

Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) Representative Report, May 2016

Quaker Earthcare Witness continues to work on many fronts to increase awareness and action on climate change and environmental justice. Steering Committee Meetings were held last fall at Ben Lomond Quaker Center in California and in the spring in Chicago.

Here are some of the highlights since last June:

Paris Climate Talks

Several members of QEW attended the Paris Climate talks (COP 21) in Paris last December along with representatives from Quaker Voice, Quaker United Nations Office, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Earth Quaker Action Team, and Alaska Friends Conference. While the agreement that was reached fell far short of what we'd hoped for, it is still heartening that an international agreement was reached. The task QEW has set for itself going forward is to work toward the ambitious goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees. According to Shelley Tannenbaum, General Secretary of QEW, "It was both inspiring and frustrating to be on the ground in Paris. I came away with many ideas and connections for follow-up that have taken me well into this year with new initiatives and articles." Shelley is hard at work publishing articles, strengthening connections within the Society of Friends, and fundraising.

FWCC Minute on Sustainability

A sustainability minute furthering the Kabarak Call for Peace and Eco-Justice entitled, "Living Sustainably and Sustaining Life on Earth" was approved by FWCC World Plenary in Pisac, Peru last December. The minute contains a series of suggestions for concrete actions that can be taken at the individual, Monthly Meeting and Yearly Meeting levels.

The first suggestion for Yearly Meetings urges us to **initiate at least two concrete actions on sustainability within the next 12 months**. These may build on existing projects of individuals or monthly meetings or they may be new initiatives. We are encouraged to ask Young Friends to play key roles. We are asked to minute our progress and results, so as to share them with FWCC and Quaker meetings. *The full minute can be found on the Earthcare tab of the SAYMA web site.*

Laudato Si', On Care for Our Common Home

Quaker Earthcare Witness gives thanks for the papal Encyclical. From the QEW minute, "We share the conviction that all life is sacred and interdependent, and that the natural world is an infinite source of awe, wonder and wisdom. We unite in the urgency to transition away from human systems, values, and lifestyles that are weakening earth's natural planetary health, causing the suffering and extinction of other species, and deepening the disempowerment of vulnerable peoples."

Upcoming Meetings

QEW's October 2016 Steering Committee sessions will be held at Pendle Hill, October 6-9. The October sessions include our regular business sessions, and committee and working group meetings, plus 2-3 presentations. The Spring 2017 meeting is likely to be held at the Atlanta Meeting House.

Resources

Friends are encouraged to visit quakerearthcare.org and find a wide range of resources from BeFriending Creation newsletters to articles and trifold brochures on a wide range of climate related topics.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Rose