

For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God.... We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit.

- Romans 8:19, 22–23a

Suggested Guidelines for discussion of the FWCC video **“Quakers Coming Together to Care for the Earth”**

The [video](#) showcases Friends from across Quaker theological traditions in North America. They join together to share their personal testimonies on environmental justice, earthcare and stewardship (www.vimeo.com/336821797).

Local meetings and churches across the world are invited to use this video to support continued momentum for earth justice from a Quaker perspective at the local level. We encourage you to discern how the Spirit is inviting you to act in response to the multiple interlocking ecological issues affecting creation.

We suggest following the video with structured sharing. You can start that sharing with this introduction, or read the introduction before viewing the video.

Introduction

Throughout 2018 several public Friends came together, mostly via video conference calls plus one face-to-face meeting, to discuss what we as Quakers are called to do about the interlocking ecological issues affecting all of creation. Participants include Friends across the Quaker spectrum including those affiliated with Evangelical Friends of North America, Friends United Meeting, Friends General Conference, Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), Quaker Earthcare Witness and other unaffiliated Friends.

Each of the participants in these meetings has felt a spiritual calling to take action in their own lives and at times, as part of the Quaker organizations that they are affiliated with, on earthcare concerns. Environmental justice has emerged as a unifying theme in our leadings and in ways that we can work together.

Friends from Christ-centered traditions see care for the Earth as the work God invited humanity to do, tending and keeping the creation God called good (Gen 2:15). The Israelites were given specific instructions about caring for the land as a part of their covenant: regular days and years set apart for the land, animals, and people to rest (Lev 25:1–12), leaving the edges of the field for animals and hungry people to glean (Lev 19:9–10), and other instructions specific to living in right relationship with the land and its creatures. Jesus came in the flesh to walk this world (Jn 1:14), and creation itself waits with eager longing, groaning in labor pains for the birth of the reconciled world Jesus invites us to participate in (Rom 8:19–23). As Friends, we have long noticed the emphasis on living in right relationship with God and other people, and part of this justice work is to ensure all people have food, clean air, water, and a means to support themselves: everyone beneath their own vine and fig tree so that no one needs to be afraid (Mic 4:4). Based in these biblical themes and the ways we as Friends have lived out “primitive Christianity revived” (as William Penn called our movement), we encourage Friends to consider how we are called to more fully care for creation in our time.

For those seeking Bible study support relating to care for creation, see these resources:

- [Christianity Today Creation Care Bible Study](#)

- A number of studies are available through [Creation Justice Ministries](#)
- [Presbyterians for Earth Care](#) lists a number of Presbyterian and ecumenical creation care resources

Group Sharing Guidelines

You can be flexible depending on the size of the group but try to hold to the main tenants: creating a safe and personal space where people feel able to express themselves without a few dominating, in sum, ‘speak once, and only once, until all who wish to speak have had a chance to speak’ so Friends feel ‘heard’. Within this framework, you can either go query by query (which works well with a small group) or adjust if you are a large group (for example, by using the last query as a final question for open discussion).

1. Gather your group in a circle, so that everyone can see each other.
2. Ask everyone to speak once (without interruptions) and to hold off responding further until everyone has had a chance to speak to the query. It is okay to pass. Speak from your heart and from you alone (do not assume to speak on behalf of others). Keep responses from the circle confidential.
3. Respond to each of the queries, in turn: **a)** How does my love for the earth connect to my heart and soul? **b)** What changes in the environment am I noticing where I live? **c)** What is God calling me to do? What does my faith require of me?
4. Does your meeting/church want to record your story as a 2-minute video or share your story as a case study? Please [contact FWCC](#).

For more information and resources, please visit [FWCC Sustainability Resources](#) and [Quaker Earthcare Witness](#).

“It would go a long way to caution and direct people in their use of the world, that they were better studied and knowing in the Creation of it. For how could [they] find the confidence to abuse it, while they should see the great Creator stare them in the face, in all and every part of it?”

— William Penn, 1693