

Good evening, everyone. My name is Julia Isaacs, and I am a member of Madison Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, also known as Quakers. I want to express my gratitude for the letter that Pope Francis has written to all of us and his invitation to all people “to enter into dialogue...about our common home.”¹ To add a Quaker voice to this dialogue, I’d like to share portions of a statement on climate change that has been adopted by dozens of Quaker organizations, including Northern Yearly Meeting, the regional association of Quakers here in Wisconsin and Minnesota.² This is what it says:

.....As Quakers, we are called to work for the peaceable Kingdom of God on the whole Earth, in right sharing with all peoples. We recognize a moral duty to cherish Creation for future generations.

We call on our leaders to make the radical decisions needed to create a fair, sufficient and effective international climate change agreement.

...we understand anthropogenic climate change (climate change due to human activities) to be a symptom of a greater challenge: how to live sustainably and justly on this Earth.

We recognize a personal and collective responsibility to ensure that the poorest and most vulnerable peoples now, and all our future generations, do not suffer as a consequence of our actions. We see this as a call to conscience.....

We recognize the connections between climate change and global economic injustice as well as unprecedented levels of consumption, and question assumptions of unlimited material growth on a planet with limited natural resources.

We recognize that most anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions are created by fossil fuel combustion.We recognize that the Earth holds more fossil fuel reserves than are safe to burn, and that the vast majority of fossil fuel reserves must remain in the ground if we are to prevent the catastrophic consequences of climate change. We therefore question profoundly the continued investment in, and subsidizing of, fossil fuel extraction.

And the ending is my favorite part:

.....As members of this beautiful human family, we seek meaningful commitments from our leaders and ourselves, to address climate change for our shared future, the Earth and all species, and the generations to come. We see this Earth as a stunning gift that supports life. It is our only home. Let us care for it together.

¹ [Laudato Si, paragraph 3]

² “A Shared Quaker Statement: Facing the Challenge of Climate Change.”

<http://www.quakerearthcare.org/article/shared-quaker-statement-facing-challenge-climate-change>