

Grail Climate Action Circle Report for GA 2021

The US Grail Climate Action Circle was formed at the November 2017 GA with a purpose to confront global climate change, environmental racism, and our U.S. environmental debt.

Our mission is to educate ourselves and our Grail sisters about the climate crisis and then to act locally and politically. We meet by Zoom on the third Tuesday of each month. We have 8 regular participants and a few others who join us occasionally. We welcome anyone who would like to join us.

Until this point, we have worked mainly on educating ourselves and our Grail sisters by sponsoring book and film discussions and publishing articles in the NGN and Gumbo. We are now ready to use US Grail Core Social Policies to make public statements and form alliances for stronger impact.

We want to participate with the **International Grail Earth Network** which has been working on a proposal for action to be presented to the IGA.

The following is part of their proposal (modified for our use):

Deep education is needed. Many people do not understand Climate Science and deny that they have contributed to causing Climate Change; politicians do not give priority to climate and biodiversity issues. The Grail has always been strong in education. We must keep educating ourselves even as we strive to educate others and as we engage in action that drives further learning.

In addition, we must learn from Indigenous peoples, who have known how to live sustainably and take care of the Earth for millennia. A deeper understanding of the meaning of being indigenous is beginning to emerge in the Grail, with Grail members identifying themselves as Indigenous or else in deep solidarity with indigenous peoples and their struggles for the land rights that colonialism robbed them of.

The Grail Vision. We are at a crucial moment facing the Climate Emergency and the Sixth Extinction. We have only a few years to avoid an overshoot of the safe 1.5 degree rise in temperature since pre-Industrial times.

The Grail movement stands on spiritual and international foundations, which have upheld us for 100 years and equip us for significant action. The Grail is an “All Saints movement” that is about to celebrate its Centenary. How can we live as Saints, mystics and prophets in this present “elbow of time”?

We present you with a few Actions for Grail women as individuals and collectively. These are basic suggestions, which will be made specific in future documents by the Earth Network according to input by Grail women in each country, suited to a variety of resources and situations.

1. Clarify Grail Identity

- bring to the forefront of our thinking as the Grail movement the need for resilient and regenerative care for the earth, its people and all its creatures.
- grow in indigenous identity, taking our youth on this journey, who are then likely to protect and defend it.

2. Educate Ourselves and Others

- educate ourselves about Climate Science and the work of environmental organizations.
- Educate others (in their own languages) on Biodiversity issues and Climate Change, starting from the young to the old.

3. Hands-on Work for the Earth

- tame the way we live, adopt a simple lifestyle.
- support a **just transition** from fossil fuels to Renewable Energy.
- protect our forests and promote the green economy.
- invite Biodiversity back into the places where we live and the Grail Centers we own.

4. Strategic Alliances

- respond to the UN Environment Program's call to "Make Peace with Nature" by joining the "Decade for the Restoration of Ecosystem Services 2021-2030".
- *Note: the GCAC also values Grail collaboration with local groups for climate action...*

Finally, we recommend that the US Grail join the IGA to declare the Climate Crisis and the Restoration of Biodiversity as priorities for the attention of all Grail members, and to that end appoint a working group to take this resolution forward. The Earth Network is willing to take on this task in collaboration with members of other Grail Networks.

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The Laudato Si' Study Group is an offspring of the Grail Climate Action Circle (GCAC). Several years ago, the GCAC followed the International Grail's recommendation to offer to the US Grail membership a study of Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si': On the Care of Our Common Home*. After the initial study, some of the members wished to continue reading more closely this important work about the roots and consequences of Climate Change. They formed a weekly meeting, first on conference call and then on Zoom, to read the text together, word for word, discussing it along the way. Indeed, they found the text so rich that they read it through twice in this reflective way. To this hour spent together, they added prayers and stimulating theological writings of Joan Chittister, both provided weekly by Terry Marshall of the Spiritual Core group.

After the GCAC's guided study of Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass* for the US membership, the Laudato Si' group (keeping its original name) is following the same process of reading this book together. Kimmerer's book is as important as the encyclical for learning to understand Our Common Home and how to live more harmoniously with natural systems amidst the Climate Crisis. It has the added elements of Indigenous knowledge, scientific botanical insights, and the author's poetic sensibility and story-telling skill.

The Laudato Si' group continues to meet on Zoom every Wednesday at 4pm EST and welcomes new members or guests.