

Interfaith Earthkeepers Hybrid Meetings

February 12 and 26, 2025 (combined notes)

Attendees 2/12: Mark L, Ron R, Dennis R, Keith O, Betsy H, Ron H, Sue C, Tom B, Theresa O, Carl B, Cynthia B, Ron K, Katharine H, Britni C

Attendees 2/26: Betsy H, Theresa O, Jerry S, Katharine H, Dennis R, Sue C, Carl B, Ron H, Cynthia B, Tom B, Mari B, Mike M, Mark L, Britni C

Moderators: 2/12 Mark; 2/26 Dennis Minutes: Britni

Invocation and Contemplation

Brief Check-in

Special Guest (2/26)

Mike Meyer from Eugene Climate Cafe: Mike is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. His monthly Climate Cafes are community discussions on climate grief and anxiety, including strategies and group processing. It started from the “death cafe” idea. Community building, not isolation, is important for building resilience. He shared that climate change is having severe impacts on mental health, and it has become part of youth culture. Young people are tired of being told that they are the future; they need guidance and leadership from older people. He mentioned [Cascadia Quest](#), which holds grief groups. Mike’s email is meyercounseling@gmail.com . His Climate Cafes are held on the first Tuesday of the month (see events section).

Also discussed was climate justice and the fact that climate change affects the most vulnerable. It is estimated that there will be 1.2 billion climate refugees by 2050.

Updates and Continuing Issues

1. Eugene City Projects and Processes: Dennis mentioned Just Transition Alliance and Fossil Free Eugene. Eugene City Council voted to approve a fire fee for homeowners, a total of 8 million dollars, to address the budget gap. The [Sustainability Commission](#)’s education and outreach committee is looking for events to present on the [Climate Action Plan 2.0](#). The Sustainability Commission will likely send a letter of concern about the proposed AstroTurf at Golden Gardens to the City Council.

2. Local Organizations ****Local and state action is increasingly important at this time.**

- 350 Eugene: They are focusing on forest defense. The Forest Service is taking [public comment](#) on the NW Forest Plan. See also *Northwest Forest Plan Comment Writing Workshop* under Events and Ongoing Action.
- Lookout Eugene-Springfield: They are already starting to post local news stories on their [website](#). Carl suggested that we invite their community engagement person to an EK meeting.
- Fossil Free Coalition: Students are initiating Fossil Free UO. The board has put off a decision about their heating system, the largest emitter of greenhouse gases in Eugene. The water based heat pump system is more expensive.
- Sierra Club: They had a webinar on the threatened Coastal/Humboldt Martin. Also, see *Native Plant Sale* under Events and Ongoing Action.
- Third Act: Patty and Linda from 350 Eugene shared at their monthly meeting. They committed to more communication between the two groups. See under Events and Ongoing Action for their next meeting.
- Oregon Coalition for Environmental Rights (OCERA): No updates specific to OCERA.
- Protect Lane County Watersheds: 14000 signatures have been gained for the Lane County initiative.
- Divest Oregon: Lobby Day for the [PAUSE Act](#) was successful. Around 100 constituents spoke with 42 Senators and Representatives along with their aides. Senator Manning and Rep. Fragala agreed to be cosponsors, along with many others. EK leadership gave Britni permission to submit testimony on behalf of EarthKeepers. Tom offered to help. They are waiting for a committee hearing to be scheduled.

3. Interfaith Clergy United: Mark and Dennis would like to attend their meetings, but they are at the same time as EK meetings. It was decided to *change EK meetings to the fourth Wednesday of each month*. Both Stronger Together Interfaith Potlucks were full. The next potluck is March 9th from 5:30-7:30 at FCC. These first three meetings are for folks to get to know each other. After that, they will pivot toward action; for example, what to do about immigration and ICE.

4. Earth Day Planning: It was determined that there is too much going and no one has the bandwidth to plan an event. The Interfaith Clergy is considering a “Gratitude for the Earth” event near Thanksgiving.

5. Future Guests: Carl will invite someone from Lookout Eugene to the next meeting. Other ideas include Sarah from McKenzie River Trust and someone from OCERA.

Events and On-Going Action

Nationwide 24 Hour Economic Blackout: Friday, February 28th. Don't buy anything from large retailers, order anything online, buy gas, or go to the bank. If you need to purchase something, shop local.

Public Interest Environmental Law Conference ([PIELC](#)): Friday, February 28th through Sunday, March 2nd. Many organizations will be tabling, and there will be local and global presenters.

March 4 America Protest: Tuesday, March 4th from 12:00-4:00pm at Eugene City Hall. This is a peaceful protest against executive overreach that violates the Constitution.

Climate Cafe: Tuesday, March 4th at 7:00pm at 70 E Howard Ave.

Winona LaDuke Lecture: Tuesday, March 4th from 6:00-7:30pm at the UO EMU Ballroom. Attendance is free. Dennis, Mark, and Cynthia are going to table for EKs before and after the event. Tabling is 5:00-6:00pm and 7:30-8:00pm. [Event website.](#)

Northwest Forest Plan Comment Writing Workshop: Tuesday, March 4th from 5:30-7:30pm at Drop Bear Brewery. There is also information and opportunity to comment on [Cascadia Wildlands website.](#)

Frances Moore Lappe Lecture: Thursday, March 6th at 5:30-7:00pm at the UO Ford Alumni Center. The title is Finding Hope in Dark Times for Democracy. [Event website.](#)

Turtle Flats Volunteer Work Parties: Saturday, March 8th and Saturday, May 3rd from 9:00am-12:00pm. Mark will email the registration info. They will be removing invasive plants. The McKenzie River Trust volunteer coordinator shared how appreciative they are of the Interfaith Earth Care Fund. It was suggested that we invite her to an EK meeting.

Stronger Together Interfaith Potluck: Sunday, March 9th from 5:30-7:30pm at First Congregational Church.

Sierra Club Native Plant Sale: Saturday, March 15th from 10:00am-3:00pm at the Eugene Municipal Court Building, 1102 Lincoln Street. [More info and form to pre order.](#)

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) Summit: Sunday, March 16th from 1:00pm-4:00pm at UU Eugene Church. The theme is Climate Health and Safety. There is an option to attend the event virtually. [Register here.](#)

Third Act Monthly Meeting: Thursday, March 27th at 5:30pm at 565 Country Club Road.

PRIDE Festival: Saturday, June 28th. We will provide materials for an interfaith table. Sue will send the EK brochure to Dennis. Cynthia will make a QR code that will direct people to the EK website.

Education

Becoming Earth by Ferris Jabar Chapter 9 and Epilogue

A sedan with a 15 gallon gas tank requires the equivalent to 300 elephant fossils. Humans have been digging up coal since 2200 B.C. in Mongolia and China. 62% of historical emissions are from Europe and North America. He talks about the ice storm we had here four years ago. There was disagreement over the author's suggestion that nuclear power plants are a solution. The intersection between inquiry and spiritual connection was notable.

Next book - Hope in the Dark by Rebecca Solnit (available as an [e-audiobook on Hoopla](#) through the Eugene Public Library)

Next Meeting: March 26th at 12:00-1:30pm (online and in person at Eugene Unitarian Universalist Church)

Moderator: Dennis

Minutes: Britni

Education Session: Introduction/Foreword and Chapter 1 of Hope in the Dark