

Minutes, Interfaith EarthKeepers Hybrid Meeting  
May 8, 2024

Attendees: Theresa O, Sue C, Jerry S, Dennis R, Mark L, Keith O, Ron R, Tom B, Cynthia B, Britni C

Moderator: Mark     Minutes: Britni

**Continuing Business**

**1. Fossil Free Eugene:** City staff have been having conversations with stakeholders. The new city council make up will affect the direction of this issue. Regarding general electrification, EWEB predicts that the biggest impact will be the expansion of electric vehicles. They are building a massive battery array. Other ideas include smart meters and variable energy pricing (electricity will cost more during peak energy times).

**2. Divest Oregon:** The [COAL Act](#) passed in the Oregon Legislature. There was a celebration and forum with treasurer candidates on April 2nd.

**3. Turtle Flats:** earth day event went well. Smaller group than last year. Fixed footbridge. Planted delphinium and bleeding hearts. Removed invasive plants. Mark shared that it looks beautiful right now. It's not generally accessible to the public. This Saturday there is a volunteer work party 9-1 (Friends of Buford park website). Right now the focus of the site is habitat restoration. Mark would like to do an interfaith worship session on the site in the future.

**4. Common Ground showing at UUCE:** The showing had a good turnout. Sue shared that the documentary was excellent. It is the follow up film to Kiss the Ground. Our current agricultural system is owned by large corporations like Monsanto.

**5. Earth Day:** Sue attended an Earth Day event at Westmoreland Park. FCC had a Creation Justice sermon as well as a plastics recycling event. There was an Earth Day service at Westminster Presbyterian. The church signed an overture to pledge to reduce plastic.

**New Business**

**1. Interfaith Connections Event:** Cynthia will print an agenda to put on tables. EKs should spread out, one at each table. EK brochures will be placed on the counter. Jared Tarr is bringing native plants for people to take. Schedule:

Meet and greet, sign in, nametag, sit at table with people you don't know well

Welcome: Mark L

Video: Reconnecting to the Human Tribe

Table talk: Discussion Questions  
Break for ice cream  
Share ideas with the whole group  
Benediction: Dennis R

**2. OCERA (Oregon Coalition for an Environmental Rights Amendment):** Keith attended the workshop at PIELC. There was a statewide kickoff meeting on May 4th. Our Children's Trust is part of the team bringing legal expertise. This is an effort to pass an Oregon constitutional amendment regarding the right to a healthy environment. Keith will continue to provide updates. He will also see about having Melissa Martin give a presentation at an EKs meeting. The Rights of Nature and Rivers approach has been successful in some other countries. OCERA is a more human focused approach which might be more successful.

### Additional Discussion:

**1. Recycling Modernization Act:** More plastics will be accepted. Glass won't be required, but expansion of the bottle bill requirements aim to result in more glass returns. There will be uniform recycling guidelines across the state. The Oregon DEQ Producer Responsibility Organization will be responsible for finding endpoints for recyclables. Producers will have to account for the materials that they bring in and send out. They will also have to report to the state all of the products that they sell within the state of Oregon. The hope is that producers will choose better materials to avoid paying fees for less sustainable materials.

**2. Membership Outreach:** Can we table at community events? Neighborhood Associations meetings and the Eugene Pride event (August 10th) were brought up. Perhaps we could join another table with a similar mission, possibly FCC or UU tables. In the past there was a cluster of faith booths.

**3. Tribal Connections:** Nancy Menning is working on coastal land stewardship with tribes. Tribal people are overwhelmed with people wanting to meet with them. Is there a more streamlined way to connect as a collaboration of faith communities? One suggestion is to show up and help out at their events rather than asking them to come to us.

### Education Discussion - Nature's Best Hope by Doug Tallamy - Chapter 9

*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 weeds.

Cynthia has plantain coming up all over. It is soft to walk on and works well as a mulch.

Britni reiterated that weeds support insects. Many weeds are also edible and/or medicinal.

Mark brought up urban design. There can be restoration in urban and suburban areas.

Keith talked about weed seed clay balls and guerrilla gardening.

**Next Meeting: June 12, 2024 at 12:00-1:30pm (online and in person at First Congregational Church)**

Moderator: Dennis

Minutes: Britni

Education Session: *Nature's Best Hope* - Read chapter 10