The Impact of Population on Climate Change: A Program Preview

By Roy Treadway

At the QEW Steering Committee Meeting and Annual Gathering in Chicago (October 24-27, 2013), collaborators Ken Lawrence, Dick Grossman, Roy Treadway, and Stan Becker will be leading an informative and stirring program on the subject of population as it relates to climate change. Thanks to Roy Treadway for providing the following information and giving us a preview of the program.

Program (Overall time: 120 minutes):

Opening by Dick Grossman (5 min); Presentation on the impact of population on climate change, followed by factual questions (total 15-20 min), led by Roy Treadway; Small group (8-10 persons) worship-sharing (60 min) led by Ken Lawrence; Large group worship (30 min.), led by Dick Grossman.

Description:

In this session, we will start by exploring the relationship between population and population growth in the world with the increasing threat of climate change. Obviously, at its basic, population is a multiplier of everything else contributing to climate change, such as carbon dioxide and methane emissions into the atmosphere: the more people, the more climate changing gases will be produced. But more people creates more sprawl with more traffic to farther distances, puts pressure for more extreme energy with more pollution, and encourages industrial agriculture with higher use of oil-based products. We will explore some of these relationships and answer a few questions about population in the first part of the session.

Given the clear impact of an increasing population on climate change, we will move into worship-sharing to explore several queries which focus on what might be our collective and individual response to growing population. Since its beginnings, FCUN/QEW has had a strong emphasis on population concerns with a Population Working Group producing tri-folds and pamphlets on world population, adoption, abortion, immigration, human sexuality, and clearness on childbearing. We have attempted Men-4-Men and Quaker Condom projects. But what else should QEW be doing about population which continues to grow rapidly in the world, exacerbating (along with many other factors) not only climate change, but water use, food, and pollution? And how should we respond individually in our personal lives, not only to our resource use but to our concern over population? What does our faith call us to do?

[1] Climate Change—Embracing Corporate Quaker Action
[2] Bridging Contemplation and Action