

Interfaith EarthKeepers Meeting

March 25, 2026

Location: Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene

Moderator: Dennis Reynolds **Notetaker:** Tom Boyd

In attendance: Cynthia Black, Tom Boyd, Annu Brewer, Mona Bronson, Britni Cacan, Sue Craig, KC Hancock (Zoom link), Mark Lindberg, Barb Reuter, Ron Raynes, Dennis Reynolds, Gabriel Scott, Kenny Watkins.

Invocation/Check-in: Dennis read Loryn Brantz' poem on healing acts of resistance. Tom Boyd mentioned the movie Greenfield, about activist Robin Greenfield's tactics to raise awareness of ecological issues. Sue Craig shared concerns regarding past attendees on our email list of whom we have lost track. Ron Raynes brought up critical concerns around proposed federal legislation to allow BLM to greatly increase clearcutting, including of old growth and in designated roadless areas. Dennis suggested we append this item to the agenda.

Continuing Issues / Upcoming Events

Retreat (Strategic planning) Debrief: KC reported that a current focus is on making more effective use of technology to relieve some of the workload for Mark and Ron (Hess). Mark noted Carl has agreed to join website-related efforts. KC is looking at streamlining email processes. Sue made a segue to the related topic of mapping areas of commitment. She said this involves such activities as approaching one's congregation directly to name issues and ask for commitments from those willing to act on a given concern. There was further discussion on this topic. Mark took the opportunity to review the topics identified as key foci from the strategic planning session. These included 1) hands-on habitat restoration projects, 2) strengthen our connections and ongoing partnerships, 3) state and local legislative initiative participation, 4) social/climate justice project support, 5) outreach – initial contact, 6) publicize our accomplishments and plans, and 7) technology. In regard to connections/partnerships, Dennis noted that he and Carl have been representing IE at activist meetings.

No Kings Day Actions on March 28: Dennis asked whether there was interest in tabling. Britni can table, but will need help with set-up. Cynthia shared suggestions on how to use public transit to attend, noting that EMX will be running from Eugene to the Springfield Station every 10 minutes. She said she is available if attendees have questions regarding getting to and from the event. Mark noted he has the Earthkeepers banner and brochures for tabling. Cynthia noted that 350-Eugene is looking for folks to help hold their "tree" and "butterfly" art creations. Interfaith Clergy United has been asked by ACES to encourage faith communities to bring church banners to carry near the front of the parade.

Palm Sunday Action: This action involving progressive Christian faith communities and their allies will start at 2:00 pm at First Christian Church, 1166 Oak St, with a short march to the Wayne Morse Free Speech Plaza. Speakers and songs will follow at 2:45.

Legislative Bills: Cynthia mentioned that Rob Dickinson of Eugene's local measure, Help Protect Lane County Watersheds (20-373), will be speaking at the Eugene Friends Meeting, 12:30, Sunday 3/29. Mark and Carl submitted an Argument in Favor of this measure. They fronted the \$300 cost of submission and would appreciate help in defraying a portion of this expense. Mark noted a state legislative victory in the "1.25% for Wildlife" (HB4134) increase in the transient lodging tax.

Earth Day: Mark will be contacting Sha at Friends of Buford Park about any restoration events associated with Earth Week. FCC has invited congregants to bring native plants for altar decoration on Creation Justice Sunday. Afterward these will be planted on the grounds by church youth. Cynthia said Eugene Friends will hold an outdoor service at Masonic Cemetery. The University of Oregon is planning a number of Earth Week events. On a related topic, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) is planning an Earth Summit from 12:30-

2:30 on May 17th. Dennis remarked that Eugene UU is considering hosting, but is receptive to others doing so. A sustainability fair (Re-Imagine Earth Day 2026) will be staged at the Farmers market Pavilion on 4/19 from 1-5 pm.

Stronger Together Interfaith Potlucks: Mark said this event will occur April 19th from 5:30-7:30 at Emmaus Lutheran.

Turtle Flats: Dennis gave some background on the history of this natural area that was formerly a gravel quarry, and described current habitat restoration activities.

Outreach to other faith communities: Carl has been attending other faith communities. Gabriel Scott from St. Mary's Catholic Church was in attendance today on behalf of Laudato Si-Eugene. He shared recent activities, including a Stations of the Cross ceremony on an earth care theme, and referenced the Synod of Bishops' "Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor" document. Gabriel welcomed attendance at Laudato Si meetings. He said the meeting on the third Sunday of May will be a special potluck at a member's farm. He noted that the group has a website, but that it is not well maintained.

BLM logging plan: Ron Raynes and Sue Craig opened this discussion. 3/24 was the end of a notably brief period allowed for public comment. Ensuing discussion addressed the importance of Pacific Northwest rainforest in combatting climate change and renewed threats to old growth and roadless areas. Cynthia commented that Oregon lumber mills are not configured to process old growth; hence, old growth logs are exported. Sue noted that three of our county commissioners have received significant funding from regional timber interests. Actions proposed included contacting Senators Widen and Merkley, letters to newspapers, and support of local forest advocacy organizations such as Cascadia Wildlands and Oregon Wild. It was suggested we consider inviting representatives from those groups to speak at one of our monthly meetings.

Other: Cynthia mentioned that a number of people have been welcomed into Friends' Meeting House earth-friendly landscaping. The Friends are planning a plant giveaway to neighbors Easter Sunday after the service (probably early afternoon). Regarding upcoming May elections, Dennis encouraged Earthkeepers to examine where candidates stand on issues relevant to our mission. In addition, he noted that Eugene's Fossil Free Coalition is developing a Clean Energy fund based largely on the model that Portland has put in place. The basic focus of the initiative will be to facilitate purchases of climate friendly home improvements (e.g., heat pumps; balcony solar) for low-income residents.

Education: Discussion continued on Bill McKibben's book, *Here Comes the Sun*. Read chapters 5-6 for April.

Next Meeting: April 22 at Unitarian Universalist Church of Eugene, 12:00 – 1:30