

Minutes, Interfaith EarthKeepers Online Meeting

March 8, 2023

Attendees: Ron H, Cynthia B, Sue C, Dennis R, Katharine, Carl B, Ruth D, Bob G, Rouanna, Britni C, Eunice

Moderator: Ron H, Minutes: Britni C

Old Business

1. Earth Day/Week Plans: We're behind schedule for any event that requires sending out announcements. The Mark Levy Florence Youth v. Gov event is not likely to work for other locations. Sue tried to follow up on tabling at the downtown Farmer's Market on Earth Day 4/22, but hasn't yet received a response. An Earth Day plant swap can be done at individual congregations at their discretion. Congregations can also participate with [Interfaith Power and Light's Faith Climate Action Week](#).

Since tabling seems a viable option, new EK trifolds will be needed: Rouanna has 19; Sue has the new ones. They are \$20 per hundred to print. Ron hasn't the block of time needed to create a new digital version, so Rouanna will take a hard copy to a print shop. The list of congregations will need to be reviewed for current involvement.

2. Electrify Eugene update: The March 3rd school strike and rally against Northwest Natural gained coverage by the Register Guard and TV stations. EE is standing up in opposition to NWN's effort to overturn Eugene's recent ordinance to phase out fossil gas in new homes. Citizen engagement will be very important. NWN has put in \$600,000 cash and \$75,000 of in kind donations toward their opposition. The company has committed 2 million for a ballot initiative to overrule the city's plan. Their petition is likely to get enough signatures for the ballot in May; it will likely be on the November ballot. *NWN is traded on Wall Street*, allowing some potential leverage from investors. Sue goes to the Farmer's Market as the opposing voice where NWN's people are collecting signatures. This week's Eugene Weekly Slant includes a half page ad all about electrification from Fossil Free Eugene. Eugene is the first city in Oregon to attempt to ban natural gas, which is why NWN is pushing back so hard.

3. Earth Stewardship update: Mt. Pisgah includes two separate nonprofit organizations: Friends of Buford Park and Mt. Pisgah Arboretum, which are in the process of merging. Both have regular volunteer opportunities. Buford Park is a county park that covers 2,500 acres. It receives no money from the park department to maintain; it is maintained by volunteers through Friends of Buford Park, which Mark has been working with. Mt. Pisgah Arboretum only manages 200 acres. Their primary mission is education. Carl is on the board. Mark's group recently completed a tree planting at Turtle Flats. This is an opportunity for people who want to make a difference and do something with their hands rather than or in addition to activism/political work. Carl will try to keep us informed about future opportunities.

On Tuesday, March 28th at 7pm at the Eugene Garden Club, Philip Bales will give a presentation of his drone photos that show the restoration of gravel pits in the area. This is an example of how drones can be used to further conservation. It was not flooding here when it was flooding in Portland because of the conservation work such as the creation of side channels. Parking for Eugene Garden Club is on the street.

4. Outreach to local faith organizations: Center for Spiritual Life reached out by email and Ron has been following up.

5. Divest Oregon update: The House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans held an initial hearing for [HB 2601](#) on February 16. They held an additional hearing to hear more testimony on March 2. Britni testified at this hearing along with a diverse group. Over 160 people submitted written testimony. Chief sponsors of the bill are representatives Pham and Gamba, and Senator Golden. [Click here](#) to contact your senator and representative to encourage them to support the bill.

6. UU Earth Action Monthly Film series:

- [Gratitude Revealed](#): Tuesday, March 21; Doors open at 6:30pm; film starts at 7:00pm

Earthkeepers have funds to pay for them to show newer movies.

7. Lent Plastic Reduction: Friends Meeting is focused on reducing plastics in the world. Cynthia has been putting together a weekly Lent challenge, which will be posted each Sunday on the [Friends website](#).

8. Hybrid meetings: There was value in showing up in person at different congregations. About half of the group is interested in an in person option. It was suggested that we conduct hybrid meetings every other month. Ron will look into the technical aspect of using Zoom combined with in person.

New Business

1. EK Account: We currently have \$320.42. Does someone who regularly comes to meetings want to be in charge of managing our account?

2. Senate Bill 854 hearing tomorrow (requires K-12 climate change education). Dennis will send testimony on behalf of EarthKeepers.

3. Fundraising for Oregon Interfaith Power & Light: Ron looked into the GoFundMe approach. He talked to Cherice Bock and they will likely set this up. The funding for her position is not at all stable. It was suggested that we fundraise for the Interfaith Earth Summit, as requiring a payment probably suppressed attendance. The option of avoiding online contributions by sending a check should be included in any fundraising strategy.

[Sign up for legislative updates and advocacy opportunities from Oregon Interfaith Power and Light.](#)

Discussion: Becoming Rooted, by Dr. Randy Woodley, Ch 76-90

Ron: Those of us with a western orientation have a lot to gain from the worldview, traditions, and wisdom of Indigenous people. We help heal the earth and the earth helps heal us.

Cynthia: It is fascinating how nature works, how plants have a cycle and are connected with other beings. "Can you learn enough about the plants in your community to identify their annual ceremony?" Eloheh, where Randy lives, has a work party every week. Anyone can sign up to help out. They need a lot of volunteers. A group from the Friends committee is going up in April.

Next Meeting: [April 12, 2023](#)

Moderator: Dennis R

Minutes: Britni C

Education Session: **[Becoming Rooted, Exercises 91 - End](#)**