

Bearing Witness To The Earth

Next Ecoretreat in the spirit of the Zen Peacemakers in Ahrtal, Eifel Germany
from September 8-10, 2023 (this year shortened!)



Some parts of the Ahr valley have been destroyed by the flood disaster 2 years ago. On site you can see and witness the consequences and effects of climate change. That's why we go there, we want to be present with what is. It is a hungry place, we want to listen to it.

Last year in August the first Ecoretreat (Bearing Witness to the Earth) took place in the Rhine lignite mining area. In the spirit of Zen Peacemaker together with Roshi Frank De Waele.

We continue.

At the end of April we returned to Lützerath for a day of reflection, or rather to where it once was, because it has already been demolished. See on Youtube a little summary: <https://youtu.be/FxzGUwaDya0>

Also for this year we have planned a 5 day Ecodharma pilgrimage (EcoRetreat) in the Ahr valley & Büchel (in the Eifel) planned.

For various reasons we will shorten the hike to a weekend. For next spring /summer we are now aiming for another longer pilgrimage. We would like to get to know some places and circumstances and to become a bit familiar with them.

We are also happy that some people from the German Zen Peacemaker community will be there as well as a mindful and very creative filmmaker from the Netherlands. We are curious to see what and whom we will meet and are open to other interested participants: So, this is a warm invitation to walk with us, listen, be in silence and share what is.

Feel free to contact: pilgrimage@eco-dharma.de for more information.

For more background on the Ecoretreat and Bearing Witness, see here: www.bearing-witness.eu



Here is the original text of our intention, here you can of course pre-register for 2024 if you are interested:

This retreat will be a pilgrimage to the Ahr area in West Germany near the Dutch border. We will visit places connected with the ecological crisis, such as open-cast lignite mines, places in the Ahr valley destroyed by floods years ago, and Büchel air base in the Eifel region, where about 20 nuclear bombs are kept ready for use. We will combine (long distance) walking and public transport. The programme of the retreat, the travels, the food and sleeping accommodations will all not be prepared before the retreat, only rough ideas of where we want to go. For the rest we will trust in our own creativity, co-creation, inventivity and meeting friendly people who will help us find our way. Not knowing, bearing witness and caring will be our tenets and main practices, in the tradition of the Zen Peacemakers founded by Bernie Glassman Roshi. Our approach will be similar to street retreats and bearing witness retreats. Ingredients of the retreat will be visiting ecodharmic places, meeting with people connected to the ecocrises, connecting with nature, meditation and council circles (talking stick circles).

The group of meditation practitioners who are organising this pilgrimage consists (so far) of Svenja Wildflower Hollweg, Dieter Mueller and Patrick Avalokiteshvara van der Hofstad. People who are interested in participating in the retreat can send an e-mail to pilgrimage@eco-dharma.de.

Please be aware that it may take some time before you receive an answer. When you have indicated your interest, we will send you e-mails with updates every once in a while.

Expected date: spring/summer 2024

Location: Ahrtal and other ecodharmic places in the region

Participants: no minimum, maximum 20

Language: English (although meetings with people can be in German and translated for anyone who needs it)

Costs: we estimate 200€ - 250€ for transports, food and lodging along the way during the pilgrimage, please consider making a donation to support participants with limited financial resources

If you have concerns or physical limitations, just talk to us, we will look for possibilities that are suitable for you.