

A Traveling Ministry on the Climate Crisis, Justice, and the Growth Dilemma

To: Members of monthly meetings in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

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From: Steve Olshevski of Radnor Meeting (steve.olshevski@gmail.com) and
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Re: A request to visit to your monthly meeting

It's urgent that our nation begin to deal with four daunting and dangerous crises: the accelerating concentration of wealth, climate change, institutional racism, and population growth. They're all inter-related and perpetuated by a financial system that evolved to support economic growth. The current financial system, and thus our economy, must keep growing to keep going, in spite of all the conflicts with our ecological and societal realities.

We've become convinced, by the work of scientists in many fields, that new technologies and the deregulation of the financial system that began in the 1980s have had a major role in our nation's inability to deal with these dangerous crises. We cannot ignore the impacts on our planet of humankind's increasing population.

At the root of our financial system is the way our money is created. There's a lot of misunderstanding about this. And as the financial system has steadily become more complex and abstract, a whole lot of people don't try to understand it. Those who are invested in the current system tend to provide others with confusing explanations, and want to make us think there are no alternatives. But this is not true.

Most people don't know that an alternative was first proposed by some of our nation's leading economists in the 1930s. As one of them wrote, "its purpose was to save capitalism!" And the growing dominance of the financial sector has created renewed interest in their proposal.

We're convinced that changing the way our money is created as an essential first step. While this will be a huge challenge, we also believe there is a clear path forward if enough of our fellow citizens are able to see it. And if our goal is to increase the possibility that the right people with the right ideas are in the right place and the right time to make this happen, there's plenty to do and reason to be hopeful.

We are eager for invitations to visit monthly meetings beginning in September. Our topics and materials include:

- The role of the financial system in contributing to the crises of wealth concentration, institutional racism, and climate disruption.
- How state and municipal public banking can help address them.
- The dilemma of continued population and economic growth on our planet.

One of us or both together can lead an interactive presentation of 45 minutes, 60 minutes, or 90 minutes. We will plan with our hosts how best to use the available time to explore our views about any of these topics. We'd also welcome an invitation to lead a longer workshop that explores all of these topics as an integrated whole.

Our purpose is to share what we've learned about the climate and demographic crises, institutional racism, and the concentration of wealth. With all that's at stake for our spiritual lives and for advancing our testimonies in our world, we hope that you'll want to learn about these things too.

We also think that Friends Committee on National Legislation may have a unique opportunity to advance the prospects for real financial reform. So it's really important that by 2022, FCNL has made a seasoned examination of what Friends are led to do about a financial system that must keep growing to keep going.

Please let us hear from you. With faith and gratitude, Steve Olshevski and Ed Dreby