

Minutes, Interfaith EarthKeepers Hybrid Meeting

April 10, 2024

Attendees: Betsy H, Sue C, Tom B, Ron H, Marilyn F, Ron K, Dennis R, Cynthia B, Mark L, Carl B, Britni C

Moderator: Mark L Minutes: Britni C

Continuing Business

1. Fossil Free Eugene: The City is beginning to hear testimony again. Last year's resolution to ban gas in new construction was ruled unconstitutional in Berkeley, CA. Councilors have on their agenda to look at the issue again in June. City sustainability staff have been meeting with stakeholders to gain input that may shape recommendations for the council. The City would like to share their sustainability plans with faith communities. Contact Dennis at wreynolds123@gmail.com for more information. Fossil Free has a [petition](#) to urge the University of Oregon to choose the boiler system replacement option that would result in the greatest reduction of emissions. Fossil Free is also recruiting a Youth Intern.

2. Divest Oregon: The [COAL Act](#) passed in the Oregon Legislature. There was a celebration and forum with treasurer candidates on April 2nd. The coalition is very diverse and still has work to do.

3. Turtle Flats: The March 23rd volunteer event had about 20 people. They planted willow, delphinium, bleeding hearts, and black capped raspberries, and they completed removal of some invasive plants. The next event is on April 20th from 9am-12pm, which will consist largely of invasive removal. Last year over 50 people attended. There are many birds and animals in the area, and it is not normally accessible to people.

4. Interfaith Earth Connections Gathering: The event is scheduled for May 9th from 7:00-8:30pm at First Congregational Church. The next planning meeting will be on April 24th 12-1pm on Zoom (come with ideas for table conversations). Mark sent a Zoom link.

This will be a gathering of green, earth care, and climate teams; all faith communities are invited to participate. There will be time for mingling as well as a sharing circle for groups to share what they have been working on. If time allows, there will be opportunities for table conversations. Ice cream bars will be donated by the company that Ron R works for. Here is the [Google form for RSVPs](#). Here is a [link to the flier/poster](#).

Mark has reached out to faith communities and has not received a lot of response. Only Mark and Cynthia have RSVPed. Please help get the word out. Post the flier at your faith communities and ask for an announcement during service. Dennis will do a closing benediction outside at University Park. Ron K will reach out to Unity of the Valley. Someone needs to call Westminster to share the event. Sue and Dennis will ask Phyllis for the Interfaith Earth Summit

attendee list. Laurie Powell of St Mary's Catholic Church has been very active with 350 Eugene; Tom will reach out to her. Betsy will share with St. Mary's Episcopopol. Sue has tried reaching out to First Methodist and Presbyterian churches. Ron H will send another announcement to the EKs mailing list. Carl will share with the Buddha-eye community.

Betsy suggested starting the event with the message from Braiding Sweetgrass.

New Business

1. Recruiting and Moderators for Future Meetings: Dennis will consider moderating beginning in July.

1. Common Ground Documentary: The Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene will host a showing of [Common Ground](#) on Tuesday April 16th at 6:00pm.

3. Environmental Rights Initiative: Keith isn't here, so we will return to this topic during a future meeting.

4. Urban Forestry: The Climate Forest Coalition is very active nationwide especially regarding old growth forests.

5. Faith Climate Action Week: Kits are [available online](#). This is a great resource for congregations that are planning creation justice events and sermons. This year's theme is "Plastic Jesus." Mark has found these resources to be helpful in the past.

6. Induction Cooking: Electromagnetic induction is much more efficient than gas. There are alternatives to completely replacing your stove, which can be expensive and pushing it may feel like shaming to people who are lower income. You can get a small, portable single burner stovetop for \$50-125. Tom uses this for 95% of his stovetop heating. Dennis shared that education on this is needed. Any iron skillet will work. Dennis takes a magnet to the thrift store.

Additional Discussion:

Buddha-eye Community has a new outdoor earth altar, which will help draw attention to the need to think and work collaboratively on earth care issues.

Tom shared about the film *God and Country*. He said it should be required for progressive faith communities. Also shared was the Sustainable Urban Design Handbook, which approaches urban design that is climate aware and socially just. Saving Capitalism by Robert Reich was also mentioned.

Sue shared that Sierra Pacific bought Seneca Sawmill. The Emerson family owns Sierra Pacific. They are planning to make the Sierra Pacific mill the largest in the country, which is detrimental

to smaller mills. Also shared was OPB's Timber Wars podcast. Cascadia Wildlands, Sierra Club, and 350 Eugene are groups to support and/or get involved with. The Pacific Northwest Forest Coalition was also mentioned.

Sierra Club state conservation committee chair Fergus is trying to get the owners of Blachly Mountain land together to turn it into a place for recreation including for those with disabilities. This includes BLM, Weyerhaeuser, Oregon State Parks and Rec, Siuslaw and Long Tom Watershed Councils. County commissioners are involved. This may be an opportunity for BLM to practice ecological forestry and train others on the practice.

Education Discussion - Nature's Best Hope by Doug Tallamy - Chapter 8

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

The topic of this chapter is insects.

Cynthia shared that many years ago, BT was sprayed over the entire city of Eugene to deal with gypsy moths, and the caterpillars have never recovered.

Mark shared from the book that humans would last only a few months if insects were to disappear. Theological connection: the more diverse the community the stronger we are. Most things we do to our yards don't help insects.

The importance of interconnectedness and interactions between species was stressed.

Sue shared that everything we have comes from the earth. She also shared the Youtube video that UU Church made on [Living With Beavers](#).

The National Wildlife Federation's [Native Plant Finder resource](#) was shared.

Mt. Pisgah has an insect walk.

Next Meeting: May 8, 2024 (online and in person at Universalist Unitarian Church Eugene)

Moderator: Mark

Minutes: Britni

Education Session: *Nature's Best Hope* - Read chapter 9