

Commit 2 Respond
World Water Day - Earth Day, 2017



Climate Justice Month Toolkit

What is “Climate Justice Month”?

March 22–April 22, 2017 (plus a bonus week!)

Our current crisis requires transformation. It’s less about changing a few individual behaviors and more about imagining radical new ways of living. From World Water Day (March 22) through Earth Day (April 22), Unitarian Universalists and other people of faith and conscience build resistance to climate change and add our moral voices to the movement for climate justice in a collective way. This is work we are called to do year round, every day --- Climate Justice Month is therefore a time for deepening, stretching and strengthening our every-day connections and commitments to climate justice.

Our current paradigm assumes ecosystems, communities, cultures, and non-human beings are all externalities that are expendable in the pursuit of maximizing profit. In it, we willingly forgo human health and even human and non-human life on this planet as long as we can live in comfort and convenience today. In this paradigm, we willingly sacrifice the people on the margins of society—generally Indigenous Peoples, people of color, immigrants, and people who live with great financial instability—to maintain capitalism and neoliberal policies.

Today, Unitarian Universalists and other people of faith and conscience begin to think deeply together about altering social norms and creating climate justice. Climate justice is a global fight to dismantle the paradigm that disadvantages marginalized people and approaches Earth as supply source and sewer rather than a system of interdependent life -- a single, beloved community. Climate justice pays deep attention to those most affected by climate change to find transformative solutions grounded in profound connections with Earth and each other.

[Climate Justice Month 2015](#) focused on spiritual grounding and making commitments. [Climate Justice Month 2016](#) centered water justice, honoring International climate commitments, reclaiming our democracy, and personal reflection through poetry.

Today, we begin to shift the way we understand and approach the world. The program for Climate Justice Month 2017 is inspired by Joanna Macy's [Spiral of the Work That Reconnects](#) -

"The activist's inner journey appears to me like a spiral, interconnecting four successive stages or movements that feed into each other." -- Joanna Macy

The Spiral of the Work that Reconnects is a spiritual practice that can help individuals or communities to find deeper levels of authenticity and actualization.

Climate Justice Month 2017:

Week 1: Opening to Gratitude

Week 2: Owning Our Pain for the World

Week 3 & 4: Seeing With New Eyes

Week 5 & 6: Going Forth

This year, we will carry past the traditional end date of Climate Justice Month (April 22), to include one more week of action “going forth” with the People’s Climate Movement: on April 29th, we will [March for Climate, Jobs, and Justice](#).

Commit2Respond is offering numerous web and phone based opportunities for participation in Climate Justice Month. We also believe uplifting stories from local congregational activities is very important:

How Can I Connect My Local Activities to Climate Justice Month?

1. Use the [SHARE FORUM](#) on the Commit2Respond website to share ideas, resources, questions, etc.
2. Post your local happenings on the [EVENTS CALENDAR](#) so that we can fill up the map!
3. Invite your local community to explore the themes or participate in the web-based opportunities listed below.
4. [SHARE PHOTOS](#) with Commit2Respond from the events in your communities on Google Photo, and [USE CLIMATE JUSTICE MONTH IMAGES](#) to help tie your local events in with this unified campaign for climate justice. Make one your profile picture or cover photo! When sharing images from your local congregation or community, make sure that you get permission from people in your pictures before sharing them to the [Google Photo Folder](#). These photos may be re-posted by the UUA, UU Ministry for Earth, etc. onto websites and social media.
5. Use @Commit2Respond and #Commit2Respond or tag Commit2Respond on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

Week 1: Opening to Gratitude - March 22 - 28



Spiritually grounding and opening to gratitude is a powerful way to sustain and nourish your spirit, your community, and your work. We begin Climate Justice Month by opening to gratitude.

Commit2Respond: This World Water Day, the US Department of Interior (Bureau of Ocean Energy Management - BOEM) [sold hundreds of thousands of mineral acres](#) to fossil fuel corporations for deep-sea fossil fuel extraction in the Gulf of Mexico in a lease auction (a regular, bi-annual event). CONTACT Secretary of Interior [Ryan Zinke](#) and [BOEM](#) on Twitter ([or share Commit2Respond's tweet](#)), to say "We need to re-think the way we are wholesaling our Gulf of Mexico waters to fossil fuel corporations!".

Important Dates

Spring Equinox: March 20

Spring seemed to arrive six weeks early for some of us this year ([February 2017 was the second-warmest February in 137 years of modern record-keeping](#)), which is all the more reason to celebrate and witness the [Spring Equinox](#). This Equinox -- the first day of Spring in the Northern hemisphere and first day of Autumn in the Southern hemisphere -- is a sacred time in many faith traditions. Let us welcome the changing of seasons with gratitude.

World Water Day: March 22

Mni Wiconi - "Water is Life" - is a message that has shaken the consciousness of the world, and centered the prayers and actions of the Water Protectors at Standing Rock. Water is a sacred source of life. The *UU Young Adults for Climate Justice* will host a **virtual worship (by web and phone), at 8:30pm Eastern / 5:30 Pacific, to celebrate World Water Day ([RSVP HERE](#))** as part of their [100 Workshops for Climate Justice](#) campaign. All are invited to attend, or to practice gratitude for water in your personal spiritual practice on March 22nd and for the duration of Climate Justice Month.

Preparing for the March for Climate, Jobs, and Justice: March 23 Webinar

7:30pm Eastern / 4:30 Pacific

[RSVP HERE](#) to attend or receive the recording.

In Washington D.C. and sister cities around North America, people will be marching and meeting on April 29th for a People's Climate Movement March for Climate, Jobs, and Justice --- bringing together people of many diverse sectors and struggles. [Join a webinar on March 23rd, at 7:30pm Eastern / 4:30 Pacific](#), with Rev. Karen Brammer (Manager of the *UUA Green Sanctuary Program*) and Aly Tharp (Programs Coordinator of *UU Ministry for Earth & UU Young Adults for Climate Justice*) to learn more about how you can participate in the People's Climate Movement - March for Climate, Jobs, and Justice on April 29th, alongside Commit2Respond and a large number of activists of faith.

Readings & Resources

Education, Culture, and Worship:

Resources on [Coming from Gratitude](#) from Joanna Macy

[The Radical Gratitude Project](#) by Barbara Ford, Unitarian Universalist

[Five Fold Path of Gratitude](#) meditation by Dennis Rivers

[Water Justice Trinity Institute 2017 Reading List](#)

[Water Communion Ritual for Justice-Making](#)

[Water Justice Ritual](#)

[Children's Water Communion](#)

"[Water Flows](#)" by Thich Nhat Hahn

[The 72 Names of God: Technology for the Soul](#), Yehuda Berg, p. 170-171, 2004, Kabbalah Centre International

People's Climate Movement Preparation:

[RSVP to go to the March on the Commit2Respond Website](#)

[Young Adult Program: GROW Climate Justice - Washington D.C. 4/27-30th](#)

[People's Climate Movement Organizing Toolkit](#)

[People's Climate Movement Website](#)



Change your Social Media profiles! Check out our full selection of images in our [Climate Justice Month Google Photo Folder](#)!

Designs created by Abigail Clauhs, a Unitarian Universalist young adult and seminarian.

Week 2: Honor Our Pain For the World - March 29 - April 4



Let this darkness be a belltower

by Rainer Maria Rilke,

trans. Joanna Macy/Anita Barrows Sonnets to Orpheus II, 29

Quiet friend who has come so far,
feel how your breathing makes more space around you. Let this darkness be a bell tower
and you the bell. As you ring,

what batters you becomes your strength. Move back and forth into the change. What is it
like, such intensity of pain?
If the drink is bitter, turn yourself to wine.

In this uncontainable night,
be the mystery at the crossroads of your senses, the meaning discovered there.

And if the world has ceased to hear you, say to the silent earth: I flow.
To the rushing water, speak: I am.

Pulled from the [Spring 2016 Deep Times Journal](#)

Commit2Respond: Pause! Reflect! Write! Sometimes life and the pressures we face have us moving so quickly that pausing to meditate and reflect must be an intentional action! For week two of Climate Justice Month, *take some time to honor your pain for the world*. Write a journal reflection, or some poetry to share with your local community or on the April 17th Climate Justice Poetry Mic Night. Take some time to reflect about *why* climate change and environmental justice matter to you.

Important Dates

People's Climate Resistance Story Circles

Thursday, March 30 @ 8pm EST

Saturday, April 1 @ 2PM EST

Monday, April 3 @ 8 PM EST

The People's Climate Movement (PCM) is encouraging communities to gather together as "[circles of resistance to vision our future](#)" for story sharing to inspire for our artwork and messages at the April 29th March for Climate, Jobs, & Justice. Commit2Respond will be hosting numerous [virtual story circles](#) (web -- Zoom.us -- and phone based) for faith activists to attend, on March 30th, April 1st, April 3rd and April 16th These gatherings will help shape the message that our community will carry with us for the People's Climate March in Washington, D.C., and it will help prepare anyone who wants to host a story circle gathering in their local community for a PCM Sister March. RSVP at the links above.

Readings & Resources:

Resources on [Honoring our Pain](#) from Joanna Macy

["The 5 Stages of Climate Change Grief"](#) with Bill Nye & Arnold Schwarzenegger

["Mourning our Planet"](#) by Dahr Jamail

[This is How Scientists Feel](#) Blog

["Let's All Take a Breath Together"](#) by Jen Myzel Swanson

["Working Through Environmental Despair"](#) excerpt (audio and text) with Joanna Macy -- 7.5 minutes

[The Climate Ribbon Project](#)

[Emotional Resiliency in the Era of Climate Change: A Clinician's Guide](#) by Leslie Davenport

Poetry:

[Deep Times: Journal That Reconnects Fall 2016 Issue](#)

[No Condition is Permanent: 19 Poets on Climate Justice & Change](#)

Week 3 & 4: Seeing with New Eyes - April 5 - 18

CLIMATE JUSTICE MONTH
WEEKS 3-4

SEE WITH NEW EYES

**COMMIT²
RESPOND**
THE SEAS ARE RISING
AND SO ARE WE

The graphic features a light blue background with a purple border. At the top left, the text 'CLIMATE JUSTICE MONTH' is in a sans-serif font, with 'WEEKS 3-4' below it in a larger, bold font. In the center, there is a stylized city skyline with buildings in shades of blue, green, and purple. Below the skyline, the phrase 'SEE WITH NEW EYES' is written in a white, bold, sans-serif font. Underneath this text is a decorative arrangement of colorful shapes, including triangles and circles in shades of blue, green, and purple. On the right side, the 'COMMIT² RESPOND' logo is displayed in a bold, sans-serif font, with 'COMMIT²' on the top line and 'RESPOND' on the bottom line. Below the logo, the tagline 'THE SEAS ARE RISING AND SO ARE WE' is written in a smaller, sans-serif font.

*“Experiencing the reality of our inter-existence helps us **see with new eyes**. We can sense how intimately and inextricably we are related to all that is. We can taste our own power to change, and feel the texture of our living connections with past and future generations, with people of all colors and cultures, and with our brother/sister species.” -- [Deep Times Journal](#)*

THIS CLIMATE JUSTICE MONTH

SEE WITH NEW EYES

**COMMIT²
RESPOND**

This graphic is similar to the one above but with a different layout. It features a light blue background with a purple border. At the top, the text 'THIS CLIMATE JUSTICE MONTH' is written in a white, sans-serif font. Below this is a stylized city skyline with buildings in shades of blue, green, and purple. Underneath the skyline, the phrase 'SEE WITH NEW EYES' is written in a white, bold, sans-serif font. Below this text is a decorative arrangement of colorful shapes, including triangles and circles in shades of blue, green, and purple. In the bottom right corner, the 'COMMIT² RESPOND' logo is displayed in a bold, sans-serif font, with 'COMMIT²' on the top line and 'RESPOND' on the bottom line.

Commit2Respond: Organize a time for your entire congregation or a climate or social justice task force at your congregation to make some hand-written letters to your Congressional representatives. Materials to guide and support your letter writing parties can be found on Commit2Respond's website, [HERE](#), in partnership with the [UUs for Social Justice in the National Capital Region \(UUSJ\) Write Here! Write Now!](#) initiative. Plan to send your letters to the UUSJ to be received by **May 4th**. They'll be hand delivered on Capitol Hill by the UUSJ Advocacy Corps, *May 9th*.

Other Important Dates

Climate Action Roundtable with Special Guest Dina Gilio-Whitaker: April 12



8:00pm Eastern / 5:00 Pacific
[RSVP HERE](#)

Formerly known as the Climate Action Team monthly calls, Climate Action Roundtables are monthly opportunities for Unitarian Universalists and friends from around the continent and world to come together for conversation about climate news and climate action. You can join by phone or web (Zoom.us) -- by yourself or with others in your congregation.

This month, we will be joined by special guest, Dina Gilio-Whitaker, co-author of the new Beacon Press publication [“All the Real Indians Died Off” and 20 Other Myths About Native Americans](#). You can **get 20% off** when you order her book (and any other Beacon book)

by using coupon code “ClimateJustice” -- and 10% of sales will support UU climate action through the UU Ministry for Earth!

Environmental Justice Practitioners Network Webinar with Special Guest Jayeesha Dutta: April 13



7:30pm Eastern / 4:30 Pacific
[RSVP HERE](#)

The Environmental Justice Practitioners Network Webinar Series (a program of the UUA Green Sanctuary Program & UU Ministry for Earth) offers monthly webinars (web -- Zoom.us -- and phone-based) to support Unitarian Universalists pursue environmental justice ministries and partnerships. The webinars typically feature a special guest presenter for 20 minutes, followed by a Q&A period with the presenter and then small group conversations.

Our guest presenter for April 13th is Jayeesha Dutta, the National Community Arts Program Manager for the [People's Climate Movement's April 29th mobilization](#). Jayeesha is a tri-coastal activist-scholar pursuing a doctorate at the University of New Orleans. She specializes in using art and relationship building for intersectional social justice movements, and is using her skills to support the People's Climate Movement's "[circles of resistance to vision our future](#)" story-circle process.

Jayeesha has been organizing with nearly 100 organizations across the Gulf Coast through the Gulf Future Coalition and Another Gulf Is Possible, since 2013. In 2016, Jayeesha co-founded the Radical Arts and Healing Collective, an arts-based direct action & healing justice support hub in New Orleans. Jayeesha will be speaking to the UU Environmental Justice Practitioners Network about using art and storytelling as a tool for community building and change-making, for the People's Climate Movement and beyond.

People's Climate Resistance Story Circle: Sunday, April 16

6:30pm Eastern / 3:30 Pacific

[RSVP HERE](#)

The People's Climate Movement (PCM) is encouraging communities to gather together as "[circles of resistance to vision our future](#)" for story sharing to inspire for our artwork and messages at the April 29th March for Climate, Jobs, & Justice. Commit2Respond will be hosting numerous [virtual story circles](#) (web -- Zoom.us -- and phone based) for faith activists to attend, on March 30th, April 1st, and April 3rd. These gatherings will help shape the message that our community will carry with us for the People's Climate March in Washington, D.C., and it will help prepare anyone who wants to host a story circle gathering in their local community for a PCM Sister March.

Climate Justice Poetry Open Mic Night: Monday, April 17

8:00pm Eastern / 5:00 Pacific

[RSVP HERE](#)

April is National Poetry Month. Last year, Commit2Respond encouraged our endorsers to engage in Climate Justice Month through poetry, and we saw some great contributions ([here](#), [and here](#)). [Join us for a poetry open mic night on April 17th at 8 PM Eastern / 5 PM Pacific](#). Everyone is encouraged to write their own poetry related to owning our pain for the world, or to recite a piece that moves them.

Readings & Resources:

[How to Let Go of the World and Love All the Things Climate Can't Change](#) (feature length film)

[Songs for the Great Turning](#) by Gretchen Sleicher and Friends

[Thich Nhat Hanh Audio, Video, & Podcasts](#)

[Being an Ally Amidst Cultural Genocide](#) by Daniel Jubelirer

[Wisdom to Survive](#) (film)

Week 5 (and 6): Going Forth - April 19 - May 2



Commit2Respond: Take your passion to the streets! Check out the March for Science and March for Climate, Jobs, & Justice to see if there is an event planned in your area or scout your options for going to Washington, D.C. Even if marching is not your thing, consider going out to watch and cheer on the procession. Show this toolkit to your congregation leaders, and explore how your faith community can support or show up for these days of public witness.

Important Dates

7-year mark of the Deepwater Horizon disaster: April 20th

The Deepwater Horizon explosion, and the terrible impacts suffered by Gulf Coast communities and ecosystems in the subsequent months, is an occurrence that should never be forgotten. There is much to learn from the way BP and the USA handled the situation --- the lack of available emergency response equipment to contain the oil spill, the toxic consequences of the mass use of Corexit dispersants, the re-traumatization and contamination of frontline coastal communities, 5 years after Hurricane Katrina. Have we learned our lessons? Are we really doing enough to prevent these kinds of disasters and toxic trespasses from happening again?

John Muir Day: April 21st

“Let all who revere [US]America's natural heritage, and see in it a timeless treasure dependent upon our stewardship, pause on April 21 in grateful remembrance of John Muir, a man who forever expressed his credo in the words, "In God's wildness lies the hope of the world..." -- Ronald Reagan, [1988 creation of John Muir Day](#)

Earth Day - March for Science: April 22nd

This Earth Day promises to be a monumental occasion, as hundreds of cities [around the world](#) participate in the March for Science. “The mischaracterization of science as a partisan issue, which has given policymakers permission to reject overwhelming evidence, is a critical and urgent matter. It is time for people who support scientific research and evidence-based policies to take a public stand and

be counted.” -- [March for Science website](#). Many Unitarian Universalists share a deep respect for science and the wisdom that it offers the world. This Earth Day, let us celebrate and defend the importance of scientific reason and the too-often-denied science of climate change.

GROW Climate Justice: April 27-30th

The UU College of Social Justice & UU Young Adults for Climate Justice are co-hosting a [Grounded Resilient Organizers Workshop for Climate Justice](#) for young adults (18 - 35 years old) in Washington, D.C., April 27th at 4 PM through Sunday afternoon, April 30th. The GROW program will offer two programmatic tracks - one focused on *Art, Culture & Community Building*, and another on *Nonviolent Direct & Disruptive Actions*, exploring and getting equipped with techniques that we will apply immediately at the [People's Climate Mobilization](#) and in the long-haul struggle ahead. Apply by April 2nd to reserve a spot! Cost: \$175 including food and lodging, or \$100 for low-income reduced rate or those with separate lodging. Find out more at <http://uucsj.org/grow/>

March for Jobs, Justice and Climate (People's Climate Movement): April 29th

The Commit2Respond initiative began with the People's Climate March in New York City, in September of 2014. On [April 29th](#), we will march again with the [People's Climate Movement](#) to show the world that we *recommit* to respond to the urgency of averting climate chaos. The Unitarian Universalist Association, UU Service Committee, and UU Ministry for Earth have all signed on to be partner organizations for the People's Climate Movement. We encourage UUs to participate in the mobilization to Washington, D.C. or in a [sister march](#) in your own corner of the world.

“I hope, with all my heart that on April 29 thousands of UUs come to Washington D.C. I yearn for a coherent UU response to climate injustice, and right after the PCM in Washington, DC there will be opportunities to build this united campaign. I believe it matters that we march; to impact government, and as faith community, to hone ourselves, and our Big Love for the world. It will be good to be together.” -- Karen Brammer, Manager for the UUA Green Sanctuary Program

Readings & Resources:

General “Going Forth” Resources

[UU Ministry for Earth's Earth Day Worship Resources](#)

[Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing](#)

[Inspired Faith Effective Action: a Social Justice Handbook for Unitarian Universalist Congregations](#)

[Beautiful Trouble: A Toolbox for Revolution](#)

[Praxis Makes Perfect - resource library for activists and organizers, by Joshua Kahn Russell](#)

[Movement Generation Curriculum Tools](#)

[Organizing Cools the Planet: Tools and Reflections to Navigate the Climate Crisis, by Hillary Moore and Joshua Kahn Russell](#)

[100 Worship Services for Climate Justice challenge](#) (UU Young Adults for Climate Justice)

[Unitarian Universalist Association's Social Justice Empowerment Handbook \(149 pages\)](#)

[Spirit-based Activism Toolkit \(Turning the Tide\)](#)

[Organizing for Power, Organizing for Change](#)

[Tips for facilitation](#) (From the *Be The Change!* Youth Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Project)

[UU Climate Action Network Facebook Group](#)
[UU Ministry for Earth Facebook Discussion Group](#)
[UU Young Adults for Climate Justice Facebook Group](#)

Climate Education & Science Communication

[US Global Change Research Program \(US Government - 13 agencies\)](#)
[NASA Global Climate Change portal](#)
["What's Really Warming the World?" NASA data visualization \(Bloomberg\)](#)
[Scientific Reference to Reliable Information on Climate Change \(Climate Feedback\)](#)
[Messages to Mobilize People of Faith on Climate Change \(Climate Outreach and Information Network, Our Voices\)](#)
[Years of Living Dangerously \(National Geographic series\)](#)
[Before the Flood \(film\)](#)

People's Climate March

RSVP on both Commit2Respond & People's Climate Movement

[Faith Organizing Group](#)
[Sister March Organizing Toolkit](#)
[Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) Answers](#)
[Information on Getting to DC](#)
[Bus Organizing Cheat Sheet](#)
[Sister March Locations](#)
[Posters & Flyers](#)
[Social Media Resource](#)
[GROW Climate Justice Young Adult Program \(D.C.\) - April 27-30](#)
[Making Your Community Visible: Circles of Resistance to Vision Our Future \(Story-circle guide\)](#)

Recap of Special Events for Climate Justice Month

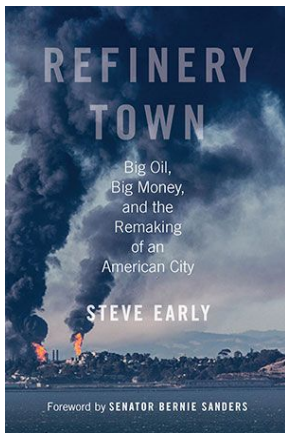
- [March 22 - World Water Day: virtual worship, 8:30 pm Eastern / 5:30 Pacific](#)
- [March 23 - Preparing for the March for Climate, Jobs, and Justice: Webinar 7:30 pm Eastern / 4:30 Pacific](#)
- [People's Climate Resistance Story Circles - Thursday, March 30 @ 8 pm EST , Saturday, April 1 @ 2 PM EST, Monday, April 3 @ 8 PM EST](#)
- [April 4 - Climate Justice Poetry Open Mic Night: 8:00 pm Eastern / 5:00 Pacific](#)
- [April 12th - Climate Action Roundtable with Special Guest Dina Gilio-Whitaker: 8:00 pm Eastern / 5:00 Pacific](#)
- [April 13th - Environmental Justice Practitioners Network Webinar with Special Guest Jayeesha Dutta, 7:30 pm Eastern / 4:30 Pacific](#)
- [April 16 - People's Climate Resistance Story Circle, 6:30 pm Eastern / 3:30 Pacific](#)
- [April 22 - March for Science](#)
- [April 29 - March for Climate, Jobs, & Justice](#)

SPECIAL DEAL!



Get 20% Off when you use special coupon code *"ClimateJustice"* at the [Beacon Press bookstore](#), and 10% of your purchase will support UU climate justice projects through the UU Ministry for Earth!

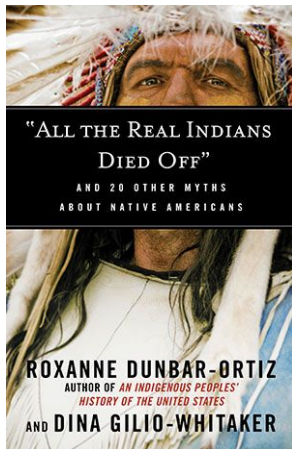
The coupon code will work with any purchase, but here are some recommended books:



Refinery Town: Big Oil, Big Money, and the Remaking of an American City

By Steve Early

Home to one of the largest oil refineries in the state, Richmond, California, was once a typical company town, dominated by Chevron. Part urban history, part call to action, *Refinery Town* shows how concerned citizens can harness the power of local politics to reclaim their community and make municipal government a source of much-needed policy innovation.



"All the Real Indians Died Off" And 20 Other Myths About Native Americans

By Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz and Dina Gilio-Whitaker

In this enlightening book, scholars and activists Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz and Dina Gilio-Whitaker tackle a wide range of myths about Native American culture and history that have misinformed generations. Tracing how these ideas evolved, and drawing from history, the authors disrupt long-held and enduring myths. Accessibly written and revelatory, *"All the Real Indians Died Off"* challenges readers to rethink what they have been taught about Native Americans and history.

Join the next Climate Action Roundtable (April 12 at 8pm EST) for a special chance to talk with author Dina Gilio-Whitaker!

You can also directly show your support for Commit2Respond and UU Climate Justice action by making a donation to the UU Ministry for Earth. Your support is greatly appreciated.

That's All, Folks! REMEMBER --
Connect Your Local Activities to Climate Justice Month:

1. Use the [SHARE FORUM](#) on the Commit2Respond website to share ideas, resources, questions, etc.
2. Post your local happenings on the [EVENTS CALENDAR](#) so that we can fill up the map!
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5. Use #Commit2Respond or tag Commit2Respond on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#)

THANK YOU!!!

Happy #Commit2Respond #ClimateJustice Month!