



Letter to a Young Activist During Troubled Times

By Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés

Mis estimados — My dear friends:
Do not lose heart. We were made for these times.

I have heard from so many recently who are deeply and properly bewildered. They are concerned about the state of affairs in our world right now. It is true, one has to be exceptionally strong to withstand much of what passes for “good” in our culture today. Abject disregard of what the soul finds most precious and irreplaceable and the corruption of principled ideals have become, in some large societal arenas, “the new normal,” the grotesquerie of the week. It is hard to say which one of the current egregious matters has rocked people’s worlds and beliefs more.

Ours is a time of almost daily jaw-dropping astonishment and often righteous rage over the latest degradations of what matters most to civilized, visionary people.

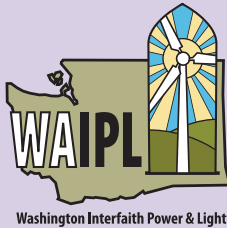
You are right in your assessments. The lustre and hubris some have aspired to while endorsing acts so heinous against children, elders, everyday people, the poor, the unguarded, the helpless, is breathtaking.

Yet ...I urge you, ask you, gentle you, to please not spend your spirit dry by bewailing these difficult times. Especially do not lose hope. Most particularly because, the fact is we were made

Continued on page 14

Inside this issue

- 3 Goings-On
- 6 Spirit Strength
- 7 What Life-Giving Practices Fuel Your Soul?
- 8 Keeping Our Lamps Burning: Faith in a Time of Climate Peril
- 10 Youthful Overcoming Woman
- 11 Joy Dance in the Garden
- 12 A Movement Moment for the Climate
- 13 Repairing the World by Minding the Store



Earth Ministry/WAIPL Staff

LeeAnne Beres, Executive Director
Jessie Dye, Senior Campaign Strategist
Jessica Zimmerle, Program & Outreach Director
Leda Zakarison, Outreach Coordinator
Diane Bell, Operations & Development Manager
Hunter Paulson-Smith, Operations Coordinator
Alicia Healey, Bookkeeper

Earth Ministry Co-founders

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Rev. Carla Pryne

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ABOUT US

Earth Ministry engages the religious community in environmental stewardship. We work in partnership with individuals and congregations to respond to this great moral challenge through education, modeling sustainable lifestyle choices, and organizing for social change through environmental advocacy.

Founded in 1992, Earth Ministry has a history of leading the way in caring for the environment from a faith perspective. Our Greening Congregations Program was the first in the country to help houses of worship implement sustainable practices, and our faithful advocacy program is on the cutting edge of empowering clergy and lay leaders to speak out on public policy issues.

Earth Ministry supports a growing network of congregations and has a national membership. While Earth Ministry is rooted in the Christian tradition, we actively engage all religious communities on climate and energy issues through Washington Interfaith Power & Light. Our programs and resources are available to all. www.earthministry.org www.waipl.org

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Resilience is a word we've been hearing a lot lately, but what is it, really? Most experts agree that resilience is the psychological capacity to adapt well to stressful circumstances and to bounce back from difficult experiences. Given the daily threats to the health of our communities and safety of our neighbors, we all could use a little more resiliency right about now.

The good news is that research has shown that resilience is ordinary, not extraordinary. The American Psychological Association states that "resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have. It involves behaviors, thoughts, and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone." Whew. That's a relief.

The real question is how do we become more resilient? A quick Google search will bring up hundreds of helpful articles. (Go on, do it. There's some good stuff.) Common themes emerge: Build strong connections and community. Be open to new ideas and new ways of doing things. Find a sense of purpose in your life and commit yourself to it. Develop a meaningful spiritual practice. Focus on hope and be the change you want to see in the world.

These are all elements that the faith community is especially well-suited to lead, guide, and support. I am repeatedly inspired by how often Earth Ministry's members carry them forward. Ours is a community built on faith and hope, with a clear vision of who we want to be and the world that we want to leave for the future. May this edition of *Earth Letter* bolster your resilience as you care deeply for God's creation and our communities.

Blessings,



GOINGS-ON at Earth Ministry

Earth Ministry relies on donations from individuals like you to make this important work possible. Join or renew your membership in Earth Ministry, sign up for monthly giving, or make a special gift at www.earthministry.org or by calling (206) 632-2426. Thank you for your support!

Colleagues and Congregations

Earth Ministry's recent congregational outreach included presentations at or events with St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Port Angeles, Westminster Presbyterian in Anacortes, Dayton United Church of Christ, Bremerton United Methodist Church, and Luther Memorial Lutheran and Ballard First Lutheran in Seattle.

Over the summer, Earth Ministry met with the Rt. Rev. Gretchen Rehberg, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane, and with staff of the Upper Columbia United Tribes. We also participated in two roundtable discussions with U.S. Representative Pramila Jayapal and organized a faithful constituents meeting with Rep. Dave Reichert.

We're happy to report that Earth Ministry's Colleague Connection program is growing! We now have 13 connections live with over 60 colleagues participating and more joining every week. It was a joy to see many of our colleagues and members at our family-friendly Trail Mixer in Renton in June and at Earth Ministry's happy hour gathering in Ballard in August.

Victory over Fossil Fuels

Over the last several years, Earth Ministry and our partners in Power Past Coal and Stand Up to Oil campaigns generated over 1.4 million written comments in opposition to proposed fossil fuel projects in the Northwest. We delivered boxes full of these comments to Washington Governor Jay Inslee to ask for his continued leadership in the just transition to clean energy. Coalition partners gathered on the steps of the capitol and Bishop Unti of the ELCA Northwest Washington Synod spoke on behalf of Earth Ministry.

This fall we celebrated the delay of the world's largest methanol refinery in Kalama along the Columbia River. Earth Ministry co-sponsored a forum in Redmond about fracked gas, at which Rev. Laura Baumgartner explained why faith compels us to halt this project. A few days later, the permits for this facility were suspended because greenhouse gas emissions were not fully evaluated. This victory is huge for keeping fracked gas out of the Northwest!

Earth Ministry is also working with local organizers in Tacoma and Whatcom County to prevent expansion of existing fossil fuel infrastructure or construction of new projects in those areas. We turned out faith leaders at public hearings this fall and will continue to mobilize around land use decisions that protect both creation and our communities.



Lutheran Bishop Kirby Unti (center) with Earth Ministry staff and volunteers delivering public comments to Governor Inslee

Catholic Leadership in the Season of Creation

Earth Ministry has been working with a strong group of Catholic leaders to form a *Laudato Si'* Leadership Team to insure that the powerful teachings of Pope Francis and his papal encyclical on the environment are embodied in local parishes.

On June 6, a group of 50 Catholic advocates from 15 Western Washington parishes met for an event called "A New Solidarity with Creation." As a result of this gathering, the group developed local plans for the Season of Creation, a series of events for the Catholic community for the days between the Pope's World Day of Prayer for Creation on September 1 and the Feast of St. Francis on October 4.

On September 14, Jeff Renner, respected weatherman from Seattle's KING 5 TV, gave a presentation at Seattle University on "Climate Change, *Laudato Si'* and the Northwest." This talk, co-sponsored by Earth Ministry, the Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center, and the Center for Catholic Thought and



Meteorologist Jeff Renner speaking on Catholic values and climate change

Culture at Seattle University, was attended by over 100 people.

St. James Cathedral hosted a Mass on September 30 in honor of *Laudato Si'* and the Catholic call to protect God's creation. Catholics and friends from all across the Archdiocese of Seattle came to pray together and pledge to keep our commitment to caring for our common home. Special thanks go to our partners at Christ Our Hope and St. Joseph's parishes in Seattle for their leadership on this event.

In the spirit of St. Francis, Earth Ministry was pleased to co-host a Blessing of the Animals with St. Joseph Parish on October 4.

Climate Advocacy

Despite the president announcing that the US would pull out of the Paris Climate Accord, Earth Ministry is committed to working to make sure our state keeps the global agreement.

Our staff attended Al Gore's Climate Reality Project training in June along with 800 others, partnered with the Latino Community Fund and other local groups in Yakima on August 31 for the Central Washington kickoff of the Alliance for Jobs and

Clean Energy's carbon pricing campaign, and hosted the Eastern Washington faith community launch for the Alliance's efforts at Westminster United Church of Christ in Spokane on Sept 7.

The Alliance for Jobs and Clean Energy is a group of faith, social justice, labor, business, environmental, and health advocates that has come together to create an effective and fair energy policy for transitioning to a clean fuel economy. This policy will invest in renewable energy, healthy forests, and water infrastructure to reduce pollution and address the frightening impacts of climate change in Washington.



Alliance for Jobs and Clean Energy kickoff in Yakima

Supporting Our Native Neighbors

Earth Ministry partnered with Nimiipuu (Nez Perce) Protecting the Environment and Save Our Wild Salmon in June to cohost a trip to Lower Granite Dam, one of the four on the Lower Snake River at Wawawai in Eastern Washington. The trip fostered a deeper partnership between people of faith, tribal communities, and environmental groups to save salmon from extinction in the dammed rivers and warming waters of the Northwest. Members of churches in Spokane and Pullman attended the event, and we led a workshop at Salem Lutheran in Spokane the following day.

On September 9, Jessie Dye and Jessica Zimmerle joined an inter-tribal flotilla calling for the removal of the four dams on the Lower Snake River, co-sponsored by Earth Ministry, Nimiipuu for Protecting the Environment, Save Our Wild Salmon, and Friends of the Clearwater. Special thanks to Earth Ministry board member Rev. Tom Soeldner for a beautiful benediction at the flotilla.

On September 28, Earth Ministry, Upper Columbia United Tribes, Save Our Salmon, League of Women Voters, American Rivers, Center for Environmental Law & Policy, and several other organizations cosponsored "Healing the Columbia River: Modernizing a treaty to sustain a river and its people in the 21st Century." The event emphasized the need to include Native voices and ecosystem health in the reauthorization of the Columbia River Treaty between the United States and Canada.



Earth Ministry board member Rev. Tom Soeldner (second from left) and Native leaders offering the benediction at the Free the Snake flotilla

New faces at Earth Ministry

We are happy to welcome Leda Zakarison and Hunter Paulson-Smith to Earth Ministry staff! Leda will be with us four days a week as our new Outreach Coordinator, and Hunter will be in the office two days per week as our Operations Coordinator. Both come to us from the United Church of Christ Justice Leadership Program, which places young adults in year-long service positions with local non-profits.

Leda grew up in Pullman, WA as a fourth-generation "daughter of the Palouse" and graduated from Whitman College with a BA in Religious Studies and a minor in French. Originally from the Twin Cities area in Minnesota, Hunter is a graduate of the Evergreen State College in Olympia. Welcome, Hunter and Leda!

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GROUNDED IN FAITH

Spirit Strength By Rev. Terry Teigen

A week or two after the 2016 election, Earth Ministry sponsored a community conversation. As we thought about “What now?” someone said, “I feel as though I’m watching as the things I’ve been working toward all my life are dissolving before my eyes.” Their words spoke for many of the dozens of us in the circle that day.

What I didn’t know was how encouraged I would feel in the coming months, witnessing all the new and continued efforts to raise awareness and engage in advocacy and political change. The current energy in the environmental community, including plenty of new, passionate voices, is fueling a powerful commitment to do all that is possible to preserve public lands, stop the expansion of coal and oil exports and fossil fuel refining, protect our waters, move forward regionally to meet the guidelines of the Paris climate accords, and much more.

For some of us, the question now is how to stay engaged? How do we maintain our ability to keep going through what has often continued to be a season of frustration and sadness? Here are three suggestions, not necessarily new but worth pondering again.

Find Your Quiet – It might be taking time, every day, to rest in simple silence. Sit on a rock or a bench and let the natural world speak. Feel the long flow of “Earth time” or sense the timelessness of the stars. A trek by a city shore or ascent of a wilderness path can reassure us that even after all we experience that breaks our hearts, mountains still stand, rivers still dance and shine. Leaves turn, beautifully, toward the completion of their cycle. All of this can help put life and challenges in perspective. Embrace peace.

Welcome the New – We fight, nonviolently, to preserve core values – compassion, generosity, honesty, integrity, truth, responsible stewardship. Our struggle is to hold our ground. However, we can’t forget many spiritual traditions teach that The Divine is often doing “a new thing.” Across the span of generations, and maybe at any moment, exactly how these values call us to live may shift and change.

We must work to really see and hear, whether it is the new information science reveals or the lived experience of sisters and brothers too often ignored. We are invited to trust in the transforming and transcendent gift of Love and may be called to proceed where we would otherwise not choose to go. This takes courage and faith.

Be Communitarian – In these days, on this journey, we must be *we*. Our understanding of the effort required and what we can bring is formed by and built upon the insights and shared gifts of others. We are invited to both know and be known, to learn and to teach, to be leaders and be those who are led.



Drawing on spirit strength we learn to persevere, and know that there is always more we will receive, and more we are able to give, than we might have imagined.

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Rev. Terry Teigen is a retired United Church of Christ pastor and chaplain and is a member of the Earth Ministry Board of Directors.

What Life-Giving Practices Fuel Your Soul?

How do you practice resilience? How do you embrace hope and find the strength to live out compassion and resistance, and to work for justice in the world? Several members of the Earth Ministry staff share their thoughts below.

LeeAnne Beres, Executive Director

Working for justice requires giving of oneself over and over again, rooted in a deep love for the world. Hard work and strong emotions allow us to achieve great things together but can also be a recipe for burnout and despair. In all honesty, I've suffered from both over the last year, and have struggled to get back in balance. Long, prayerful walks helped clear my head and heart, but my real breakthrough came when I gave myself permission to do what is mine to do without taking on the weight of the whole world. That's easier said than done, but I find renewed strength in these words from the Talmud: "Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it."

Jessica Zimmerle, Program & Outreach Director

I'm a hobby potter, but "hobby" isn't the right word. Instead, I have begun claiming this artistic expression as a spiritual practice. When I sit down to throw clay, my worries slip away as I transform an unshapen lump into a masterpiece. To be honest, I feel closer to the Creator when I am up to my elbows in clay than when I more "traditionally" pray. It's time in relationship with the Divine that reminds me of how intentionally I have been shaped by God to be an advocate for environmental stewardship. I'm not just making strong pots, I'm making myself stronger to do God's work for justice.

Jessie Dye, Senior Campaign Strategist

All my life I have been challenged to integrate two sides of myself—the lawyer and the mystic. I am endlessly in love with creation at the same time that I want to win every campaign. Working for Earth Ministry has been a renewable source of joy for me. When I struggle with the darkness of the world or inside myself, my greatest source of resilience is going into my own core. When

I touch into my deepest self, I feel a great security and pride that I am doing what I came to Earth to do, despite my own flaws and the essential pain of being human. Of course, yoga, dogs, friends, and gardens are there to help me reach inside. It's all good.

Diane Bell, Operations & Development Manager

I am so grateful every day for the gift from God of my children. These kids and their peers just "get it." They are intrinsically motivated to do good in the world. They care for others and the environment naturally. At age three, my daughter announced that she was going to be a vegetarian because "it's not nice to kill animals to eat them when we don't have to." She has not changed her stance in over eight years. My teenage son said: "People always talk about saving the Earth, but the Earth has been around for billions of years. It will be here long after we're gone. I wish people would see that saving the environment is about saving ourselves." Spending time with my children and having conversations like these is how I find the resilience to keep working for the future they deserve.



Keeping Our Lamps Burning: Faith in a Time of Climate Peril

By Shantha Ready Alonso, Rev. Scott Hardin-Nieri, and Rev. Dr. Brooks Berndt

Within a song or hymn, one can often find insights into how to cope with setbacks and hardships. The old African-American spiritual “Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning” presents a dim reality: a “darker midnight lies before us, for the time is drawing nigh.” Yet, in the next verse, comes relief: “the morning soon is breaking.” All the while, all are enjoined to “Keep your lamps trimmed and burning.” In these lyrics, there may be a key to sustaining our faith during the present midnight of climate peril.

Christian faith communities have kept the light of creation justice trimmed and burning for decades. We have been a vital part of the chorus of voices calling for action at every level. As people of faith, we have drawn attention to how many facets of our lives are inextricably bound to the wellbeing of God’s creation. We have highlighted how our ability to love God and our neighbors is connected to our care for creation.

Yet, in 2017, we have been forced to the midnight hour as the window of opportunity to address the present climate crisis shortens. The Trump administration has filed notice with the United Nations that the United States federal government will withdraw from the Paris International Climate Agreement. At

precisely the moment when the nations of the world should be accelerating progress on climate protection, the U.S. federal government has thrown itself into reverse.

The health and diversity of God’s creation is intimately connected to the wellbeing of humanity. Pollution is increasingly harming human health, while

extreme weather and altered climates are forcing migration as those who are most economically vulnerable are the least able to cope with the degradation of God’s creation. To compound matters, all of this is happening as our social safety nets are being cut apart: healthcare, immigrant rights, and support for vulnerable populations are under attack.

Even in this time of trial, the hope of a coming morning remains. But this hope is not simply a feeling. It is an act of faith, and it is an act that comes with responsibility. We are called to keep our lamps trimmed and burning. We believe and act in hope, knowing that when we do our part, God can move among us to heal creation.

In the absence of leadership from the federal government, people of faith are making the choice to hope, even in the midnight hour. For instance, we see it in the United Church of Christ, a denomination of 5,000 churches across the country.

This summer, a group of climate leaders within the denomination gathered to listen to the Rev. Tafue Lusama from the island nation of Tuvalu. Lusama shared with them a common assertion from his home country, “If we save Tuvalu, we save the world.” If the world can prevent Tuvalu from drowning, there is hope for everyone else.

On July 3, almost a thousand delegates from every state in the Union gathered for the UCC’s biennial meeting in Baltimore. A highly anticipated item of business was an emergency resolution drafted in response to the Trump administration’s decision to pull out of the accord. The resolution opposed the pullout and declared that this was a moment “for which the church was born.”



The resolution put particular focus on “the disproportionate impact of climate change on communities of color, indigenous communities, and poor white communities.” The resolution further instructed pastors to preach on climate change as their churches and members engaged in an array of grassroots activism to resist fossil fuel infrastructure and demand renewable energy. The resolution passed with 97 percent of the delegates voting in its favor.

The UCC is part of a larger tide that is growing. Less than a week later the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), with its nearly 4,000 churches, passed a resolution moving the denomination toward Carbon Neutrality. This resolution passed unanimously after words spoken by youth and adult alike.

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has a long-standing program to invite churches into action. The Green Chalice movement within the denomination is growing as churches across the country and in Canada are offering a legacy of love by caring for creation and neighbor. Congregations participating in the Green Chalice ministry create a green team, sign a covenant for care for God’s creation and commit to three actions.

To build a movement that can address the magnitude of the climate crisis during this midnight hour requires that denominations no longer act alone. Our lamps shine brighter when we stand side by side. Both the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are active in the ecumenical work of Creation Justice Ministries.

Creation Justice Ministries’ mission is to educate, equip, and mobilize Christian communities to protect, restore, and rightly share God’s creation. Creation Justice Ministries brings diverse denominations together whether it is for online actions or marches in the street. Moreover, Creation Justice Ministries offers Christian educational resources that are released each year in advance of Earth Day Sunday. Creation Justice Ministries is based on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC and also facilitates advocacy opportunities for faith communities.

“Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning” has a refrain. It calls out, “Children, don’t grow weary, for the time is drawing nigh.” With faith and with hope, let us not grow weary. Instead, let’s become storytellers of climate truths, building meaning and courage in our communities. Now is the time to continue our striving, and to fulfill the high calling to which God beckons us.

How is God calling you to act and to keep the lamp burning?

This article originally appeared in *Unbound: An Interactive Journal of Christian Social Justice*. It has been edited slightly for length.

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Shantha Ready Alonso is the Executive Director of Creation Justice Ministries, an ecumenical ministry that educates, equips, and mobilizes faith communities to protect, restore, and rightly share God’s creation.

Rev. Scott Hardin-Nieri is the Director of the Creation Care Alliance of Western North Carolina and Associate Pastor for Green Chalice of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Rev. Dr. Brooks Berndt serves the United Church of Christ as the Minister for Environmental Justice. He is the coauthor of Sounding the Trumpet: How Churches Can Answer God’s Call to Justice.



Youthful Overcoming Woman By Jessie Dye

Carrie Schuster is pointed out as a matriarch by everyone at the gathering. Dressed in her stunning elk-tooth regalia, she sits with her relatives and friends in the front row at the jamboree, holding an eagle feather fan and enjoying herself greatly.

The matriarch of the *Nah-khee-um Wow-Yick-Mah* or Palouse, and a member of the Yakama Nation, Carrie leads the prayers at the Free the Snake flotilla at Chief Timothy State Park, thanking Creator for the gift of the day, our time together, the salmon swimming up the river. She asks on behalf of the people for health and happiness and graciously shares time in praise of Creator with a Christian speaker.

Carrie is strongly opposed to the four dams that currently choke the Lower Snake River between Lewiston, Idaho and Pasco, Washington. A long line of ancestors, including herself, her mother, and grandmother come from an area near the confluence of the Snake and the Columbia Rivers, just downstream from where these four dams were built from the early 1960s through mid-1970s.

As a little girl, Carrie remembers her mother showing her a large stone that is sister to the moon. Her mother railed against the then-proposed

Ice Harbor Dam, which would cover this stone, breaking the tie between the Earth and the moon. But the dam was built and the stone covered. Carrie says that to regain balance on Earth, the dam must be removed so the stone can be uncovered. It is certainly true today that, for balance to be restored to the great Columbia River salmon runs, this dam and the other three like it nearby must be removed. It is time to Free the Snake.

All of us living now face the uncertainties of a future impacted by climate change. Our children and grandchildren in particular will face



Carrie Schuster (on left), her son Jesse Nightwalker, and a friend at the Free the Snake Flotilla

problems that we can scarcely imagine. In the face of such daunting challenges, we may wonder how Native people have found the resilience, good cheer, and personal power that Carrie exhibits. She is warm, open to teaching those who act respectfully, and fair-minded. Yet her ancestors witnessed the extinction of almost all of their relatives, either from disease or genocide. Historical trauma is a lived experience in her community. So I asked her how she can be so full of joy and wisdom.

Carrie had a ready answer. Raised on the knees of her grandparents and elders, she was taught the one faith, *Washit*, the religion of the Seven Drums of the Columbia Plateau, which stretches from the Colorado Rockies to the Cascades. Her belief is strong in both Christianity and the Seven Drum teaching. She explained that praying with one heart from different traditions makes our prayers stronger.

As a child, Carrie was given to a matriarch of the Umatilla to learn the teachings of the people, as well as beadwork and how to wash dishes. Later, as a young girl, she was given a name from the last Palouse leader of the Colville: *Aii-yut-to-ton-mii*, Youthful Overcoming Woman. There is extraordinary power of resilience in her name.

Strength also comes from being a woman. The tribes in the Palouse use the term “matriarch” frequently, referring to wise and respected elders. As a matriarch, Carrie is a teacher and a keeper of the stories, a historian for the people. She acknowledges the fortitude of women – to be a mother, a wife, or an auntie takes strength and courage. Watching her in community, I see the

support she shares with women around her, and the comfort and humor she radiates. Her friendship is a valuable gift.

Carrie is no weak sister in her opposition to the dams and her anger at the federal agencies that have denied fair treatment to the lineal descendants of her ancestors. “We do not have evil intent,” she explains. “We are not here for profit but for the well-being of the people.”

Pre-contact, indigenous economies and political systems of the Northwest were vital and wide-ranging, with tribes trading as far away as California and the Dakotas. The Snake River, though, is the heart of the place. Carrie’s people bred the famous Appaloosa horses, produced beautiful beadwork, and fished for the abundant salmon in the rivers. “The dams on the Snake River will come down,” she says with confidence. “It’s only a question of time. Will the salmon live long enough for the dams to be removed?”

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Jessie Dye is Earth Ministry’s Senior Campaign Strategist.

Earth Ministry Receives National Presbyterians for Earth Care Award

Earth Ministry is honored to have received the national Restoring Creation Award for Institutional Leadership in Environmental Justice from Presbyterians for Earth Care (PEC). Presented at PEC’s national conference in Oregon in September, the award recognizes Earth Ministry’s outstanding work engaging the faith community in environmental stewardship and advocacy, with special emphasis on our successful campaigns to stop the transport and export of fossil fuels in the Northwest.

Executive Director LeeAnne Beres accepted the award on behalf of Earth Ministry and the thousands of members and supporters who have stood up and spoken out over the years, making the moral voice heard for the health and safety of our communities and all God’s creation. This is your award too! Thank you for putting your faith into action for the Earth.



Executive Director LeeAnne Beres (center) accepts the Presbyterians for Earth Care (PEC) national Restoring Creation Award on behalf of Earth Ministry, as presented by Holly Hallman, PEC steering committee & former Earth Ministry board member, and Jenny Holmes, PEC national conference coordinator.

Joy Dance in the Garden By Marlena Nip

Āina is the Hawaiian word for “that which gives” or “the land.” From what I witnessed living on the island of Molokaʻi, *āina* is a central piece of the Hawaiian people. As a FoodCorps service member connecting kids to healthy foods in schools, I had to quickly adapt and learn about this beautiful, sacred, and exploited culture.

Many of the students I taught were born and raised on Molokaʻi, an island 40 miles long and 10 miles wide with a population of 7,000 people. Although many of them knew how to fish, hunt, and grow their own food, there was a disconnect with how that food nourished them physically and spiritually.

To understand the Hawaiian people, one must learn the story of Haloa. Haloa is the older brother of the Hawaiian people, and the first *kalo* (taro) plant ever grown. The Hawaiian people are quite literally rooted to the earth, the *āina*, through Haloa. Ever since the colonization of the islands, Western influence has put up barriers to make what was commonly known not so common.

I continue to see the tragedies of colonization and systemic oppression in the communities in which I work, but I also see a beacon of hope. At the Krista Foundation for Global Citizenship, we call this the Joy Dance. I am a colleague of the foundation, which has supported my ability to lift up the voices of the oppressed without exploiting their stories. With the Krista Foundation’s support, I have been able to reflect more deeply on my service experience and turn those learned experiences into an approach to life.

I have taken what I learned in Hawaii into my current role as the state lead for the FoodCorps Mississippi program. In this role, I support current service members in Mississippi who are paired with schools to connect kids to healthy foods through gardening, cooking, and nutrition education. I do this by developing trainings, supporting service members through site visits and regular coaching calls, and, most important, building in time for reflection on their experience and how they are impacting the communities they serve.

Service can be an uncomfortable and eye-opening experience for corps members. Some volunteers have never seen how the system fails to provide equitable opportunities for some while providing ample opportunities for others. Through all of these experiences of service and navigating a complex world, I turn back to this beacon of hope in the Joy Dance.

I see this hope in our gardens, wherever they may be. The garden is where Jewish, Muslim, and Christian communities come together through their shared excitement and eagerness to grow food and share it. The garden is where historically black and historically white churches of the same denomination come together to work alongside each other. I’ve seen the garden reconnect a Hawaiian student to his roots, his older brother, Haloa. Amongst all of the chaos in the world, the garden is a beacon of hope for new life, resilience, and remembering where we come from.

Marlena Nip is the Mississippi Fellow at FoodCorps in Jackson, Mississippi, and a Krista Foundation Colleague.



A Movement Moment for the Climate By Rep. Pramila Jayapal

Climate change is deeply affecting people around the globe – including the devastation of forest fires in the Pacific Northwest; hurricanes in Texas, Florida, and the Caribbean; and heavy monsoon rains in South Asia’s Nepal, Bangladesh, and my birth country of India.

It is absolutely clear that we must do everything in our power to come together and save our planet and our people. But federal policies over the past eight months have rolled back some of the most important environmental protections and advances made in the last decade.

The silver lining is that this is a “movement moment,” a moment when organizing and engagement in communities across our country are at an all-time high. Those who may not have thought their voices mattered are realizing how important it is to speak up and take action.

Countries around the world are doubling down on their efforts to combat climate change. In May, I had the privilege to be part of a Congressional delegation with Leader Nancy Pelosi to visit India and meet with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We discussed the preservation of our natural world and the importance of science. His Holiness reminded us that while powers of coercion and force may be strong in the short term, the truth will always win.

I also met with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. I asked him about India’s work on climate change, in light of recent news of the United States’ withdrawal from the Paris climate accords. The Prime Minister movingly shared his firm commitment to the accords, describing an early childhood memory with his own mother teaching him about the need to preserve the forests that provided essential resources for the family. He reiterated that climate change is an existential threat, and that means that we simply have no choice in taking it on – and he intends to do so.

In Washington’s 7th District, we are proud of our commitment to our environment and to the connection our varied communities have to that environment – through the cultivation of traditional foods, walks along the shores of Puget Sound, joyful games of soccer at the park, and hikes in our abundant wilderness. Our politics in the district have always reflected the public’s intrinsic connection to the environment, as they should.

In my time in office, I have prioritized the environment. I co-founded a new Congressional task force with my House colleagues Nanette Barragán and Donald McEachin dedicated to climate justice and ensuring clean air, water, and health for all. This task force recognizes the disproportionate burden that low-income communities and communities of color face around the impacts of climate change. We are pushing to codify the Environmental Justice Small Grants program into law and to



Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal and His Holiness, the Dalai Lama

create an Office of Environmental Justice in the executive branch.

I’m also proud to be one of the four original sponsors of the 100 by ’50 Act, the only bill laying out how we can fully transition from fossil fuels to 100 percent clean energy by 2050. This is a moral responsibility, as well as a pathway to a strong economic future with robust retraining programs, apprenticeships, and good-paying jobs for American workers.

Protecting our environment is our urgent moral responsibility and it is deeply entwined with achieving economic, racial, and gender justice. Building a strong coalition to organize and advocate is the way we will win. I’m deeply proud of our faith community and Earth Ministry for their strong and grounded leadership as we work to bend that moral arc of the universe more quickly toward justice.

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U.S. Representative Pramila Jayapal represents the people of the 7th Congressional District in Washington State.

Continued from page 1

for these times. Yes. For years, we have been learning, practicing, been in training for, and just waiting to meet on this exact plain of engagement. I cannot tell you often enough that we are definitely the leaders we have been waiting for, and that we have been raised since childhood for this time precisely.

I grew up on the Great Lakes and recognize a seaworthy vessel when I see one. Regarding awakened souls, there have never been more able crafts in the waters than there are right now across the world. And they are fully provisioned and able to signal one another as never before in the history of humankind. I would like to take your hands for a moment and assure you that you are built well for these times. Despite your stints of doubt, your frustrations in righting all that needs change right now, or even feeling you have lost the map entirely, you are not without resource, you are not alone.

Look out over the prow; there are millions of boats of righteous souls on the waters with you. In your deepest bones, you have always known this is so. Even though your veneers may shiver from every wave in this stormy roil, I assure you that the long timbers composing your prow and rudder come from a greater forest. That long-grained lumber is known to withstand storms, to hold together, to hold its own, and to advance, regardless.

We have been in training for a dark time such as this, since the day we assented to come to Earth. For many decades, worldwide, souls just like us have been felled and left for dead in so many ways over and over—brought down by naiveté, by lack of love, by suddenly realizing one deadly thing or another, by not realizing something else soon enough, by being ambushed and assaulted by various cultural and personal shocks in the extreme. We have a history of being gutted, and yet remember this especially... we have also, of necessity, perfected the knack of resurrection.

Over and over again we have been the living

proof that that which has been exiled, lost, or foundered can be restored to life again. This is as true and sturdy a prognosis for the destroyed worlds around us as it was for our own once mortally wounded selves.

Though we are not invulnerable, our risibility supports us to laugh in the face of cynics who say “fat chance,” and “management before mercy,” and other evidences of complete absence of soul sense. This, and our having been to Hell and back on at least one momentous occasion, makes us seasoned vessels for certain. Even if you do not feel that you are, you are.

Believe the evidence of any one of your past testings and trials. Here it is: Are you still standing? The answer is, Yes! (And no adverbs like “barely” are allowed here). If you are still standing, ragged flags or no, you are able. Thus, you have passed the bar. And even raised it. You are seaworthy.

In any dark time, there is a tendency to veer toward fainting over how much is wrong or unmended in the world. Do not focus on that. Do not make yourself ill with overwhelm. There is a tendency



too to fall into being weakened by perseverating on what is outside your reach, by what cannot yet be. Do not focus there. That is spending the wind without raising the sails.

We are needed, that is all we can know. And though we meet resistance, we more so will meet great souls who will hail us, love us and guide us, and we will know them when they appear. Didn't you say you were a believer? Didn't you say you pledged to listen to a voice greater?

Didn't you ask for grace? Don't you remember that to be in grace means to submit to the voice greater? You have all the resource you need to ride any wave, to surface from any trough. Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach.

Any small, calm thing that one soul can do to help another soul, to assist some portion of this poor suffering world, will help immensely. It is not given to us to know which acts or by whom, will cause the critical mass to tip toward an enduring good. What is needed for dramatic change is an accumulation of acts – adding, continuing. We know that it does not take “everyone on Earth” to bring justice and peace, but only a small, determined group who will not give up during the first, second, or hundredth gale.

One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. Soul on deck shines like gold in dark times. The light of the soul throws sparks, can send up flares, builds signal fires ... causes proper matters to catch fire.

To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these – to be fierce and to show mercy toward others both – are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity. Struggling souls catch light from other souls who are fully lit and willing to show it. If you would help to calm the tumult, this is one of the strongest things you can do.

There will always be times in the midst of “success right around the corner, but as yet still unseen” when you feel discouraged. I too have felt despair many times in my life, but I do not keep a chair for it; I will not entertain it. It is not allowed to eat from my plate. The reason is this: In my uttermost bones I



know something, as do you. It is that there can be no despair when you remember why you came to Earth, who you serve, and who sent you here. The good words we say and the good deeds we do are not ours: They are the words and deeds of the One who brought us here.

In that spirit, I hope you will write this on your wall: When a great ship is in harbor and moored, it is safe, there can be no doubt. But ... that is not what great ships are built for.

This comes with much love and prayer that you remember who you came from, and why you came to this beautiful, needful Earth.

This article been edited slightly for length.

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Clarissa Pinkola Estés, Ph.D. is a Mestiza Latina (Native American/Mexican Spanish) American poet, psychoanalyst, and post-trauma specialist.

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Perhaps
this is the
moment for
which you
have been
Created.
Esther 4:14

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