

New Story News for January 2022

Compiled by Cornelia Parkes and the New Story Group

Join us for another transformative evening with the New Story Group on Monday, January 24, 2022, from 7:00 to 9:00pm. Come at 6:30pm for fellowship. Newcomers are always welcome. We have a new theme each month.

To participate in this event [click this NEW link](#) or call 1-646-558-8656 and provide the Meeting ID 875 6881 1869 and passcode 101225.

The theme for the January meeting is Celtic wisdom. We will explore the topic through Celtic symbols and through their stories as told by J. Philip Newell in *Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul: Celtic Wisdom for Reawakening to What Our Souls Know and Healing the World*. For an introduction to the book and Philip Newell and the Celtic critique of Christianity [watch this video](#).

We will listen to the song [We Shall be Known](#), words below. Skip Schiel will present “simply earth” a short slide show in which he tries to depict how the earth feels to him thru his lens, in two parts, personal spirits or essences of the earth, and strategic and often colorful actions to address the climate crisis.

I hope you can come!

Are you new to the New Story? Read our one-page introduction "[Welcome to the New Story](#)." Come at 6:30pm for fellowship and to get acquainted.

Musings on Celtic Wisdom and the New Story

Cornelia Parkes, January 9, 2022

As I was reading *Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul: Celtic Wisdom for Reawakening to What Our Souls Know and Healing the World* by J. Philip Newell (2021) in preparation for the January New Story Group meeting, I was amazed at how familiar the Celtic wisdom was and how it echoed themes in the New Story and Quakerism. I didn't realize how direct the connection was between the new story, as told by Thomas Berry, and the Celtic tradition until I later read the piece “Uncle Brother and the Celts” by Peter Berry, Thomas Berry's nephew. Peter Berry tells this story about his visit to Ireland in 2005.

We went to the Holy Well of Brigit at Kildare where Thomas Berry planted an oak tree ten years prior in a ceremony. The nuns went absolutely berserk with excitement when they found out I was his nephew..... What happened after the nuns calmed down was really special. They took us to the “real” healing well of Brigit, which is more private and secluded, and then took us into their home where the flame of Brigit burns and gave us votive candles ignited from that special flame and we all received very special individual blessings pertinent to our work in the world.

It was an amazing afternoon and was very meaningful for everyone in our small group of pilgrims. As I was handed my ignited candle by Sister Mary (the head of the order called *Solas*

Brigh—Light of Brigit) she looked into my eyes and said, “Peter, don’t let your uncle die without YOU being ready to carry on his work in your own way.” After telling a friend of mine about my experience at Brigit’s Well, she gave me the image of a priest and priestesses going to the sacred temple—he to visit the ancestral oak (a male aspect) and they to visit the sacred well (a female aspect). (Druid would be another word, and it derives from *dara* for oak! *Cill Darain Gaelic* is "church of the oak" and is anglicized as Kildare).

The notion of “ancestral oak” was literally true in this case since the tree at the well was planted by my uncle who is my ancestor in the sense of being a mentor as well as my ancestor by being my father’s brother. In ancient Druidic understanding, the oak is a special teacher of humanity. In our experience, the oak did indeed open the door for us to gain admittance into the inner sanctum where we each received special blessings for our life’s work, blessings given by a woman whose life is dedicated to the spiritual vision of Thomas Berry.¹

Isn’t that amazing? Now I have another question. I wonder if the connection between Quakers and Celtic spirituality is more than accidental.

Celebrating Old Growth

At the last meeting of the New Story Group on November 22, it was all about trees. We watched and discussed portions of the webinar “Celebrating Old Growth: A Conversation with Robin Wall Kimmerer, Robert Macfarlane, and David Haskell.” You can find the recording of the webinar [here](#) and read Mary Evelyn’s introduction [here](#).

The following Sunday a group of us made a pilgrimage to see the new Miyawaki forest Danehy Park in North Cambridge. The Miyawaki method compresses layers of a forest—shrubs, trees, canopies—on small plots of land, turning them into tiny forests. The method involves planting two to four trees per square meter. Miyawaki forests grow in two to three years and are self-sustaining. Planted in the fall of 2021, this tiny forest is only about waist high, yet it already commands reverence and hope for the future.



¹ *The New Ecozoic Reader* Number 3, October-December, 2021. I apologize for having lost the link to the full text of this story.

On Trees: A Conversation with Peter Wohlleben, Jessica J. Lee, and Sumana Roy

The Forest School at the Yale School of the Environment and *Orion Magazine* are pleased to announce that we are continuing the conversation we began with "[Celebrating Old Growth](#)." We presented a second event in this series called "[On Trees](#)." This event on January 11, 2022, featured a conversation between Peter Wohlleben (*The Hidden Life of Trees*), Jessica J. Lee (*Two Trees Make a Forest*), and Sumana Roy (*How I Became a Tree*), three authors whose work embodies the language of trees. Together, they discussed cultural constructs of forests and how disconnected those are from the growing reality of monoculture. Mary Evelyn Tucker, co-author of *Journey of the Universe* and co-founder of Yale's Forum on Religion and Ecology, moderated the event.

[You can watch the recording here.](#)

The Depth of Our Belonging FMC Book Group

The next meeting of the "Depth of Our Belonging FMC Book Group" is the first Thursday of next month, **February 3, 2022**. To participate, [click this link](#) or provide the Meeting ID 836 1037 8563 and passcode 628182 (if requested) on [Zoom.com](#), the Zoom app, or after calling 1-646-558-8656

Welcome to the fifth meeting of the FMC group reading *The Depth of Our Belonging: Mysticism, Physics, and Healing* (Producciones de la Hamaca, 2021) by Mary Conrow Coelho. We will discuss Chapter 4 "Becoming Fully Conscious Participants in the Unfolding Story" pages 56 to 72. When you read, underline passages that stand out for you and bring these and your questions the meeting You are welcome to join this series in progress especially if you have read the book through Chapter 4.

At our previous meeting on January 6, we discussed Chapter 3 "Listening to Mystics' Words in the Context of Radical Discoveries by Physicists," and considered the queries

- Haven you ever had an experience of cognitive dissonance between science as you learned it and your faith tradition?
- Are physicists and mystics touching the same non-visible dimension?
- If so, is the word 'God' still adequate to refer to our new understanding?
- Does this reconception of the nature of God increase your sense of belonging?

The meeting was convened by Cornelia Parkes at new-story@fmcquaker.com and sponsored by the FMC Adult Spiritual Education Working Group.

QEW Discussion of The Depth of Our Belonging

With **Shelley Tanenbaum** from the Quaker Earthcare Witness Committee, a national Quaker organization, met on January 11, 2022. **Mary Coelho** reported that sixty people attended! There is still time for you to join. The book discussion is planned for three evenings starting in January (Jan 11 and 25

plus Feb. 8): [you can register here](#). Each session will start at 8pm Eastern and all will be on Zoom. There is no cost, but you need to register in advance to attend.

[We Shall be Known](#)

This song for [The Great Turning](#) comes to us from the duo MaMuse and Sarah Nutting.

We shall be known by the company we keep
by the ones who circle round to tend these fires.

We shall be known by the ones who sow and reap
the seeds of change alive from deep within the earth.

It is time now.
It is time now that we thrive.
It is time we lead ourselves into the well.
It is time now, and what a time to be alive.
In this Great Turning we shall learn to lead in love.
In this Great Turning we shall learn to lead in love.



The Great Turning Experiment

Imagine your ideal world. The Great Turning is upon us. The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know is Possible has arrived. How are you living your life in this new world? For all of us this will mean a deep change in consciousness as we enter a rite of passage which will lead us from our current evolutionary stage of adolescence to the transition stage as initiates of a mature planetary civilization.

Conversations with [Mattie Porte](#), [Joanna Macy](#), [David Korten](#), [Duane Elgin](#), [Pat McCabe](#), [Dr. Craig F. Schindler](#), [Dr Chris Johnstone](#)

Two live sessions per month, [via online videoconferencing](#)

Eight live sessions: The introduction and completion sessions are 1 hour in duration. The six speaker sessions are 2 hours in duration. The format of the speaker sessions will be flexible and emergent but will include: a brief framing of the session and speaker introduction by your journey host (15 minutes), speaker presentation (40 minutes), participant break out groups (30 minutes), return to the large group for Q&A with the speaker and participant sharings (30 minutes), and closing remarks (5 minutes).

Introductory video: [An Intimate Discourse with Visionaries of The Great Turning](#), 1:30 minutes.

Shifting Paradigms with Jeremy Lent and Helena Norberg-Hodge

Podcast December 28, 2021, posted by [Local Futures: Economics of Happiness](#)

The word 'future' itself can be seen not as a noun but as a verb. It's the unfolding of what all of us are doing right now that creates the conditions for whatever happens next. ~ Jeremy Lent

The Local Futures Podcast, [Shifting Paradigms](#), is the perfect listen as we enter the New Year. Renowned systems thinker, Jeremy Lent, has been described by journalist George Monbiot as "one of the greatest thinkers of our age." --[The Great Turning](#).

2021 Greatest Hits: The Stories You Loved Most

Judith Morse shares these [stories from Bioneers](#): Revolution from the Heart of Nature.

Happy New Year! As we bid adieu to what has admittedly been a challenging 2021 for so many of us, we wanted to share with you, our Bioneers community, the top 10 stories from the past year that resonated most with you, reflecting our collective passion for such topics as Indigenous rights, the complex microbial world beneath our feet, women's leadership, regenerative food systems, and many others.

How The Largest Movement in The World Came into Being and Why No One Saw It Coming

by Paul Hawken (Posted on [The Great Turning](#))

I believe that we are part of a movement that is greater and deeper and broader than we ourselves know, or can know.

It flies under the radar of the media, by and large.

It is non-violent. It is grassroots.

It has no cluster bars, no armies, and no helicopters.

It has no central ideology.

A male vertebrate is not in charge.

[\(Read more here\)](#)

Regeneration

By [Paul Hawkin](#)

The author of *Drawdown* has a new book *Regeneration: Ending the Climate Crisis in One Generation* (September 2021).

“We and all living beings thrive by being actors in the planet’s regeneration, a civilizational goal that should commence and never cease. We practiced degeneration as a species, and it brought us to the threshold of an unimaginable crisis. To reverse global warming, we need to reverse global degeneration.

We have created an astonishing moment of truth. The climate crisis is not a science problem. It is a human problem. The ultimate power to change the world does not reside in technologies. It relies on reverence, respect, and compassion—for ourselves, all people, all life. This is **regeneration.**”

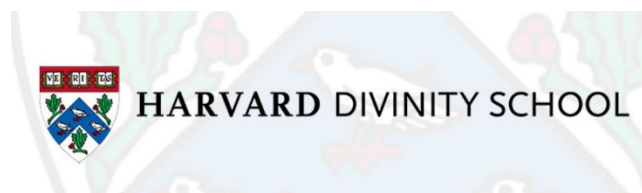
New Story Groups Spring up around the United States

The [Center for Ecozoic Studies](#) published an [article](#) about us!

“**Mary Kay Klein** has sent us information on New Story Groups that are coming into being around the country. The first meeting she participated in was at Friends Meeting Cambridge, MA. This group began in 2005 and wrote this statement.”

[Read more here!](#)

This article does not include the new group just started by **Sophie Quest** in the Burlington, VT, area.



Inaugural Ecological Spiritualities Conference

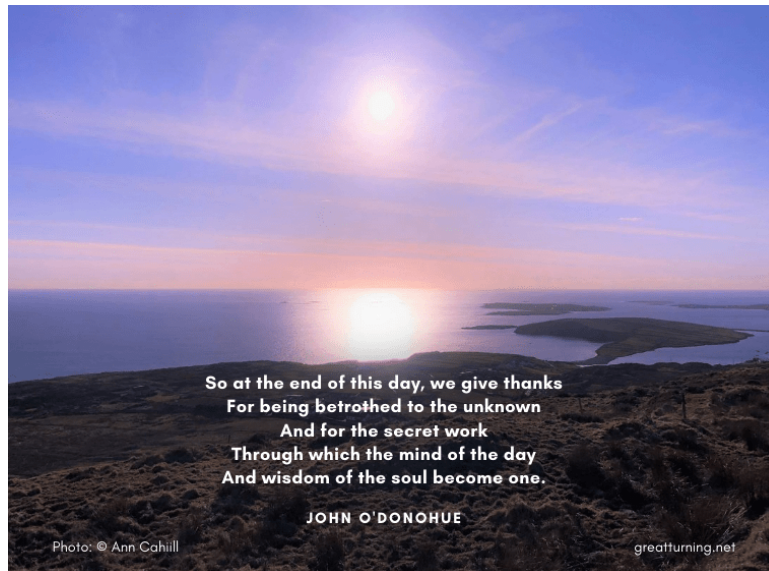
Wednesday-Saturday, April 27-30, 2022

The theme of our inaugural conference will be “Ecological Spiritualities.” Presentations and workshops will explore the evolution of earth-based spiritual traditions and highlight innovative spiritual practices that are emerging in response to the painful realities of climate change, mass extinction, biodiversity loss, and the disruption of local and global ecosystems. [Click here for more information.](#)

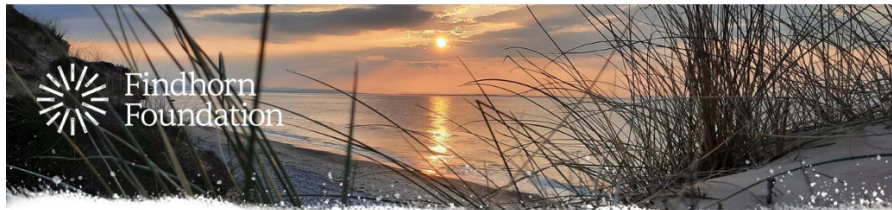
The Songs of Trees (stories from nature's great connectors)

By David Haskell's:(New York: Viking Books, 2017)

Dave Damm-Luhr highly recommends this book and has copied the first two pages of the Preface [here](#) for your enjoyment.



[The Inner History of a Day ~ John O'Donohue](#)



JANUARY NEWSLETTER

"Nature has a soul level just as we humans have. On that level we are one. On that level they are all knowing just as we are all knowing. I think that we in the western world need to stop and listen." Dorothy Maclean

Check out the [Findhorn January Newsletter](#) for New Story workshops and events.