

From Sustainability to Climate Justice
A Conference at The Mountain Retreat & Learning
Center
May 20 – 25, 2018



This conference will expand your understanding of climate change and its connection to environmental and social justice. The conference includes:

- ❖ Information, inspiration and challenge that will increase your resolve for the work of climate justice
- ❖ Skills for working with others, including those with different perspectives
- ❖ Processes to convert informed anxiety into effective action
- ❖ Opportunities to nurture your physical, emotional and spiritual selves

Planned Activities and Workshops

Before Breakfast – Yoga on The Mountain

After Breakfast – 30-minute worship service

Morning Sessions – two-hour sessions with Rev. Fred Small, who will invite us into meditation, reflection, conversation, and song, strengthening our spirits and deepening our resolve in the struggle for climate justice. The program supports personal engagement through four themes:

- ❖ Gratitude
- ❖ Grief
- ❖ Renewal
- ❖ Resolve

After Lunch – Workshops

- ❖ The science and implications of climate change
- ❖ Environmental justice
- ❖ Green building – constructing an energy-efficient home
- ❖ The World Game: Integrative Resource Utilization Planning Tool by R. Buckminster Fuller
- ❖ Awakening the Dreamer: Environmental Sustainability, Social Justice, and Spiritual Fulfillment
- ❖ Moments of Truth -- Compassionate listening for working with others
- ❖ How music changes the world because it changes people
- ❖ Divestment of Investment — investing to support climate justice
- ❖ The Food Forest Project at the Many Hands Peace Farm
- ❖ Gardening to produce your own food

- ❖ Sustainability practices at The Mountain
- ❖ Low-ropes course — risk-taking and team-building
- ❖ Guided walk of the outdoor labyrinth —nurturance for the work of climate justice
- ❖ Fake News: Living in a Post-Truth World
- ❖ Going Green at Home

Social Hour and Dinner: Each evening we spend informal time before dinner on the deck and the Commons at the Dining Hall. This provides time to get to know each other and share ideas.

Evening Sessions – concerts, movie, storytelling, and open mic for participants to share stories or songs. Bring your own instruments and music to share during social hour or at evening events. We are also planning a trust walk behind a nearby waterfall.

In addition to planned activities, you can take advantage of other opportunities at The Mountain including spending time on Meditation Rock, the Memorial Garden, outdoor labyrinth, and using the nearby hiking trails, onsite library, volleyball court, and outdoor decks.

Conference Presenters

Rev. Fred Small <http://www.uua.org/offices/people/fred-small>

Rev. Small, who began his career as an environmental lawyer, is a Unitarian Universalist minister, focusing on justice issues, especially climate justice. He is also a notable singer and songwriter, hailed by Pete Seeger as one of the best in America. Rev. Small was listed in Grist magazine as one of the 15 Green Religious Leaders worldwide. Rev. Small will conduct two-hour sessions each morning, along with some worship services and an evening concert.

Friction Farm: Aiden Quinn and Christine Stay www.frictionfarm.com

Aidan and Christine combine storytelling, social commentary and humor to create songs of everyday life, local heroes, and quirky observations. From ballads to anthems each song is filled with harmony, hope, and inspiring people to do good in the world. This modern-folk duo performs internationally and throughout the US. They recently built their own energy-efficient home and apply principles of sustainability in their daily lives. Christine and Aiden will present morning worship services, an evening concert and workshops about building a "green" home and creating music to change the world.

Rick Crume www.rcrume.com

Recently retired from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Rick directed program planning and execution for the nation's air quality program. His office was responsible for developing the Clean Power Plan in President Obama's second term. Richard also taught air pollution, climate change, and renewable energy classes at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. He is a feature writer for green energy magazines, and makes presentations on environmental protection and green buildings. Rick will facilitate workshops about climate science, environmental justice, and energy-efficient buildings.

Pam and Charley Rogers www.momentsoftruth.info

Pam partnered in a public relations firm for 25 years, concentrating on the non-profit and political sectors. Charley enjoyed a 27-year career with IBM, followed by nine years as a business consultant. Both have served as members of the Board of Directors of the Henderson County Community Foundation. Pam and Charley are deeply committed to the environment and social justice. For the past five years, they have devoted their time to volunteer with the Charter for Compassion International (CCI), an organization founded on the Golden Rule, whose mission is to bring compassion to life through practical action in everyday life. Pam and Charley will facilitate a three-hour session integrating two workshops: Awakening the Dreamer - Environmental Sustainability, Social Justice, and Spiritual Fulfillment; and Moments of Truth -- Compassionate Listening for Working with Others

Freeman Owle

Freeman is a Cherokee Elder, story teller, craftsperson and educator from the Qualla boundary. Freeman brings the Native American perspective of honoring the Earth and considering the long-term impact of actions, the 7th generation approach. The Mountain property was previously Cherokee land. Freeman will participate in the welcoming gathering Sunday evening, and present an evening storytelling session.

Representative from 350.org www.350.org

350.org is a collaboration of organizers, community groups, and regular people who are working together for clean energy. The organization uses online campaigns, grassroots organizing, and mass public actions to oppose new coal, oil and gas projects, take money out of the companies that are heating up the planet, and build 100% clean energy solutions that work for all. 350's network extends to 188 countries. The organization has graciously sent a representative who will facilitate a workshop about socially responsible investing – divesting financial support linked to corporations and institutions that do not reflect concern about our environment.

Mountain Staff

Ben Galindo and Joey Kyle, Managers of our Many Hands Peace Farm will facilitate a tour of the farm, including the development of a "Food Forest" in a black locust thicket on The Mountain. They will also offer a workshop of tips for gardening to supplement your food.

Matt Wright, Kitchen Manager, will offer a variety of vegetarian and vegan foods to demonstrate the possibilities for a plant-based diet. Animal products will be available most meals.

Russell Honnewell, Facilities Director, will demonstrate how The Mountain uses renewable energy and practices principles of sustainability. In a second workshop, he will present information and answer questions about renewable energy and sustainability practices at home.

Rachel Kinback, Guest Services, will facilitate yoga before breakfast, stretching and centering, with a view of an amazing environment.

Justin Perry, Mountain Intern, will facilitate the Low Ropes Course to develop skills related to risk-taking, communication in a challenging situation, reaching out to others for support, and team-building as the group works together toward a common goal.

Laurel Amabile, Development Director, will lead the Trust Walk at Dry Falls. This is done after dark, with participants holding hands to give signals to and support one another single file, as they silently walk to and behind the falls.

Julia Jamison, Guest Services, will guide participants in the outdoor Labyrinth walk. A labyrinth is symbolic of a pilgrimage; people can walk the path, ascending toward enlightenment. One loses track of direction and of the outside world, and thus quiets the mind. In addition, the labyrinth can serve as a metaphor for difficult situations, such as dealing with climate justice.

Alyssa Fuller, Communications, will coordinate hikes from The Mountains tailored to the level of interest and degree of difficulty preferred by hikers.

General Information

Although it will not be feasible to participate in all workshops and activities, there will be opportunities to meet and interact with all presenters and conference participants.

Conference participants are encouraged to bring a thumb drive or device to download conference materials and resources so we practice our sustainability by providing digital copies of materials.

We look forward to a conference filled with knowledge, inspiration, challenge, personal growth, nurturing friendships, and together going into the world, resolved to continue the critical work of climate justice. For more information, contact us at [\[link for conference inquiry\]](#).

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