

Quaker Earthcare Witness is a network of North American Friends (Quakers) and other like-minded people who are taking spirit-led action to address the ecological and social crises of the world, emphasizing Quaker process and testimonies.



QUAKER EARTHCARE WITNESS

Keith Runyan

To Kneel and Kiss the Ground

In the fall of 2019, just after founding my podcast, A Future on Waxen Wings, I was invited to be a keynote panelist for the College Park Quarterly Meeting with Mica Estrada, Stephen Myers, and Shelley Tanenbaum. On the ride there, I had much moving in me. I felt the weight of what I needed to say, but I didn't know how to say it.

Before our panel, I took a walk out in the pasture and woodland hills above Woolman Campus – a place that had often felt like my childhood home. As dappled sunlight lit the canopy above, I felt a peace wash over and through me. What had been a cacophony of ideas and ministry dropped away; I felt centered and held by the stillness around me.

There is a deep wisdom present in those hills. A deep wisdom, I sense, reflected through the ground of all living things. Homo Sapiens has not been here long on Earth, just a blip in the large stretches of geologic time. Every biomolecule, organism, and relationship has a history all to itself, tempered by eons of evolution. Through vast periods of time, life on Earth has woven itself into



BEFRIENDING CREATION

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER - VOL. 36 #04
OCTOBER - NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2023

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Image Above: Altar created by our Steering Committee during our fall meeting, photo by Ruah Swennerfelt

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Giving as Practical Reverence



Photo by Al McGrew

Dear Friends,

For many thousands of years, ancestral peoples across the world have come together to celebrate the harvest. From the Persian Mehrgān to the Celtic Samhain, finding togetherness in celebrating the bounty of our planet is a tradition foundational to Earthcare and a spirituality attuned to the cycles of Earth.

Entering this season, we're asked to center in on that which is most important to us. It is a time of storytelling, peacemaking, grief, and gratitude. As leaves fall from limb to Earth autumn draws us into the cyclical of life's procession - offering a time of shedding, letting go, and of fertilizing the soils beneath us to make room for new beginnings.

As Friends, we know that giving our money should be a sacred act. It deserves discernment and care. In the frenzy of so many requests for your resources, giving can feel anything but grounding.

So in the spirit of harvest, where we regularly pause to center in worship and reconnect, today we offer you a few queries to guide your giving:

- » How does my giving align with my values?
- » How is my giving Spirit-led?
- » What ripples are caused by my actions?
- » How do I support my community?
- » In what ways do I engage with climate work?

We are entering 2024 alight with hope. In the coming year, we intend to kickstart *QEW on the Road*, as Keith sets forth to seed the Quaker environmental movement with vitality and hope. Together, as the QEW Staff, we hope to expand our work with Quaker youth inspiring a Quaker environmental movement worthy of our times.

After reflecting on these queries, please consider deepening your commitment to Earthcare with a donation to Quaker Earthcare Witness today. Donate at QuakerEarthcare.org/donate or send a check to P.O. Box 6787 Albany, CA 94706

Thank you,
QEW Staff

Keith Runyan, Shelley Tanenbaum, and Miche McCall

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Our Vision & Witness

WE ARE CALLED to live in right relationship with all Creation, recognizing that the entire world is interconnected and is a manifestation of God.

WE WORK to integrate into the beliefs and practices of the Religious Society of Friends the Truth that God's Creation is to be respected, protected, and held in reverence in its own right, and the Truth that human aspirations for peace and justice depend upon restoring the earth's ecological integrity.

WE PROMOTE these truths by being patterns and examples, by communicating our message, and by providing spiritual and material support to those engaged in the compelling task of transforming our relationship to the earth.

BeFriending Creation

We publish *BeFriending Creation* to promote the work of Quaker Earthcare Witness, stimulate discussion and action, share insights, practical ideas, news of our actions, and encourage a sense of community and spiritual connection with all Creation.

Opinions expressed are the authors' own and do not necessarily reflect those of Quaker Earthcare Witness, or of the Religious Society of Friends. The editor is responsible for unsigned items. Please share our work widely and broadly, always attributing it to Quaker Earthcare Witness.

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

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an intricate tapestry sustained by the intimate day-to-day interactions of all living things. There is implicit wisdom in the synchronized fruiting of pecans, the unfolding from oocyte to Swallow's wing, and the delicate ecologies maintained by the wolves of Yellowstone. If any corporeal thing is worthy of our reverence and deemed to possess wisdom, it is these interactions, as old as the hills.

We live in a strange moment in human history, wherein the integrity of the web of Life on Earth has come to depend on a single species. Through the momentum of historical forces our species has happened upon creative and destructive capacities that vastly exceed our wisdom. As we come face to face with these capacities and the immaturities and traumas we bear forth into the 21st century, how can we become students to the web of Life before it is too late? How do we begin the process toward wholeness, regeneration, and redemption?

For me, the yearning to re-enliven and coalesce the vibrant forces within Quakerism to meet the challenges of our times has become a central theme of my life's work. I was raised Quaker, but I didn't become a convinced Friend until my late twenties when I began to feel a stronger and stronger calling to return to my roots and re-engage the Quaker tradition. As Friends, we listen to the voice of our conscience within ourselves and connect to that which always was and always will be. I sense in Quakerism, a latent energy that is waiting to wake. Over the past few decades, Friends have grown dramatically in ecological consciousness and are beginning to develop the courage to redress our relationship to colonial legacies with people, labor, and land. What we lack, as older generations age and many grow weary with the perceived failures of past efforts, is the vigor and vision to meet this growing consciousness with an active hope as powerful as the forces that would lead us toward despair.

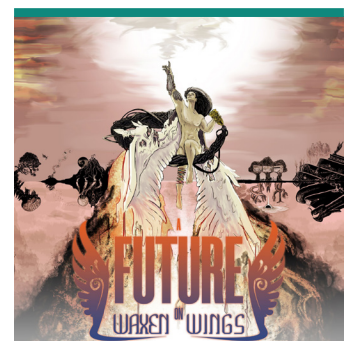
My aspiration for QEW is to become a force that re-enlivens the dormant and radical seed amongst Friends. It is time for us to move through Love - to prune that which no longer serves us, sink our roots into the furthest depths of our tradition, and take wing in alliance with Life. Perhaps it is our highest vision to be the lowliest in the Garden of Faiths and to, in the wake of climate change and colonization, take the century before us as an invitation to communion,

reparation, and regeneration. To, as it were: "kneel and kiss the ground." We live in an era of great environmental injustice, the poorest and least culpable among us most vulnerable to the changing tides of ecological and societal disruption. Can we walk humbly, in service and solidarity to the world's most vulnerable, as the storms of the next decades begin to remake the world?

Over the next few years, I hope to relinquish a permanent dwelling and begin to travel the country to spread hope, vision, and fierce determination in my role as General Secretary of Quaker Earthcare Witness. In this position, I anticipate taking leadership as an activist by building ties between generations, faith communities, and activist coalitions to empower Quakers and aligned individuals to build and assist powerful and strategic campaigns and social movements. We must merge spirituality and strategy - rebuild practical hope in our future and together write a story that meets people in their spiritual core.

Keith Runyan is QEW's incoming General Secretary. He is a Quaker changemaker, visionary, and activist born and raised in Pacific Yearly Meeting in Northern California.

We are hoping to launch a QEW podcast in the next year. In the meantime check out Keith's podcast at: afutureonwaxenwings.podbean.com/



Peter Husby

Humans and Nature – The Yellowstone Model

To many people, the concept of “natural” is equivalent to a lack of human presence or measurable human influence. For example, the late ecologist E.O. Wilson believed that the only way to save our planet was to remove humans from half of the earth’s land surface! (Who would do the removing, and who would be removed?).

As an evolved species, however, humans are part of nature, not separate from it. The critical issue is whether we can be a positive force in nature or whether we will continue to ruin our home planet. A 2022 TEDx Talk by Navajo woman Lyla June presents how indigenous people have been significant positive participants in ecosystems worldwide for thousands of years.

Racism, belief in “manifest destiny,” and a need to have “natural” spaces that lack human presence have prevented those in developed countries from accepting Indigenous wisdom and understanding that we can be a positive force in nature. A familiar pattern involves white Americans and Europeans creating a National Park or wilderness area and immediately removing the Indigenous people who have been an integral part of the ecosystem for a very long time. Then, they marvel at the beautiful wilderness. A wilderness because there is no significant human activity!

Our oldest National Park – Yellowstone (YNP) – is the original example of this worldwide pattern. After removing the native people, YNP management actively denied that humans had ever influenced the Park’s ecosystem. In fact, YNP claimed that American Indian people had been afraid of the Park’s thermal features and avoided going near them. The truth is that these people regarded thermal areas as sacred sites and spent considerable time there.

Research by University of Montana anthropologists has identified over 2000 archaeological sites within the Park – and only a small percentage of the Park has been surveyed. Yet YNP has made minimal effort to educate the public about the considerable hunting, burning, plant harvesting, obsidian and chert mining, and trekking by the original human inhabitants. The eastern one-third of the Park was originally part of the Crow Indian Reservation. The Lacy Act took away the Shoshone people’s right to hunt in what is now Yellowstone, granted by the Fort Bridger Treaty—more broken treaties.

The removal of American Indians from YNP has had serious ramifications for the ecological health of the Park, particularly the Northern Range, a 380,000-acre area that provides winter habitat for elk and bison. Management of the Northern Range changed radically in 1967. Until then, elk numbers had been controlled by annual culling to protect the habitat from overuse at the recommendation of, among others, Park biology advisor Starker Leopold, son of famous wildlife biologist, wilderness advocate, and sustainable use promoter Aldo Leopold.

In 1967, a congressional subcommittee ordered YNP to stop all culling. Fearful that public or Indigenous hunting would be allowed in Yellowstone to control elk numbers, Park biologists quickly invented a Natural Regulation hypothesis - which stated that predators, such as wolves, didn’t have much influence on prey populations - severe weather and starvation would supposedly control elk numbers before the predators could damage their habitat. However, elk numbers skyrocketed after culling ended, and habitat damage was severe.

In 1995, Park biologists reintroduced wolves into YNP, and, contrary to the Natural Regulation hypothesis, the elk population drastically declined. Since then, the YNP has abandoned the Natural Regulation idea and the Park is now claiming that the “wolf effect” has sparked a rapid recovery of the Northern Range. The truth is that since wolves were reintroduced, the bison population has grown to well over ten times the most liberal estimate of pre-settlement numbers and habitat degradation (loss of biodiversity, severe erosion, loss of cutthroat trout habitat, loss of soil carbon storage capacity), is more severe than ever. The fact that wolves have not affected



Springtime in Yellowstone, by Kathy Barnhart

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bison numbers supports Lyla June's contention that the "keystone species" in pre-settlement times was the Indigenous human being.

Human activity – introducing bison into the Park, preventing them from migrating out, and failing to control their numbers - has created an unnaturally large bison population in YNP. Historical evidence suggests that bison numbers were sparse in Yellowstone in pre-settlement times. The YNP bison biologist indicated to me during a meeting with him on the Northern Range that the Park has no intention (or ability) to restore pre-settlement conditions under their current management. In fact, they want to double their bison numbers!



Photo by Kathy Barnhart

Based on descriptions of early explorers, the Northern Range should be a hot spot of biodiversity. This would include willows and sedges along the stream-banks, cooling the water and providing hiding cover for cutthroat trout as well as cover for songbirds like willow flycatchers and Wilson's warblers; deep-rooted native grasses waving in the upland breeze while storing carbon in the soil and hiding ground-nesting birds; and dense stands of aspen and willows marking hillside springs and hosting cavity-nesting birds and growing grizzly bear food plants.

Based on the archaeological record, this biodiversity must include human activity and a much smaller bison population. Restoration of Indigenous treaty rights to hunt within YNP could be an important tool for reducing bison overpopulation. It would be a part of making reparations to American Indians with whom every treaty made with the U.S. Government has been

broken or altered. Accelerating efforts to move YNP bison to Montana's seven Indian reservations would further help reduce the herd and restore bison to their preferred habitat – the plains.

YNP could be a model for the world by educating the public about its Indigenous human history, demonstrating how human beings can be a positive force in nature, and expanding the integration of Indigenous people into the present-day management of the Park. Given the Park's history of over 11,000 years, human influence is "natural" and necessary if ecological health is to be restored.

Peter Husby is a retired wildlife biologist and range conservationist who is active in efforts to address the condition of the Northern Range of Yellowstone National Park and with efforts to prevent suffering and death of migrants along the southern Arizona border. He is a Montana Gathering of Friends liason to AFSC.

Upcoming Workshops with QEW



Quakers and COP28: A Report Back with the Ben Lomond Quaker Center

December 20th @ 2-3pm Eastern/11am-12pm Pacific

COP28 is under way in the United Arab Emirates. These conferences can be hard to make sense of, and yet they are the world's most organized effort to bring governments and civil society together to attempt to respond to climate change. Quaker Center is hosting a post-COP discussion. Register at [QuakerCenter.org](https://www.QuakerCenter.org)

Creation Vigil: Holding Earth in Prayer

January 11th @ 7-8pm Eastern/4-5pm Pacific

Sister Confianza del Señor will lead us in a Spirit-filled worshipful experience that includes scripture, song, silence, and sharing. Together we will celebrate God's Creation, lament the harm and injustice humans perpetrate against our human and non-human neighbors, and reflect on our place in and responsibility toward the great web of life. Register at [QuakerEarthcare.org/Events](https://www.QuakerEarthcare.org/Events)

John McKinstry

Community Choice Aggregation: Pennsylvania Boroughs are Ready for 100%

One of the most exciting opportunities to take action on behalf of our Earth and slow climate change in Pennsylvania is through implementing community choice aggregation (CCA).

CCA enables an entire community to convert to green electricity rather than doing it one household at a time. Ten states currently have CCA programs: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, Ohio, Illinois, and California. In Pennsylvania, the authority to implement CCA is available only to boroughs (not townships or cities.) Even so, CCA is an essential way for local governments to help us transition to non-carbon energy sources, especially considering that there are over 900 boroughs in the Commonwealth! Five Pennsylvania boroughs have already taken steps toward implementing a CCA program (Narberth, Swarthmore, Media, Lansdowne, and Hatboro), and many more have expressed interest in doing so.

There are several advantages of establishing a CCA in one's borough. First and most obviously, it can significantly change the electricity market. In New York State, for example, municipalities had 5-10% of their residents using green energy before CCA. The number was low because people had to opt into a green electric generator where the default electric supplier burned fossil fuels. After CCA, where the model switched so that the default electric supply was renewable energy and an individual had to opt out of the green source, CCA communities had 80-90% of their residents using green energy.

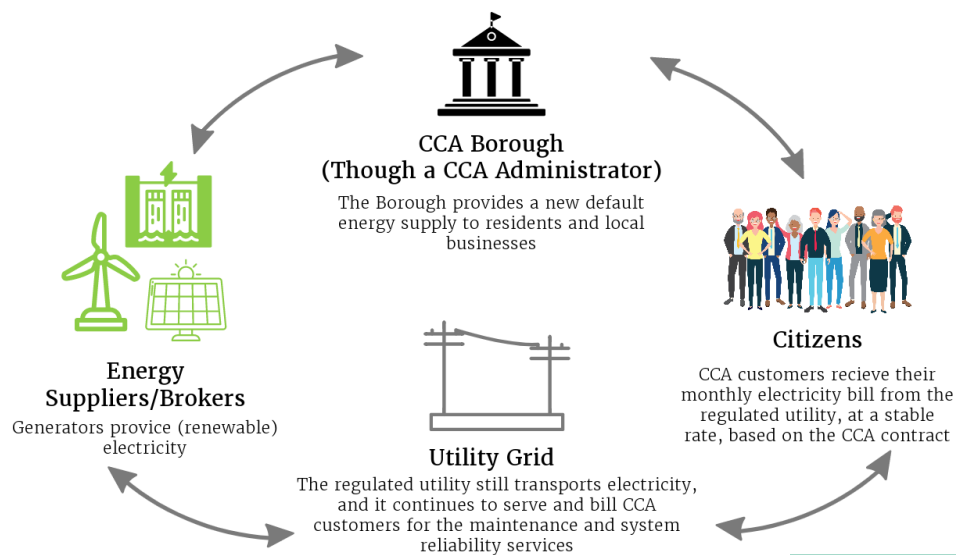


Chart by CCA for PA

Secondly, CCA offers consumers ease and protection. With the municipalities' CCA Administrator monitoring the electricity provider, the terms of the generator contract will be fair and adhered to. CCA results in a community obtaining green electricity at competitive rates by virtue of the group buying power. Moreover, the terms will be fair to the consumer. Gone will be the days when one signs up for a generator, not seeing the fine print that allows the utility to triple the cost of electricity when no one is looking.

Third, CCA promises stability since renewable energy sources will be fixed by contract.

Fourth, CCA can change the market from the supply and the demand side. With local electricity control, a borough can encourage and provide a market for local green energy projects and jobs. A borough might arrange to install a neighborhood solar array over a parking lot, providing more EV charging and selling the excess electricity to the local residents and small businesses.

So what does this have to do with Quakers? Just as Pennsylvania gives this enormous CCA power to local control, so too do Quakers work well at the local level. Members of a meeting or the entire meeting can talk directly to the local environmental advisory council, sustainability commission, or borough council about establishing a CCA. It can network with other churches concerned about climate change and make a persuasive case for the planet and the consumer. A meeting can also network with other Quakers in boroughs through the Commonwealth on their progress and share resources.

John McKinstry is the co-chair of Swarthmore Borough's Environmental Advisory Council. He has been a teacher and school administrator before retiring in 2020. Before teaching, John was an environmental attorney, working for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Chief Council.

Attend the webinar!

Shelley Tanenbaum

Our Own Worst Enemies: An Apostolic Exhortation on the Climate Crisis

In 2015, the Pope's message to the world, *Laudato Si*, amazed many of us, myself included, with his blunt comments about people, economics, and climate change. (QuakerEarthcare.org/Laudato-Si) He called for a radical restructuring of how we relate to each other and to the more-than-human world. This fall, 8 years later, his message to the world, *Laudato Deum*, stated in even blunter terms how much humans are falling short of living up to the goals of caring for all creatures.

Calling for courageous action at the Climate Conference (COP 28) in the UAE, the Pope concludes his message for humanity with these words: "Praise God' is the title of this letter. For when human beings claim to take God's place, they become their own worst enemies." For those with the resources to use it, technology has given them "an impressive dominance over the whole of humanity and the entire world. Never has humanity had such power over itself, yet nothing ensures that it will be used wisely, particularly when we consider how it is currently being used."

To former activists who are constantly critical of every effort to change the climate status quo, the Pope says, "To say that there is nothing to hope for would be suicidal, for it would mean exposing all humanity, especially the poorest, to the worst impacts of climate change." To the most affluent, he says the "richer percentage of the planet contaminates more than the poorest 50% of the total world population."

To our predicament, he repeats his convictions that "everything is connected" and "no one is saved alone". He continues, "We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it." I started questioning if this was the Pope or an indigenous elder describing their worldview when I read these words.

To regain a sense of harmony with nature, he recommends against our current form of economics that primarily uses financial gain as a guidepost. Instead, he calls on grassroots activism to take on the current power structure of elites. He calls on every family to "realize that the future of their children is at stake." He calls on the powerful to consider, "What would induce anyone, at this stage, to hold on to power, only to be remembered for their inability to take action when it was urgent and necessary to do so?"

This past March, Pope Francis repudiated the 'Doctrine of Discovery,' a set of Papal letters that justified brutal Christian colonization of indigenous cultures and lands. Many of us within QEW had been part of a global movement calling on the Vatican to do so. *Laudato Si*, *Laudato Deum*, and the Repudiation are beautiful words. What can we do to turn those words into action, to build a grassroots Earthcare movement, to rematriate land, and to truly care for our world?

Shelley Tanenbaum is QEW's outgoing General Secretary.

PYM's Environmental Justice Collaborative's Webinar on CCAs

January 18th @ 7-8pm Eastern

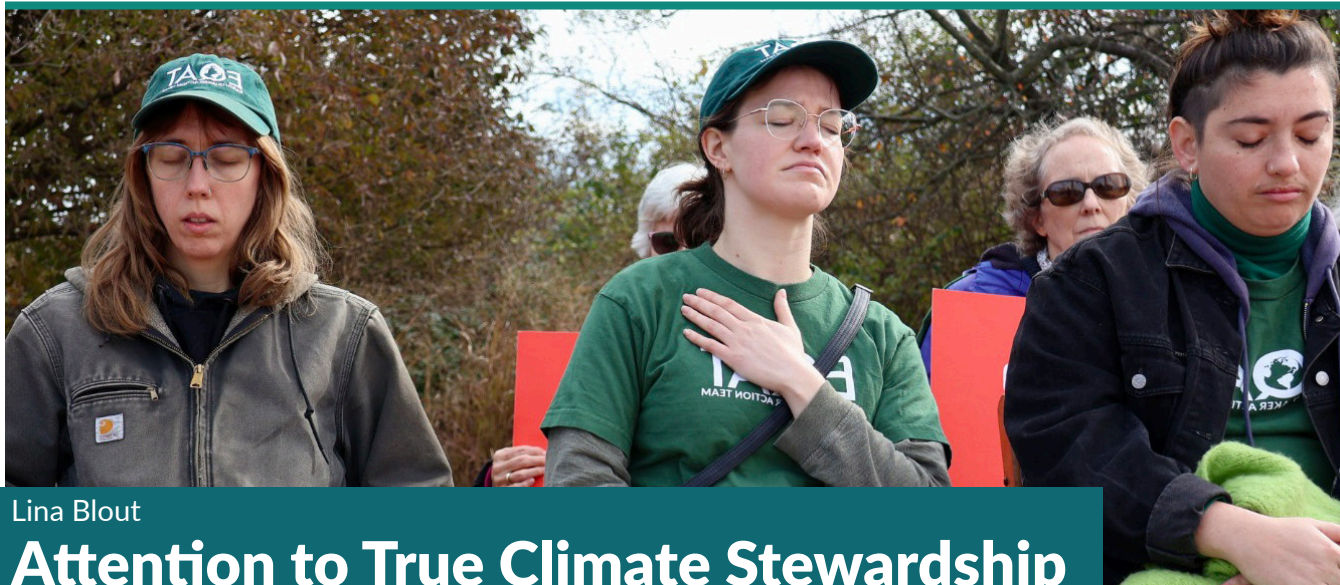
Presenters from the CCA for PA team will provide an overview of CCA, introduce participants to local leaders from the five boroughs that have already signed an MOU, and explain how this will work in PA to help boroughs meet their commitments to acquire 100% renewable power.

If you live in or near a borough, please consider attending. You can make a real difference in bringing more clean energy to Pennsylvania. Community Solar is not yet legal in PA, but CCA is and it just might be better!

Presenters:

- » John McKinstry, Swarthmore Borough, member, Swarthmore Meeting
- » Dennis Rowan, CCA for PA
- » Baird Brown, Eco n law, member, Central Philadelphia MM
- » Liz Robinson, Philadelphia Solar Energy Association, Central Philadelphia MM and the EJC Collaborative

Register at PYM.org/event/community-choice-aggregation-boroughs-are-ready-for-100



Lina Blout

Attention to True Climate Stewardship

Photo by Laran Kaplan

On November 15th, I sat in a wooden folding chair on a grassy corner outside the Pennsylvania headquarters of the investment company Vanguard. I was surrounded by dozens of others, all of us in worshipful, contemplative silence. We had taken Quaker meeting for worship out of our meeting houses and to the entrance to Vanguard's headquarters.

Why? Vanguard is the world's largest investor in fossil fuels, which are propelling us towards climate catastrophe. In 2022, Earth Quaker Action Team gathered outside the home of the CEO of Vanguard, while British Quakers gathered at Vanguard's London office, and Quaker Earthcare Witness held a virtual gathering that spanned geography, all to urge Vanguard to support the transition from climate destruction towards decarbonization.

This year, we went to Vanguard's headquarters to honor our grief for what has already been lost to environmental destruction, to hold in our hearts our belief

that Vanguard must use its power and influence responsibly, and to ground ourselves in our commitment to take action until it does so.

So, we worshiped in public, with large banners that said things like "Vanguard invests in climate destruction" around us. It was through the silence that I felt, rising up inside of me, a reminder of why we take action at Vanguard and the stakes of its power. I stood up to speak out of the silence, sharing how I feel such grief and anger for the lives already impacted by climate change – through droughts, floods, heat waves, fires, pollution, and the violence that comes out of the scarcity and chaos of climate disasters. Lives and species have already been lost due to the inaction of those profiting off of business as usual, and that will continue unless we, and Vanguard, make a change.

QEW partnered with EQAT to bring this local worship to Friends across the United

States and all the way to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Across such distance, we still felt connected in knowing that the impact of Vanguard's investments – and our power to do something about it – is global.

Keith Runyan shared that "We live in a moment in which the integrity of the Web of Life hangs in the balance of human choice. As one of the world's largest investors in fossil fuels, with \$7.7 trillion under management, Vanguard has the power to shape the future of countless species – including our own. We ask that Vanguard come under the weight of this profound responsibility in our times and align itself with Life."

Our meeting for worship centered on attention to true climate stewardship. Stewardship is a stated value of Vanguard's, but it's currently failing to responsibly steward its customers' savings for a livable future. According to a 2021 report, Vanguard could lose at least \$3 trillion by 2050 if it fails to act on the climate crisis.

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Company leadership has so far refused to take sufficient action, lagging behind its peers in the asset management industry by not engaging sufficiently with the companies it invests in on climate change issues and by failing to release plans to decarbonize its investment portfolio according to what science tells us is necessary for a livable future.

These meetings for worship were part of an international campaign, called “Vanguard S.O.S.” Through protests, phone calls, letters, petitions, and other actions over the past two years, we have been asking Vanguard to use its influence as a major shareholder to push the companies it invests in to significantly reduce their emissions, and exit its investments in fossil fuel companies that refuse to transition their businesses to be in alignment with a livable future.

This past fall, in addition to praying for true climate stewardship at Vanguard’s headquarters, interfaith ministers spoke up at an Vanguard-sponsored conference, elders celebrated Grandparents’ Day by calling on Vanguard to plant seeds for a livable future, and young people went to Vanguard during the school day, declaring “Vanguard, don’t rob our future!” People of all faiths, all ages, and from all over are joining this collective effort to draw a line in the sand and say “Never Vanguard” until the asset manager makes a serious course correction on climate change and environmental injustice.

Anyone, no matter who or where they are, can join the effort by signing the “Never Vanguard” pledge. For some, signing the pledge is a commitment to move out savings invested with Vanguard. For others, pledging means promising not to start new investments or work for Vanguard until it deals with its climate change problem and invests for a livable future.

Asset managers, like Vanguard, are permitting fossil fuel companies to poison us today and set up future generations for climate catastrophe. But by coming together to take action, we can make powerful corporations start working for a just and livable future.

Lina Blount is the Director of Strategy and Partnerships at Earth Quaker Action Team, a grassroots group including Quakers and people of diverse beliefs who use nonviolent direct action to work towards a just and sustainable economy.



Learn more at:

Earth Quaker Action Team:
[EQAT.org](https://eqat.org)

More about the Vanguard SOS International Effort at
[EQAT.org/Campaign](https://eqat.org/Campaign) and
[Vanguard-SOS.com](https://vanguard-sos.com)

“Never Vanguard” pledge:
[EQAT.org/Never-Vanguard](https://eqat.org/Never-Vanguard)

Clergy speak out at conference: Common-Dreams.org/Opinion/Vanguard-Fossil-Fuels



Photo by Ryan Leitner



Miche McCall

No Faith in Fossil Fuels

On the second day of Rosh Hashana, the faith hub at the March to End Fossil Fuels was full of celebrations of Life on Earth. Last September, 75,000 people poured into the streets of New York City to call for our leaders to protect our communities and all of Life by ending the era of fossil fuels.

The march took place ahead of the UN Climate Ambition Summit, designed to accelerate governmental, business, and civil action in decarbonizing and delivering climate justice. The United States, one of the world's largest polluters, was not invited to speak at the meeting. UN Secretary-General António Guterres said in his opening remarks, "We must make up time lost to foot-dragging, arm-twisting, and the naked

greed of entrenched interests raking in billions from fossil fuels." Though few concrete goals were met during the summit, looking ahead to COP28, delegates called for avenues for collaboration and global cooperation.

Quaker Earthcare Witness helped organize hundreds of Quakers from all across the country to join with thousands of passionate people who represented houses of worship, faith coalitions, and more to bear witness to the effects of climate change on frontline communities and stand together to support a just transition away from fossil fuels.

The march began with an interfaith invocation where Sunita Viswanath, the Executive Director of Hindus for

Human Rights, prayed, "We are turning away from Mother Earth, Bhumi Devi, Prithvi Maa. We must remember that we are all one, inseparable from each other, with the divine light equally present in each one of us and every part of the universe."

Her reference to the divine light spoke to me very deeply. Standing shoulder-to-shoulder with people of all faiths, QEW holds true to the belief that our future depends on a spiritual transformation in our relationship with Earth and each other.



Left above: Roy Taylor taken by Miche McCall
Left below: Interfaith Coalition taken by Simon Chambers/ACT
All other photos: QEW and NYC Quakers taken by nova george and Ted Bongiovanni

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This occasion to connect came at a turning point for QEW. Our beloved General Secretary, Shelley Tanenbaum, is retiring after more than 13 years of service to QEW; serving as a member and clerk of our Steering Committee before stepping up to be our General Secretary.

Keith Runyan, our incoming General Secretary and newest member of QEW, shared in his talk *A Movement Worthy of our Times* on Saturday evening, "As QEW turns the corner on seeding new leadership, may we offer this moment as an opportunity for new eyes and fresh perspectives brimming with fierce resolve, determination, and hope. We are the ones we have been waiting for. It is time we sparked the radical fire within Friends."

Our Steering Committee Meetings result in concrete plans for the future, but they also give us time to renew our collective commitment to Earthcare, expand our sense of belonging, and to share ministry with one another. We asked Friends why they are involved with QEW. Elaine Emmi, one of our co-clerks, said it best; Earthcare is her "raison d'être!"



We hope to see you at our next in-person Steering Committee meeting!

All are welcome to join and explore future leadings of QEW. We will be gathering at the Norbertine Spirituality Center at Santa Maria de la Vid Abbey in Albuquerque, New Mexico on October 3rd-6th, 2024. Learn more at QuakerEarthcare.org/Event/Fall2024.



Join Quaker Earthcare Witness in 2024 for:

- » Engaging presentations and speakers, including a new QEW Podcast
- » News, resources, and action updates on ecological concerns
- » Outreach to Meetings and Churches through *QEW on the Road*
- » Spiritual grounding through worship sharing and workshops
- » Coalition-building for sacred activism and advocacy
- » Our quarterly newsletter, *BeFriending Creation*



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

Name
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See How They Love One Another

Referring to the Romans' view of early Christians, Tertullian wrote, "It is mainly the deeds of a love so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us. See how they love one another, they say." This idea that our QEW community is rooted in addressing climate change through love was the theme of our fall Steering Committee Meeting, where we met in person for the first time in three years.

QEW is guided by a 50-person steering committee comprised of at-large members and nominated representatives from Quaker yearly meetings (regional groups) in North America. Our fall meeting served as a vital opportunity for us to connect/re-connect at a deep level. Some Friends had never met one another, and others have been members of our community for decades.

