience to see

my work experience with the natural environment dovetail with the QVS programming. This deepening connection to the environment in my professional and spiritual lives has been a highlight of my year. As my time with QVS ends, these are the moments I will remember: the time I spent at my job supporting community gardens and environmental education and the time I spent with my coordinator and housemate in nature.



A Portland, Oregon native, Elsa Hoover graduated from Earlham College in 2022 with a BA in Peace and Global Studies and immediately joined The Hort Society for a one-year Quaker Voluntary Service fellowship.

## Need Some Funding to Kick Off an Earthcare Vision?

The QEW Grants program may have you covered. Due to last year’s successful Grants fundraiser, we recently announced a Special Call for Proposals to fund projects at up to \$1500. At the same time we continue to welcome smaller-scale proposals up to \$500 under our traditional Mini-Grants program.

ANY proposals and visions related to Earthcare are invited, but we especially welcome proposals focusing on one or more of these priority areas:

1. Responding to or preparing to meet the Climate change crisis.
2. Supporting regional and/or global biodiversity.
3. Redressing issues of environmental injustice that impact underserved or disempowered communities (especially communities of color) preferably in North America, but other locations will also be considered.
4. Involving and engaging youth in responding to the above issues and/or transforming the consciousness of the rising generation to act in unity with the Earth as caregivers for our planet.

Find funding criteria and procedures at: [QuakerEarthcare.org/mini-grants](https://QuakerEarthcare.org/mini-grants).



Mini-Grants

Bill Cahalan and Ruah Swennerfelt

## Earth Awareness, Earth Activism

*This is an excerpt from QEW's Earthcare for Friends: A Study Guide for Individuals and Faith Communities. You can find this curriculum, as well as our Earthcare for children curriculum for your First Day or Sunday School at [QuakerEarthcare.org/Resources](https://www.quakerearthcare.org/Resources)*



"The Living Web" by Mary Coelho

When either of us holds meetings and leads workshops on Quaker Earthcare, if there is time we open by inviting people to share an experience in nature that was special or meaningful to them. There is normally a wide range of responses, but their stories are always very gratifying. One person might recall lying awake in awe and fright one night as a powerful electrical storm raged outside. Another might relate a sense of kinship with a wild animal encountered in the woods.

The fact that such events are fairly rare in most people's lives is instructive as well. Becoming "civilized" means literally to isolate ourselves within the defensive walls of urban life and perhaps to regard the rest of the natural world as something alien and threatening. We no longer have the intimate association with nature that was common in pre-industrial times.

The purpose of this unit is to move from that sense of possibilities to daily practices that can help us to relate to nature at a much deeper, spiritual level than simply visiting natural areas for relaxation and outdoor recreation. Such heightened awareness can be the first step in making meaningful lifestyle changes and joining others in Earth activism to preserve this threatened heritage.

If you have not had much experience with guided meditations or similar exercises, you may find it difficult to relate to the approach at first. In the simplest terms, natural awareness is the process of opening our hearts to the Divine in creation. We are being asked to stop and take time from our hectic lives, go outside, and really see what is around us, and listen to nature's language.

Jesus found his spiritual nourishment in the outdoors. He spent time in the wilderness, where he fasted and faced the temptations (Luke 4:1) and asked for God's help in the garden at Gethsemane (Matthew 26:1). The Sermon on the Mount was outdoors and not in a temple or home. We can find many Biblical references about nature and its spiritual power.

**In the simplest terms, natural awareness is the process of opening our hearts to the Divine in creation.**

### Deep Listening Walk

You can now go on a "deep listening walk" if you want, wandering or stalking (moving slowly and silently, pausing a lot, versus "hiking") for an extended time through the nearby wild areas, being led intuitively by your emotional responses to what you see, hear, or smell. Your only goal is to discover the beings, elements, and places that share the land with you, sensing them as emanations of the Divine, and discovering how they may move you or what they have to teach you.

It is typical at first to experience some boredom or anxiety as you withdraw even for an hour from your attachment to the built environment. If you accept these feelings and continue your opening to the world, compassion, wonder, and even ecstasy may eventually come. Allow yourself to open your senses to the places, animals, plants, and weather, silently scanning with a generalized attentiveness. Notice what moves you emotionally, what calls you out of your more contained self. Attend to living things and places as subjective presences, each with special sensitivities and unique functions within the circle of life. They may become sources of spiritual power and primary teachers of lessons for living.

As you slowly wander, stop and linger often with any place or thing which seems to invite you or speak to you. Allow yourself to imaginatively enter its life for a while. What is it sensing? What is it doing within this community? Take your leave when you feel ready, and move on.

Such activities help you carry the life force and lessons of the Spirit's embodiments in nature back into everyday living.

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## Practicing Earth Activism

To become more active on behalf of the Earth, start by making yourself aware of the issues.

Be willing to talk about what you are doing. This is one of the most important steps. It will encourage others to take first steps so together we can really make a difference.

Then, if you have made some personal changes, written some letters, made some phone calls, and engaged others into action, and you still feel you are not doing enough, maybe you are being led to demonstrate your concerns more actively. Encourage others in your Meeting or church to join together and participate in a vigil or march. Search out neighborhood activities such as a plan to clean up a stream or lake, preserve some land for wildlife habitat, create bicycle paths, clean up a park or the roads, or carry out some other worthwhile project. Working with others to make change can be an incredibly inspiring experience.

*You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under a basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.*

—Matthew 5:14–16



## Questions for Reflection

- » What do I do daily to remind myself of my connections with people, other creatures, and all that sustains life? How does this bring joy, thankfulness, and nourishment into my spiritual life?
- » Do I treasure as sacred the whole of Creation?
- » Do I honor the Life of all living things, the order of nature, the wildness of wilderness, the richness of the world? Do I seek the holiness which God has placed in these things, and the measure of Light which God has lent them?
- » What actions am I taking to reverse the destruction of the earth's ecosystems, and to promote the earth's healing?
- » Do I contribute ideas, effort, resources to help heal and stabilize our ecosystem?
- » As a member of my Friends community, as well as of my work and home communities, do I seek guidance in the Light for ways that I may lead and participate in actions which both heal the Earth and inspire others regarding the urgency of this healing?



## Young Friends for a Fossil-Free Future

Photos 1 & 3 above, and below right by Kri Burkander  
Photos 2 above, below left and next page by Sebastian DiMino

With the local temperatures soaring to 96 degrees during the Friends General Conference Gathering and the global average temperatures breaking records, Earth Quaker Action Team (EQAT) gathered an intergenerational group of Friends from across the country in an action against JP Morgan Chase and Vanguard. Vanguard is the world's largest investor in fossil fuels. These investments have already wrought climate destruction and will continue to be catastrophic for future generations.

At the Gathering, high schoolers get to create their own self-governing community, where many discerned that they would join EQAT's action. Here are a few inspirations and reflections that they shared with QEW:

### Miles Silverman, 18, Washington State

Hearing the speeches of fellow protesters was powerful, and knowing I was helping to make a difference by showing up was important. As a young person, it is easy to feel isolated and terrified by the state of the world and the sometimes glacial-feeling pace of action. Seeing the passion and support of people who are far older than I am cuts through the cynicism and helps me to feel at least a little more hopeful. I am hoping that more people were made aware of Vanguard's problems as a result of the protest, and I would be interested in helping further to make change happen in the future.



### Espen Bock, 16, Oregon

I was inspired to go for many reasons. I'm very aware of the state the planet is in, which causes me constant worry and unhappiness. Participating in actions like this keeps my hope alive and helps me keep moving forward. Besides my awareness, I've also been brought up in a family that is very aware of the climate crisis, and I've attended many protests myself. The protest was well meant, and it also felt short. Speakers spoke to a crowd of people that already agreed. I appreciated the sentiment, and it also felt like we were there to do something good and then go home. On the other hand, I'm aware that many people there are of an age where they cannot stand in the sun for an hour, holding a sign. In the end, though, the action continued to stoke my spark of hope, and I greatly appreciated what the Quaker community at Friends General Conference, or part of the community, was willing to do to spread the word about climate change.







### Asma Roshi, 16, Florida

The EQAT Action was a truly eye-opening and inspiring experience. I not only met but heard so many amazing people speaking out against Vanguard and sharing their own experiences regarding climate change. This was such a powerful thing to be a part of because so many different people from different parts of the world and even people from different cultures took part in the action. It gave me hope for a better future because despite some disappointing set backs I feel that we were still able to make an impact and uplift the issues of Vanguard. I hope through our signs, the speeches made, and all the ruckus we created that we reached at least one person who was unaware (just as I had been) of how companies they may support help kill our Earth. It was an incredibly powerful atmosphere that taught me so much in a short time. As a young person, it was wonderful to see so many people of all ages fighting for our planet, and it has inspired me to do whatever else I can to continue the fight.

This action was a part of EQAT's "Never Vanguard" campaign that has moved \$17 million out of the firm in response to its inaction on climate change. "Since Vanguard manages over \$7 trillion, EQAT's effort is the tip of the iceberg. But many other organizations are considering divesting and growing the movement against Vanguard.

EQAT started organizing Quakers and using nonviolent direct action to push Vanguard in the right direction in 2021. In December 2022, Vanguard walked out on one of its only climate commitments: the Net Zero Asset Managers initiative. EQAT continues to mobilize Quakers through divestment and nonviolent direct action to move the needle towards a clean energy future.



### Join the March to End Fossil Fuels in New York City on September 17th, 2023!

We are all connected. Climate change is already impacting our communities across the globe, and those who are paying the highest price for fossil-fueled destruction are the least responsible. It has never been more urgent to end our dependence on the leading cause of these crises – fossil fuels.

In September, the United Nations will gather world leaders at a Climate Ambition Summit to demonstrate that there is a collective global will towards a just transition. The United States is the largest producer of oil and gas in the world, and we are still expanding our oil and gas drilling, production, and export.

We need each other to face the overwhelming realities of the climate crisis and to act on these concerns with love, faith, and reverence. Join us, and thousands of others, in September to demand that our government take bold action to End Fossil Fuels.

Learn more about the march and how to join at:

[QuakerEarthcare.org/events](https://www.QuakerEarthcare.org/events)





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## Insights and Inspirations: Celebrating Shelley Tanenbaum

Join us to honor the ten years Shelley Tanenbaum has guided Quaker Earthcare Witness as General Secretary and three more years she had previously spent as a member and clerk of the Steering Committee.

Save the date for an evening of insights and inspirations from Shelley on what it was like to support QEW in our primary goal: to nurture a spiritual transformation in our relationship with the living world. She will share with us stories of her personal journey and highlights from her years representing QEW as a Public Friend. Shelley hopes to leave QEW in good shape with two fabulous new staff (Miche

started working with QEW in May and a new General Secretary will start this fall). There is no fee for this talk – all are welcome – AND at Shelley's request, we are asking those who can, to make a contribution.

Shelley: "We had to cut back on staff and Outreach travel this year due to budget constraints. With the wild weather we have experienced this summer, this is no time to be cutting back. The best retirement gift you can give me is to start our new fiscal year (Nov 1) in good shape and raring to go." Come for a time of celebration and reflection.



Join us on Zoom on Tuesday, September 19th  
7pm Eastern/4pm Pacific

RSVP at: [QuakerEarthcare.org/events](https://www.QuakerEarthcare.org/events)