

Minutes, Interfaith EarthKeepers Hybrid Meeting
January 10, 2024

Attendees: Ron H, Cynthia B, Sue C, Britni C, Jerry S, Mark L, Carl B, Katharine H

Moderator: Sue C Minutes: Britni C

Continuing Business

1. Fossil Free Eugene: They are having a meeting on how to weatherize your home and cut down energy use. There will be information about Eugene's tool library, the [Toolbox Project](#). They are giving a \$50 stipend to attendees.

2. Divest Oregon: [COAL Act](#) legislation was introduced for the 2024 short legislative session. It is more specific than the bill that was introduced last year; it focuses on getting the treasury to divest from coal. Today is a Lobby Day for the COAL Act.

3. Turtle Flats and FCC Earth Stewardship: There is a volunteer appreciation party at Public House on Thursday evening (1/11/24). The next volunteer parties are scheduled for March 23rd and April 20th, in conjunction with Earth Day. Additionally, there will be separate opportunities to plant trees every Saturday (not associated with the Earth Stewardship program). Mark will send more information.

4. KEPW Radio Project Update: They are open to providing a tour of the radio station for youth. Mark would like to have a large group of youth who are interested before scheduling the tour. After the tour, he will talk to them about the talk show. We should communicate to youth that it could also be posted as a podcast in order to encourage interest.

5. Earthcare Interfaith Fund: Donations go to the Long Tom Watershed Council and McKenzie River Trust (50/50). Sue and Betsy have fliers about the fund. It was helpful to have the [printable gift card](#) to give out for the holidays.

6. Oil Change International: This large coalition has been instrumental in the language about phasing out fossil fuels at COP28. More people and groups are working on this issue.

7. How are we Changing Opinions for Earth Care? - Katharine is on her Creation Care working group. They are planning a presentation to encourage churches and individuals to help people deal with climate change. Sue shared that UU Church is working on a statewide level to reach all of the congregations. They want to focus on grassroots actions. Sue encourages people to get on the [Oregon Legislative Information System website](#) to stay up to date and provide testimony. You can also [subscribe](#) to receive emails on specific bills. Cynthia shared that Friends Meeting received a \$10,000 grant from Long Tom Watershed to do trout friendly landscaping, which has been a good educational opportunity for the congregation. Carl brought up a new book by a local author and cofounder of 350 Eugene, [Mary DeMocker](#), *The Parents' Guide to Climate Revolution* (forward written by Bill McKibben). Buddha Eye Temple is considering inviting her to speak on the topic. .

8. Moderators for Future Meetings: Mark is willing to moderate the next meeting and rotate with others. This will be Sue's last time to moderate a meeting. Dennis is currently out of the country. Who else is willing to help moderate?

9. Meeting Attendance and Group Membership: The possibility of evening meetings was discussed again, but it would need to be consistent. Discussion to be continued. Think about how we can make this organization more dynamic and recruit new members. Ideas that were brought up include:

- On the IFEK website, post a directory with a list of congregations that have endorsed the idea of IFEK. Ask someone from each congregation to fill out a form with information about what they are doing in regards to earth care. This would be an online way to share activities and information.
- More interfaith action opportunities might grow the group. That is the best way to recruit young people. Each congregation should think about opportunities for actions that they could invite other congregations to.
- [Interfaith Earthkeepers Green Summit: Invite all green teams/ earth care groups to get together for an event. Give each group time to speak to the group about what they have been working on. Invite youth as well. Be sure to focus on the spiritual aspect of this](#)

group. A date was set for the evening of April 18th (near Earth Day). Planning to continue at the next meeting.

- Distribute fliers and contact congregation leaders to see if they would say something about IFEK during a service.
- Make a comprehensive list of all congregations in the Eugene/Springfield area. Each of us will make contact with a few other congregations to see if they are doing anything in regards to earth care. EMO likely has a list of congregations. We will work on this next month.

New Business

1. EMO Virtual Interfaith Legislative Forum (January 28, 2024): They are going to share the issues that are coming up in the short legislative session. [Register here.](#)

2. EMO Interfaith Earth Summit (February 4, 2024): The event will go from 1:00 to 5:00pm at Eugene UU Church and online (online session begins at 1:40). The registration fee is \$25, %20 for students. [Register here.](#) They are hoping to get Jeff Merkley to speak. At 3:30 everyone will break out into smaller groups in order to encourage people of different faiths to work together. There will likely be a vigil at the end.

3. Action for Gaza (January 13, 2024): This is being planned by a coalition of several groups.

4. Mark's Ordination: More information to come, likely this summer.

Education Discussion - Nature's Best Hope by Doug Tallamy - Chapter 5

The book is available as an eAudiobook (free) through Hoopla via Eugene Public Library (search the title on the [library website](#)).

Mark: The percentage of trees in Portland that are native is very small. Native plants provide food for insects, which birds need for food. There is little diversity of birds where few native plants exist.

Cynthia: The author has a [website about Homegrown National Park](#).

Britni: A potential topic for the Green Summit is a community wide effort to transform congregations' and individuals' properties.

Jerry: Duckweed grows fast and is 40% protein. It floats on ponds and cleans up the water. It is native to everywhere except arctic and subarctic climates.

Sue: On March 14th the local Sierra Club chapter will be selling native plants.

Next Meeting: February 14, 2024 (online and in person at First Congregational Church)

Moderator: Mark

Minutes: Britni

Education Session: *Nature's Best Hope* - Read through chapter 6