



RED CEDAR
ZEN COMMUNITY
Bellingham, WA

Red Cedar Sangha Conversation

24 November 2021

12 participants on Zoom

4(?) in person

Guest: Julie from Outreach Committee of the Multi-faith Network for Climate Justice (MNCJ)

Introduction by Bob Penny

Julie:

MNCJ grew out of informal conversations amongst those in various faith organizations, started in 2019
Started meeting monthly; have been going for 2½ years and are now a very tight, supportive network

Mission Vision and Values Statement: [INSERT?]

Christian, Buddhist, Sikh, and Pagan communities represented

Have co-sponsored events with environmental community during Climate Week and Earth Day

Formed relationship with Lummi Nation

Have connected with Earth Ministry - statewide coalition/network of faith communities

Three projects this year [ATTACH HANDOUT?]

Net of Interconnection - based on myth of Indra's Net, inter-being - 7' net made of multi-colored cloth on which people inscribe a blessing for Earth and then weave into net - available for retreat, ceremony, or event

Sacred Earth Fair (Earth Day) - networking opportunity

Partnered with Million Trees Project - encouraging communities to plant trees

Bob:

Perennial question for each faith group involved in MNCJ: How do we advocate from our tradition?

What special ingredient do we have to add to activism?

Questions?

Tim: How are we interfacing with the trees project? WhatcomMillionTrees.org

Julie: They have been approaching people who have land to talk to them about planting trees

Julie Q: In Zen Buddhist tradition how do teachings inform our understanding of our responsibilities to the Earth and how does that inform actions in the world?

A: (Tim) Raizelah said that we take vows to avoid harm/do good and that informs how she relates to animals and plants; "save all beings," sense of care for everything we encounter

A: (Bob) to not spare the dharma assets (natural resources, goodwill, compassion)

A: (Edie) Oryoki practice and how complete it is, how demonstrably caring it is for everything involved in the meal(s)

A: (Kate) Recognizing how everything we do as individuals, no matter how small, has huge impact on larger world, especially in aggregate; keep being cautious about consumption, not worry so much about the fact that our actions aren't "grand"; continue practicing stillness, cultivate our relationships with each other

A: (Mary) Inter-dependence, recognize how dependent we are to the plant world for food, medicine, clean air, water

A: (Bob Rose) Oryoki "just enough" - modesty of consumption is an affirmative response we can make to the out-of-control consumerism we're living with/in

A: (Bob Penny) - 'In wildness is the preservation of the world' - we reflexively protect what protects us; the environment supports us, so we maintain awareness and support them

A: (Scott) Fascicle "Instructions to the Cook" - taking care of even one grain of rice - taking care of the resources that we have and making sure they are taken care of in a thorough and timely manner - sense of responsibility; "what can I do?"--keep setting the example as a teaching lesson to those around us

A: (??) Making connections with earth & nature despite our differences

Julie: Not only about doing, but how we are in the world; amazing, challenging, wonderful, awful time

Julie: Focus on doing the work that is OURS to do, from within each of our traditions, not straying too far into others' territory

Kate: We need to care about who and what we vote for, and what the consequences are; understand and investigate with others; being more conscientious of how and where we spend our money

Julie: Earth Ministry does a lot of advocacy, research, education around policies; people seem to be mindful of the range of ideas about different issues, "we try to walk a fine line"

Bob P: Important now, in the moment, is that MNCJ is formulating its stance with input from each faith group; US gov't signed an agreement to have a climate plan, and could/should be reaching out to communities and groups doing the work

Bham & Whatcom Co. are at the forefront of establishing community climate standards

MNCJ has opportunity to have a broader impact if we're seen as an example

December 13 City Council meeting to meet and adopt climate plan; County on the cusp of same

Julie: Cherry Point provided reason for faith community to coalesce, but didn't continue
Now some are re-grouping; there is a tradition of such activism

When people speak from a faith perspective it's a very powerful message and legislators hear it