

Pacific Yearly Meeting
Unity with Nature Committee
Report to Representative Committee 2022

February 21, 2022

The Unity with Nature Committee has been meeting at least once monthly for committee business, and more frequently for special projects and working sub-groups. The committee is deeply spiritually grounded. All of its members participate in the committee's work and discernment.

The committee facilitated a Yearly Meeting-wide Braiding Sweetgrass worship-discussion group throughout 2021 to help Friends explore indigenous wisdom and imagine alternative ways of interacting with Creation. This group regularly had more than 25 Friends in attendance.

The committee has been profoundly moved by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's leadership on the climate crisis as seen in the action plan they adopted in July 2021 entitled *Moving Forward in the Face of Climate Change*. In the adoption of this plan, some 35 pages of carefully developed ideas for moving its aspirations into action, PYM has elevated the issue of climate change to the forefront of their peace and justice agenda. It has set this concern as a priority across all their actions, calling for PYM Friends to "come under the weight of the climate crisis and climate injustice" and committing the entire yearly meeting to "strengthen and expand our response to climate change as a corporate witness."

The PYM plan reminds us that as Friends we are called to witness to the truth of our times, and that the most glaring of these truths is that we are facing an existential crisis that is systemic and requires more than individual actions. Quoting again from the PYM corporate call to action: "We already face catastrophic fires, storms, droughts, crop failures and floods. Scientists tell us that what we do in the next decade will determine the fate of humanity... Many people already suffer and call us to act. Future generations depend on us to act. Knowing the consequences of inaction, integrity demands that we act."

Inspired by the work of PYM and following from our own discernment of this past year, the UWN committee has created a PacYM Climate Action Plan Working Group" to help PacYM rise up as a regenerative and transformative force to address the climate crisis and the living systems affected by it. Many PacYM Friends are already taking various actions in their own lives and communities. But meeting the collective challenge of the global crisis we are now facing requires much more. It demands of us a wholesale transformation of both the Pacific Yearly Meeting and the broad scale cultural patterns of which we are a part. Our intent in developing the PacYM Climate Strategy is to offer a roadmap for discerning what we are called to do in response to the climate crisis and how we will support each other in co-creating the world that we all need if we are to not only survive but to thrive as a positive, and healing, force upon our planet. The Unity with Nature Committee expects to launch a year-long effort to engage all Meetings in taking and sharing climate actions, and in helping to frame a climate strategy for PacYM that is both effective and spiritually grounded.

In 2022 we are undertaking two other programs, a monthly sharing among meetings regarding their own climate actions, as well as needs, concerns and aspirations, and work related to (i) eco-grief, (ii) climate resilience and (iii) rewilding and regenerative approaches to healing and protecting eco-systems. We are also looking at ways to work with Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and the wider body of Friends to share knowledge and collaborate on reports, plans and actions.

Gayle Matson and Keith Runyon, Co-Clerks