

## **APRIL 2024 CALL TO ACTION: WE SEEK AN EARTH TO BE RESTORED**

On April 22 we will again celebrate Earth Day as we have for over fifty years. As Climate disruption becomes increasingly urgent, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting has responded.

**In March 2021 PYM approved Addressing Climate Change as a corporate witness.** “A yearly meeting-wide witness is unique in that:

- There is an expectation that *every* friend, *every* household, *every* meeting, and the yearly meeting as a whole will each discern for themselves how they can respond to this call.
- It is the experience that our entire community and each of its members is asked to respond to God’s call, whether or not we experience the call as individuals.”\*

### **Learn More**

\*Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, *Creating a Playbook for Climate Action: How to address climate change for individuals, households and meetings*. Download a copy of the Climate Action Playbook [here](#).

### **Take Action**

**Support a Green Amendment in New Jersey:** A Green Amendment would guarantee NJ citizens the right to clean air, clean water, a healthier environment, and a stable climate. All government officials would be held accountable for protecting those rights by virtue of pledging to uphold the State Constitution. To learn more, watch a video of a recent educational webinar hosted by the League of Women Voters Camden County [here](#).

You can support getting a Green Amendment on the ballot in New Jersey by sending a League of Women Voters email to your legislators [here](#).

## **FEBRUARY 2024 CALL TO ACTION: BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

Each year we celebrate Black History Month in the US and around the world. We remember and learn about important people and events in the history of the African diaspora. **Did you know?**

- Black History Month was officially recognized by President Ford in 1976.
- Massachusetts granted African Americans the right to vote in 1780.
- In 1869, the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment was passed granting Black men the right to vote.

**African Americans and the Arts is the theme for 2024.** “For centuries Western intellectuals denied or minimized the contributions of people of African descent to the arts as well as history – even as their artistry in many genres was mimicked an/or stolen.” <https://asalh.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2024-Black-History-Theme-African-Americans-and-the-Arts.pdf>

### **Learn more:**

**Listen to:** Jazz, blues, gospel and other forms of Black and/or Black-inspired music. Check out Big Mama Thornton, Little Richard, and Otis Blackwell <https://globalnews.ca/news/4321150/black-music-whitewashing-classic-rock/>

**Watch:** Videos on the History Channel <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history>, movies like *Elvis*, *Just Mercy*, *Selma*, *Eyes on the Prize* and *Rustin*, which was shown at Moorestown Meetinghouse in January.

**Read:** Literature by Alice Walker, Toni Morrison; poems by Amanda Gorman and Langston Hughes. Recent books like - [Christian Cooper’s \*Better Living Through Birding\*](#).

**Study Black Artists:** [Alma Thomas](#), [Jacob Lawrence](#), and contemporary [Kara Walker](#) and [Faith Ringold](#).

**Take Action:**

- Join Moorestown Monthly Meeting's Anti-Racism Committee
- Get involved with [www.blacklivesmatter.com](http://www.blacklivesmatter.com)
- Volunteer for the local NAACP <https://www.naacpnj.org/home>

## **JANUARY 2024 CALL TO ACTION: AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS**

January is a good time to appreciate the value of a warm home to live in and to remember that this blessing is NOT shared by everyone.

Over the last twenty years the United States has experienced a decrease in available affordable housing. Now that temporary pandemic era assistance programs have ended, we are feeling the reality of this lack. According to the [Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University](#) “millions of households are now priced out of homeownership, grappling with housing cost burdens, or lacking shelter altogether, including a disproportionate share of people of color”.

### **Why don't we have enough affordable housing in New Jersey?**

1. Rising building, rent and housing costs
2. Historically restrictive zoning and housing policies
3. Inadequate public assistance

### **Affordable housing in Moorestown**

Moorestown has had a mixed record on providing affordable housing which is described [in this presentation by Moorestown Township](#). One of the more successful affordable housing programs in our town has been the work of MEND (Moorestown Ecumenical Neighborhood Development.) Founded in 1969, MEND provides affordable housing integrated within communities throughout South Jersey. You can learn more about the history of MEND from Warren Sawyer himself, one of the founders, in [this video](#).

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