

2019 IMYM Climate Minute **(approved by Intermountain Yearly Mountain, 6/14/2019)**

“In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations.”
Ancient Haudenosaunee Philosophy
From the Great Law of the Haudenosaunee, founding document of the Iroquois Confederacy

“It would go a long way to caution and direct people in their use of the world, that they were better studied and knowing the Creation of it. For how could [they] find the confidence to abuse it, while they should see the Great Creator stare them in the face, in all and every part of it?”
William Penn, 1693

“The produce of the Earth is a gift from our gracious creator to the inhabitants, and to impoverish the earth now to support outward greatness appears to be an injury to the succeeding age.”
John Woolman, 1772

“The environmental crisis is at root a spiritual and religious crisis; we are called to look again at the real purpose of being on this earth.”
London Yearly Meeting, 1988

We have gathered for a week to consider “Faith, Fear, and Our Future,” acknowledging that we are now living during a time of climate crisis. We come to this moment grounded in the testimonies of the Religious Society of Friends. The testimonies of community, equality, stewardship, and integrity call us forward in our work. We recognize that peace is increasingly linked to climate justice, both globally and locally.

Care for Earth, for all of creation, is a core spiritual value and a practical necessity. Until we make peace with Earth, we cannot make peace with each other.

We unite with those who are already experiencing the stresses of this crisis, displaced by: rising seas, hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, drought, fires, lower agricultural production, famine, and the threats to human health posed by increasingly warm temperatures and variable weather patterns. These changes can lead to adverse health consequences, scarcity, and conflict, as well as mass migration. Migration pressures, in particular, link emerging climate refugees to a web of increasingly strained and stressful social and governmental structures that exacerbate economic inequality and undermine racial and environmental justice.

We know that there is much about these times that can cause us to feel fearful, angry, and helpless. We seek to be gentle with ourselves and one another, to take time for our feelings, seek ways to release our own stress, as we continue the work. At the same time, our integrity insists that we acknowledge our part in causing the current crisis, and accept our responsibility to act.

From a global perspective, Americans have used, and continue to use, a disproportionately large share of fossil fuel resources, while those who are most vulnerable to climate disruptions overwhelmingly bear the negative impacts. Although we are clear that speed is not our only priority, we need to face the

reality that there are real tipping points, and our national failures to act are decisions with as much impact as other action choices we can make.

With this awareness, we ask ourselves what more we could do, and together we have settled on the following:

- We continue to seek the Light through worship and prayerful consideration. We shall be led by the Spirit as we confront the realities of climate change.
- We seek to understand our role as humans, and the dangers unfolding through climate change. We continue to educate ourselves rigorously on these matters.
- We commit to learning about and engaging in collective action and advocacy at the local, state, national, and global levels.
- Compelled by deep concern for the care of our life-giving planet and the irreversible effects of current climate disruption for generations, we support with our voices and our witness legislation such as H.R. 763, the bipartisan Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019, looking to Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) and other organizations for guidance.
- We support legislative initiatives designed to lead to equitable and effective carbon emission reductions and/or safe carbon sequestration.
- We commit to act on our responsibility, both in our personal use of resources and in the management of our meetinghouse resources. We ask: How can we have greater integrity in these matters?
 - Perhaps by tracking or reducing first our personal, and then our communal carbon emissions through conservation, load-shifting, recycling, composting, considering the carbon impact of what we eat and without food waste, and use of low-carbon methods of personal transportation.
 - Perhaps by divestment from fossil fuels as individuals or communities.
- We commit to support and practice regenerative agriculture to safely sequester carbon.
- We support policies and practices intended to preserve as much biodiversity as possible to reduce species extinction.
- We understand that global support for the education of women (which in turn is strongly correlated to lower birth rates) and support for reproductive health are among the top five individual climate action tools identified by [Project Drawdown](#), since having one fewer child (anywhere in the world) decreases a life-time of carbon emissions.
- Friends might consider a population-focused carbon-offset approach, like that of “Quaker Popoffsets,” as described by Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) at <https://www.quakerearthcare.org/article/quaker-popoffsets> : “Quaker PopOffsets is a program that gives people a means of offsetting their carbon emissions by helping them fund voluntary family planning for people who might otherwise not be able to access it.”
- We seek to create examples and patterns, carrying this message forward to other Friends’ communities and to others who carry concern and love for the earth.