



Quaker Earthcare Witness Representatives' Report 2023

Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) is a Quaker-led organization that brings together Friends who strive to live in ecological integrity with the living world and in right relationship with each other. It works through mutual support for the actions each of its members takes in their own lives and in their Quaker communities; through educational and outreach programs; through direct action that QEW encourages and supports; through resources, such as its publications and website; and as a public Quaker voice on earthcare and environmental justice.

As a public Quaker voice for earthcare and environmental justice, QEW is a signatory to the Global Recognition of the Right to a Healthy Environment Coalition, which was one of two organizations recognized in 2023 with the U.N. Prize in the Field of Human Rights. Other Quaker signatories include American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and Friends World Committee on Consultation (FWCC). The global coalition was developed by a core group that included the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) Geneva.

“We are sorely in need of a different way to live on this planet, and a different way to relate to each other. Spiritually we are called to do this work. Ecologically, we have no other choice if we are to survive with a healthy ecosystem that equitably supports all beings.”

- Shelley Tanenbaum, General Secretary

Patricia Finley and Ruth Darlington are privileged to serve as your yearly meeting representatives to QEW. As members of the steering committee, we play a number of roles within the organization. Patricia is QEW Treasurer and serves on the Finance Committee and the FCNL Working Group. Ruth serves on the Publications Committee and is Clerk of the FCNL Working Group. This summer we both served on the search committee to find a new Communications Coordinator, and we are currently on the search committee to find a new General Secretary to fill the position Shelley Tannenbaum will leave at the end of the summer.

As QEW representatives, we share updates on QEW activities through the Eco Justice Collaborative newsletter and with our reports to annual sessions.

How Quaker Earthcare Witness Works: Steering Committee & Staff

QEW is a volunteer-led organization guided by a 50-person Steering Committee that uses Quaker process and decision-making to guide its work. The Steering Committee is composed of 20 at-large members and 30 nominated representatives from Quaker yearly meetings in North America. In addition to meeting twice a year to do the business of QEW, Steering Committee

members serve on QEW committees, visit their own monthly and yearly meetings on behalf of QEW, distribute resources, and/or provide workshops and interest groups. They also meet with their committees and working groups between Steering Committee meetings. Officers and committee and working group clerks serve on the Clerks' Committee, which takes care of business between Steering Committee meetings.

QEW's day-to-day work is done by staff: General Secretary, Shelley Tanenbaum, and Communications Coordinator, Miche McCall (plus a part-time bookkeeper consultant, Holly Wilder).

Finance Development

QEW has a small annual budget, \$210,000, with a big mission. During the year 2000 QEW responsibly increased its budget to better pay its staff. In addition to staff time, most of QEW's expenditures go to publication costs (printing, postage, editing), outreach (visits to monthly and yearly meetings, and events), and maintaining the network (Steering Committee meetings, conference calls, database maintenance). QEW spends about 10% of its budget on fundraising (15 percent of staff salaries plus the cost of the annual appeal). Nearly all its income comes from monthly/yearly meeting donations and individual donations.

What QEW is Doing

In 2023, QEW has been working to:

- Serve as a **hub for Friends working on environmental concerns**. Some current issues Friends are connecting about are divestment from fossil fuels, advocacy for a Fair Farm Bill in 2023, priorities for the upcoming COP28, and environmental justice for frontline communities.
- Offer **more support and resources to monthly and yearly meetings**, including connecting speakers on a variety of earthcare topics with monthly and quarterly meetings through the "QEW Presents" program. QEW Presents topics include environmental justice, regenerative agriculture, the financial and economic roots of the climate crisis, and much more. **State College Friends Meeting has hosted a number of QEW Presents programs, including Jim Kessler's presentation on restoring native prairie, oak savannah, wetland and woodland habitats. Other QEW Presents programs they hosted were: Living in Right Relationship with the Living World: Quaker Testimonies as a Template; Financial and Economic Roots of the Climate Emergency; and Finding Way Forward: Friends Care for the Earth.** Jackie Bonomo would be happy to talk to anyone who would like to know more about their experience with QEW Presents.
- Host **monthly online workshops** (including on climate grief), worship-sharing, and other forums that encourage Friends' faithful action. Most recently the June 7th workshop, "Introduction to Faithfulness Groups for Those Called to Earthcare," introduced participants to an ongoing small group practice designed "to support Friends (and others) in their work, ministry, and leadings around Earthcare, environmental witness,

environmental justice, ecological grief, education about climate change, and building resilient communities.” **Shoshana Osofsky of Greenwich Meeting took part in the Introduction to Faithfulness Groups and would be happy to talk to others about her experience.**

- Make **racial and environmental justice an ongoing priority** in all of QEW’s work. We are striving to showcase environmental justice concerns in our publications, including both authors and activists who are Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC). Several sessions of online worship-sharing included queries that address racial and environmental justice.

Publications & Communications

- Produced four print and electronic issues of the 12-page newsletter ***Befriending Creation***. This newsletter provides a forum for Friends and friends to share their work and resources and find inspiration from others. **Three recent issues included six articles about the work of PYM Friends: “Moving Money Publicly to Move Vanguard,” “Incentive for Green Energy: Practical Impacts of the Inflation Reduction Act,” “How to Host a Climate Potluck,” “New Jersey Meetings Organize to Stop Export of LNG from Gibbstown,” “Following Spirit Despite Fear: Remembering John Woolman in the Vanguard Campaign,” and “New Jersey Friends Take Action at Home.”**
- Maintained the **new website** that was launched in 2022 with up-to-date information on Friends action and contemplation for Quakers and the wider community.
- Began the process of **updating many publications**, including reformatting them from trifolds to 8 ½ x 11 double-sided documents that are easier both to read online and to print for sharing.

Local Earthcare Projects

Each year, QEW offers **matching mini grants** of up to \$500 to Quaker meetings, churches, and other Quaker organizations to support hands-on projects that foster earth care. PYM meetings that have been supported in the last two years include State College Monthly Meeting (Expanding the Keller St. Community Garden), West Chester Friends School (Acquiring the “Exploring Organisms with Literacy” set for 1st graders), Newtown Square Friends Meeting (wildflower garden) and this year Lancaster Friends (an event in support of the Citizens Climate Lobby). One other local project proposal being considered for grants is tree planting. Recently, due to the generosity of donors, QEW has established another more substantial grant for projects that require more resources. **For either grant, submit proposals at this link:**

<https://quakerearthcare.org/mini-grants/>

QEW continues to grow and to expand its offerings with support from Quakers throughout North America. Learn more at QuakerEarthcare.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Darlington and Patricia Finley