Ludlow Quaker Journal

January/February 2026

This Journal will publish anything that Friends think is of interest; so its range may be very wide. If you find it too long, select only what interests you from the Table of Contents.
Please contact Barbara Mark if you would like to have something included or wonder if you have a subject that might be of interest.
It will be published on-line only and will come out when enough articles have been gathered in. Comments and letters to the editor are also welcome.
Do remember if this copy is pdf you can listen to it via Windows 10 'read aloud' option at the top of the sheet.

Contents:

Page 2. Prayers for Peace 1st January
Page 3. Prayer for Christian Unity Meeting at the Meeting House
Page 3. World Council of Churches Conference info.
page 4. A message from Tim Gee, Friends World Committee for Consultation
page 6. Pause for Thought. Water and Fire and a poem
page 6. Book Review: A Man that looks on Glass by Derek Guiton.
Page 7. Poem shared by Murri and book review by Barbara
page 8. Rookhow Retreat and news QARN (Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network)
page 9. UN 80th Anniversary from 'Quake!'
page 10. Actions of local groups to support Palestine
page 11. Things from the Internet

Environmental Issues pages
Newlands Burial Ground, request from Ludlow 21, Leominster Seed swap, Caring for God's Acre and Geoengineering article.

New Years Day Prayer for Peace

In the afternoon of New Year's Day we held a prayer for peace for anyone to come and share. Around 25 people came, which included friends from other local Meetings and one person who was from Ludlow town.

Colin started the 45 mins of quiet reflect with this prayer he had written using several sources:-

We enter this new year with feelings of trepidation, of feelings of uncertainty, we have fears born through experiences in our recent past, from within our community and in politics on a national and world scale.

Today we want to reach outside of our fears and look for hope, for the flame which we know will bring Your Light into every part of our world.

With every breath, we hold this world in The Light.

We know in that Light we will find Love. We know in that Light we find Love

We feel our connection through The Light to those suffering the lack of peace in our world.

We pledge to work to trust in the love and strength of those near us in that Light. With hope that we may we all find resilience in the support of others

May we have belief we can be well, happy, and peaceful.

We hold all in The Light especially those who cannot find happiness and peace.

Let us feel the calm amidst the storm—even sometimes when the storm is of our own making

May our families, friends, and even those who are unfriendly to us, be well, happy, and peaceful.

May all people, everywhere, be well, happy, and peaceful.

May all people be allowed the cause for happiness.

May they be free from suffering and the cause of suffering.

May they never be prevented finding a supreme happiness which is without suffering.

May we speak for those who are poor without fear of the powerful.

May our life's work be a passion for peace and nonviolence

May our imagination overcome fear and despair with new possibility.

Grant us the serenity to accept what we cannot change, the courage to change what we can, and the wisdom to know the difference

May we build hope through Love, steps for peace through love and break down the barriers that divide us through Love.

May weapons of war be transformed into tools of peace may all those who work to that end be held in the Light.

And may that Light guide our steps toward finding understanding and Love, Love for us to share.

Afterwards refreshments were served and there was appreciation expressed for the event.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

On Wednesday 21st January Ludlow Quakers open their Meeting House for a Meeting for Worship as part of the Week for Prayer for Christian Unity.
There were around 10 people present, with representatives from Methodists, Baptists and Elim Churches, all of whom stayed for refreshments. Bridget managed to have a lovely talk with the two Baptists and I renewed my friendship with Mike Owen from the Methodists

QFP was 2.31 was read at the beginning of the Meeting.
Mike read
All my hope on God is founded;
he doth still my trust renew.
Me through change and chance he guideth,
only good and only true.
God unknown,
he alone
calls my heart to be his own.
Robert Bridges (1844–1930) *(alt.)*
based on Joachim Neander (1650–1680)
Reproduced from *Singing the Faith* Electronic Words Edition, number 455 .
Barbara

World Council of Churches Conference

Because we were thinking of Churches working together in January here is a thought to go with this:-
Note The Friend article 12th December 2025 about World Council of Churches Conference on Faith and Order. Worth reading.

Look on World Council of Churches web site for the message that came out of this conference. Barbara

A message from Tim Gee, General Secretary
Friends World Committee for Consultation (World Office)

Dear Friends

When Jesus' birth was announced it was with news of peace.

Jesus began his ministry by talking about peace and said goodbye to his disciples by leaving them with peace.

The first word of the risen Christ was peace. Paul began many of his letters by speaking of peace.

And yet, the world does not reflect peace. Even as many of us were reading and singing of peace on earth this year, warlike acts were being planned. But Jesus does not give as the world gives. Instead he advises "do not be afraid".

Our work for peace on earth and our experience of Christ's peace are not separate. And yet finding peace in ourselves joined to peace in the world is the vocation of a lifetime. It wasn't easy in Jesus' time and it isn't easy in ours.

As a step on this journey, the CEC has agreed the next World Plenary Meeting will be themed 'Blessed are the Peacemakers', with a target date of 2030, to mark 2000 years since the start of Jesus' Ministry.

In preparation we are planning quarterly global meetings for worship online (subscribe to Friends World News for updates) and a big online gathering for World Quaker Day (4 October 2026)……..

Pause for Thought.
Water and The Fire – reflections by Colin Sheward

Earlier this month there was a fire in Mercersburg a town of some 2000 people in Pennsylvania USA. It took place in a building (*pictured*) which has been described as a barn but also a unit of lock up commercial buildings (*some* commentary says animals were involved). At some point in the fire the local volunteer fire department needed more water with local pressure being too low and natural water sources like rivers and lakes iced in. The Fire Chief sent his Fire Engines back into town to a hydrant to refill near the fire station with water brought back on a shuttle.

Then the Chairman of the Local Water company intervened and asked him to desist as the water withdrawal risked collapsing the system. Later the request was withdrawn and the Water Company apologised.

This led to an uproar and much interest on the internet and when I read it there was almost universal condemnation of the Chairman with demands for his sacking and that of the water company board. It interested me and I felt some sympathy for the Chairs position (safely out of things as I was in Ludlow). In Sundays Meeting I had all this come to mind. And I just wondered if I was attending the local Quaker meeting

there(held at Chambersburg PA) would I feel need to give Ministry and what would they think? Because it seems to me to give insight into pressing problems that face decision makers around what is the “common good”

Like many small towns in the USA, Mercersburg has Water Supply issues, there have been cuts to supply, low pressure problems and concerns over bacteria contaminated water. Several times the local population has been dependent on supplies of bottled water. Recently a Federal Grant of $3.9 million has been received to partially upgrade the system, but this has not been spent yet. Concerns over Water management in the USA has received considerable attention and in 2021 Congress voted for a total package of $50 billion to cover remediation of the whole system, Mercersburg’s grant came from that But it won’t solve all the problems in this town after years of underinvestment.

Firefighting is a water intensive activity, and the demand has grown with global warming and new technologies like lithium batteries raising requirements. The tanks of fire engines are getting bigger locally in Shropshire they have grown from 1800l capacity to 2400l water capacity, and they will grow again to 2800l. But beside this, larger tankers (including up to 10,000 galls) have become increasingly used in the States to supplement the fire engines. And it was the threat provided by filling such a beast that threatened to break a vulnerable system.

Fire Fighters in USA are almost automatically given heroic status; they have a place in these small communities of importance. In this case all but the Chief being volunteers. They are the “lions” whereas (like in the UK) the Water company bosses are more the “Donkey” category (although maybe well renumerated Donkeys). If the Fire Department can’t fight fires, then the Insurance Rates in their district will raise premiums. But then if the largescale extraction of water risks system collapse for several hours, risking the young and old, the vulnerable like kidney dialysis patients then maybe the Donkey has a valid point.

Let us bring both views into The Light as properly held with very difficult outcomes attached. Problems like this may be already be on their way to us.

A Poem By Alex Ziegler

Flag measles

The red, white, and blue,
flutter,
half mast
Something's dead,
Long live Something.
We
don't know, we don't
we
don't know, do we
What
Flag measles
really
is?

Many thanks. Ali attends occasionally

Book review

By Julia Reynolds

I bought this book from Friends House
A Man that looks on Glass by Derek Guiton.

A quote in the Appleseed newsletter from Kathleen Nelson from this book.
'When we listen critically to our stuttering attempts to express ourselves, we become aware of an inexpressible otherness'

The words stuck with me although not sure I understood why.
Since then, I have been slowly reading it. I'm finding it's making me feel that after all I am a Quaker, maybe.
I need to go slowly, and the book has a lot of pencil margin marks and text underlining.
There are many references to past Quaker writers. These quotes are used to link to present day thinking and how the society may change as diversity is accepted.
I think anyone who wonders about Quakerism would find it a good read, not necessarily easy, at least for me. I'm still only on page 78 last page 266.
Only £ 7. 99 plus postage. Although it may be in our meeting library already.

Please use if you think OK
Many thanks for this Julia

Poem from Alan Wright

Murri found this while looking through some old letters and files. It was shared during a Sunday Meeting for Worship but the author is unknown.

DRAW BREATH
Breathe in the quiet purpose of this place.
Through outward stillness, seek the calm within.
Here we can find forgiveness and forgive:
Here we feel the healing miracle begin.

Breathe out the busy world, the teeming mind.
The follies, fears and failures of the week:
Breathe out contention, pettiness and pride.
And wait in trust for that of God to speak.

Breathe in communion, friend with quiet friend.
Each drawing closer in this timeless hour.
As all our different needs and gifts are drawn
To the source o comfort, love and power.

Breathe out at ast to God the heart's full thanks
That we have seen this vision, known this grace.
Renewed through love, let us that love extend
Through all our daily life beyond this place.

Thank you Murri for sharing this.

The Wonder Coast by Iain Dryden

I bought this book in a National Trust shop near Swanage, Dorset. The wonder coast relates to this coastline, which is beautiful.
It is an unusual book giving snippets of fascinating historical information from the fossils of the Jurassic era, the uplifting of the earth's crust to the present day. It covers legends, smuggling haunts and architecture. Almost without you knowing it!
It is written in an almost poetical way observing how you would be able to 'feel' if you walked the route he is on.
It is a good way to visit this coastline, even if you could never get there!

Barbara

Rookhow Retreat News

This is one of the charities our Meeting had to give up this year because of the need to alter our Appeals system to fit in with the new Cymar Charity.
Over the last 5 years the Retreat Away Fund has supported over 2,000 people from 90 groups to have a subsidised stay at Rookhow. This has included refugees, people dealing with addictions and trauma and homelessness charities. Initially set up with a grant from the Quaker Mental Health Fund UK, it is now supported by local Quaker Meetings, individuals and 5% from Rookhow's bookings income.
The next round deadline is 1st April. See our website for more information: https://rookhow.org.uk/support-for-groups and please get in touch if you are interested in applying.
Email from Sue Nicholls, development manager 07377971783

If you would like to receive an epilogue from Rookhow, which I understand are very good, please email https://rookhow.org.uk/contact-us
and ask to be put into their monthly mailing which contains the link to the epilogue which is on the first Monday at 9pm.

A Message from QARN

In November 2025, the Home Secretary announced a swathe of new policies regarding claims for asylum and applications for settlement. Since then QARN asked if we could do a government survey and have kept us informed as things have happened.

Leave to Remain debate
Have a look at the transcript and see if your MP took part.

https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2026-02-02/debates/b2643b0d-fe64-47be-9fbd-5d16bf510a5c/WestminsterHall

The BBC on-line has also been following the development of the new legislation.
On 16th February it reflected on what Shabana Mahmood said on 'BBC on Sunday'. Her new policy is to overhaul the human rights law and change asylum laws. Those granted asylum would have to wait 20 years before they could apply for settled status. (including their children)

She is said to have stated "This is a moral mission for me, because I can see illegal migration is tearing our country apart, it is dividing communities." (some would not call these people illegal migrants but people seeking sanctuary)

At the moment there is a backlog of more than 50,000 and a waiting time of at least a year. She said this had to improve.

Barbara

QARN had an emergency meeting, the minutes of which are here.

Minute from a Special Meeting for Worship for Business of Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN)

21 February 2026

28 Members and Friends of QARN met online on Saturday 21 February 2026 for a Meeting for Worship for Business to discern how we can take forward to Britain Yearly Meeting our urgent concerns as a Quaker Recognised Body about refugee and asylum matters. We were reminded of the Citation of Friends by the Nobel Peace prize committee which mentioned compassion “from the nameless to the nameless”. We see no compassion in the stance and actions of the government displayed in its current proposals for restructuring the asylum and immigration rules. We were reminded of our testimonies to truth, equality and peace which should underpin all actions.

We have prepared papers detailing our concerns about the present proposals of the government and stand behind them ready to explain as called. We see the situation as urgent because the government proposes to progress its measures rapidly by procedures that circumvent proper scrutiny of changes - changes which we believe are in conflict with international law.

We ask BYM to recognise the racism inherent in the current proposals. We ask BYM to respond to its faith-based leadings in a gathered session. We hope that Quakers in Britain will make a strong statement. We also ask for resources to be made available to support Quakers across the country working for equality and justice for people who seek sanctuary, unique, precious, children of God. QARN will be eager to offer support for Yearly Meeting’s consideration. We ask our Steering Group to take this minute forward and to share it with other Quaker bodies as it sees fit.

Fred Ashmore and Sheila Mosley, Co Clerks

Do consider joining QARN on-line and keep abreast of all that is happening.

Article from Quake!

Quakers mark UN anniversary and warn world cooperation is under threat

Quakers in Britain joined a historic gathering at Methodist Central Hall in London this weekend to mark 80 years since the first United Nations General Assembly, which first met in 1946.

The UN's ideals of cooperation and multilateralism are under threat around the globe today, Quakers warned.

The audience of around 1,000 included faith leaders, ambassadors and government representatives, the UN Secretary-General, and Sophie, Duchess of Edinburgh.

In his address, UN Secretary-General António Guterres described the past year as “profoundly challenging" for international cooperation, noting that aid had been cut, inequalities widened, climate breakdown accelerated, and international law “trampled."

He warned that such pressures are putting the principles of the UN under strain.

Quakers have long supported the UN as a vehicle for peace. In 1948, they established the Quaker UN Office (QUNO) to help countries find shared solutions to global problems.

Helen Drewery, clerk of the Quaker United Nations Committee (Geneva), attended the anniversary, highlighting Quakers' commitment to constructive engagement.

“Cooperation is not weakness, because we can do more together than we can apart."

For Quakers, the event was a reminder that dialogue, listening, and shared purpose remain essential to sustaining international cooperation.

Oliver Robertson, head of witness and worship for Quakers in Britain, reported

Action of local groups to support Palestine

News from Jonathan Edwards, Chair, Shropshire PSC, lets us know about vigils on Saturdays during February which have been in Craven Arms, Shrewsbury, Newtown and Welshpool. There is also information about the National Demonstrations in London. The demonstrators sometimes distribute leaflets asking people to stop buying Israeli products and now it is about a petition to demand that supermarkets stop stocking Israeli produce

There is another boycott campaign concerns Palantir which provides AI and surveillance technology to Israel used in the occupation. There is an online action to write to Keir Starmer telling him to cancel all UK contracts with Palantir such as in the NHS and the MoD.

He is also very concerned that the US/Israel has decided to attack Iran soon. He says ‘Iran has made clear it will defend itself by using its own considerable military power without limit. Iran is also receiving assistance from its allies in the BRICS group - China and Russia. The outcome of such a conflict is unforeseeable and not confined to the Middle East.’

Both the Shrewsbury group and Radnor Palestinian Links announced that, on 13th February 2026, the terrorism ban on Palestine Action was ruled unlawful by the UK’s High Court. A panel of three judges said that there had been “very significant interference with the right to freedom of speech and freedom of assembly” and they consider the proscription of the group “disproportionate”.

‘Quake!’ observed; This judgment confirms the serious risks posed when counter-terrorism laws are used in ways that undermine freedom of conscience, religion and peaceful dissent.

The proscription of a direct-action protest group continues a worrying trend of state repression against dissent including the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 and the Public Order Act 2023. The UK is the only country in western Europe to have its civic freedom classed as "obstructed" by Civicus.
Quakers have warned since 2000 when the Terrorism Act came into force that it is too broad, too vague and a threat to civil liberties. In particular, extending the definition of terrorism to include damage to property takes the UK's approach far beyond international norms
We all wait to see if the government appeal.
Barbara

Internet Interests

You may like to look at YouTuber Richard Murphy, professor of Economics: 'You are not disposable'
Please try and look at the Hansard reports on;-
Parliamentary debate. Refugee status and right to remain on 2nd February
and debate on genocide in Gaza on 5th February. (Occupied Territories)
Also, may be of interest, Radio 4 'Sideways' 4th February about the mystery of miracles
Barbara

Environmental Issues

Newlands Burial Ground -an update from the Custodian.

Those of you who are familiar with Newlands Quaker Burial Ground in Leominster will know that the two huge Western Red Cedar trees are now dominating one side of the burial ground and shading out a lot of the plot. They are also intruding significantly into both the garden and building of the property next door. This has now changed hands, having been in the same ownership for forty years. Cutting them back to the boundary would result in two very lopsided trees and so it seems sensible to fell them both and open up that side of the burial ground and reinstate the boundary hedge with native species which will add diversity to the site.
Over the last nine months I have spent quite some time making contact with all possible interested parties - Herefordshire Council Natural Environment Department, the local Leominster Councillor, Leominster Tree Warden as well as a Cymar Trustee as it is now owned by Cymar and not SMAQM. This has involved site visits with the last three. There is agreement that the trees should be felled.

I have also put a notice on the gate for the last few weeks telling local residents that the trees about the plans, but I have received absolutely no comments!

As the Custodian of Newlands appointed by Area Meeting, I'm looking forward to developing the opportunities that the removal of these two huge conifers will create and to working with the new owner of the property next door, who seems to have nature at the heart of his plans for both his own garden and the shared hedge.
For at least the last fifty years, the Custodian of the Burial Ground has been a Ludlow Friend (my predecessor was John Voysey) and so inevitably small scale maintenance jobs fall to us, although a few Friends from other meetings in the AM have taken an interest from time to time. However, the financial responsibility for maintenance lies with AM and not Ludlow Local Meeting.
Once we can be sure of some warmer and sunnier days I will be organising one or two work parties and encouraging Friends to come and lend a hand. There are jobs for all abilities and energy levels including the important task of just sitting and admiring the peaceful atmosphere of this little bit of Quaker history which is still an active burial ground. Our Friend Ann Adams is buried here.

Hedge cutting already done.

Please ask me if you have any questions. Cynthia

Thank you very much for this up-date Cynthia

Books for Ludlow Library request from Ludlow 21

A few years ago Ludlow 21 donated a collection of books on sustainability themes to Ludlow Library. The collection was well received, and a number of the books have been much borrowed.

At the AGM last November, Ludlow 21 member Linda suggested a new book which she felt would be a good addition to the collection. The Board agreed this was a great idea, and felt, particularly as 2026 has been designated the National Year of Reading, that now would be a great time to put together a new collection of books to donate.

The books would become part of the Shropshire Libraries catalogue, and could be borrowed anywhere in the county, but as part of a special collection would always come 'home' to Ludlow Library.

Linda has kindly offered to collate a list of suggestions, so if you know of a book on any 'green' or environmental theme, preferably fairly recently published, or at least still in print, fiction or non-fiction, for adults or children, please let Linda know by emailing books@ludlow21.org.uk

Please give the title(s) and author, and if you can, say something about why you think the book is a good read.

We look forward to hearing your suggestions!

The books donated in 2021 were:

The Overstory, Richard Powers

Drawdown, edited by Paul Hawken

The Way we Eat Now, Bee Wilson

Sustainable Energy without the Hot Air, David JC MacKay

Wilding, Isabella Tree

No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference, Greta Thunberg

How to Change Everything: The Young Human's Guide to Protecting the Planet

and Each Other, Naomi Klein

The Biggest Footprint, Rob & Tom Sears

Love Our Earth, Jane Cabrera

Too Much Stuff! , Emily Gravett

Seed Swap in Leominster 14th February

It was a busy occasion. From 10 to 12 lots of people scoured the tables for seeds they fancied, many of them bringing along seeds they did not need or had collected.

It was so busy in fact that Barbara and Cynthia did not see each other!

It was run by Transition Leominster group of which Annie Wood is a founder member.

The mayor put on her chains of office to open the event.

We had music in the entrance hall by Merdo, playing small Scottish pipes

Merdo was accompanied by Terry Tandler

Here is Annie deep in conversation

Caring for God's Acre

Five Ways to Welcome Wildlife for a New Year ahead

January is the time for new starts so why not plan ways in which you can make your churchyard more wildlife friendly in 2026? Here are five simple things to try, maybe you could start with one or two.

1 Create a meadow - choose an area of grass in full sun, currently mown short. Leave it uncut for about 14 weeks over the spring and summer. See how many wildflowers come up naturally, you will probably be surprised. Scythe or strim the long grass, rake it up and remove it to a compost heap or use it to make hay.

2 Help your veteran trees - churchyards are fantastic for veteran trees, particularly yews. Gently clear below veteran and ancient trees, removing young saplings, piles of grass cuttings, sheds, grave spoil, old bottles and anything else that is there! Always remove ivy from yew trees but no need to do so from other trees unless advised to by an arboriculture expert.

3 Give wildlife a home - great fun for community events, how about making bird and bat boxes, bug hotels, deadwood piles and compost bays. Swift boxes can fit behind the church tower louvres. Try a range of different sized bird boxes, including open fronted ones for Spotted Flycatcher and Robin. Place a deadwood pile in a shady spot for frogs, newts, slow worm and hedgehogs to feast on the invertebrates there.

4 Be a little untidy – leave an area of tussocky grassland or scrub, perhaps against a wall or round the back. Cut and clear this every two or three years, doing a section each year. This will be fantastic shelter and great for overwintering invertebrates as well as amphibians and reptiles. Hedgehogs love places like this too.

5 Plant for pollinators – fill your flowerbeds or planters with species that are useful to insects. Include native plants and grasses as well as early and late flowering plants. How about some herbs which people can enjoy too? The wildflower Viper's Bugloss is outstanding for pollinators and very attractive too.

Enjoy watching the wildlife which will take advantage of these features and please tell us what you see.

Oldberrow Church, Worcestershire

Magnificent Yews

Whilst churchyards contain many different veteran trees, it is the yews that are particularly special. Globally, veteran and ancient yews are threatened; however, on a world stage the best refuge for these trees is actually the churchyards of England and Wales. It is in these enclosed spaces that over three quarters of Britain's oldest yew trees can be found. Some trees are believed to be several thousand years old.
The yew trees we are referring to are the long lived *Taxus baccata* (often referred to as the Common, English or European Yew) as opposed to others also found in churchyards such as the Irish Yew which is more upright, neat in shape and not nearly as long lived.

Almost every part of the yew is poisonous to stock and wildlife (including humans!). But birds such as blackbirds, waxwings, thrushes, and fieldfares enjoy the fleshy red berries. If you are partial to gathering fungi to eat, it is best to avoid even edible species if you find them growing on a yew tree.
The Common yews tend to grow in a 'normal' tree shape until about 600 years old when they often hollow out and thicken around the base. This hollow cylindrical structure does not weaken the tree, in fact it may even strengthen its structure. Hollow yews are great for sheltering wildlife. Some, such as the attached picture from Much Marcle in Herefordshire, have seats inside, and in past centuries hollow yews were even used as homes by monks in Wales and Ireland!
For more information about our second annual Love your Yew Week initiative, visit www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/love-your-yew-week/ where you will also find an interactive map showing the locations of ancient and veteran yews in churchyards.

Geoengineering

By Silvia Ribeiro in La Jornada

Stardust, a new Israeli company, has announced that it raised $60 million to develop a solar geoengineering project that it will sell to the highest bidder. This is by far the largest for-profit solar geoengineering project to date.

Stardust was founded in 2023 by researchers from the Israeli government specializing in nuclear energy and has since raised $75 million. It initially received funding from AWZ, a multinational Israeli-American-Canadian company specializing in "security, intelligence, and technology," which boasts contracts with the Israeli Ministry of Defense, the CIA, FBI, Mossad, and MI5. Stardust also highlights its connections to the Israeli military and the potential for the U.S. government to acquire the company in the future.

Its objective is clear: to develop commercial-scale solar geoengineering technologies that can be sold to governments, militaries, or anyone who can afford them. According to an interview with *Politico*, the company claims it will have the technology ready for stratospheric experiments by 2027, large-scale deployment by 2030, and global deployment by 2035.

Geoengineering has been under a moratorium by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity since 2010 due to the high risks it poses to the environment and biodiversity. States reaffirmed the moratorium by consensus in 2024. The activities Stardust has announced would violate these decisions.

Solar geoengineering refers to technological proposals that aim to reflect some of the sun's radiation back into space with the goal of lowering global temperatures (as warming is one of the symptoms of climate change). It is inspired by the effect of volcanic clouds that sometimes prevent sunlight from reaching the Earth. The most studied proposal is the injection of aerosols into the stratosphere, especially sulfur, which would act like a sunshade. Other proposals involve mirrors or devices in space to create shadows on Earth. All these approaches are hypothetical; they entail negative side effects and increase the inequity of climate chaos, with a high potential for military use and increased geopolitical tensions.

Computer models indicate that large-scale solar geoengineering could lower temperatures but would have significant negative impacts in certain areas. There would be "winners" with better temperatures and "losers" who would suffer from worsened droughts or floods. Furthermore, sulfur particles damage the ozone layer and are toxic to both human health and the environment when they fall, which typically occurs a year or two after their injection. Since geoengineering does not change the causes of climate change, it would have to continue, creating a captive market for those who control the technology. The particles must be reinjected every year; if the project were to stop, temperatures would rise abruptly, creating a situation worse than the initial one, a phenomenon scientists refer to as "termination shock".

Paradoxically, it is these aspects that make the proposal attractive from a business standpoint: it is a way to control the global thermostat, creating captive markets and dependence for decades or centuries, and it can be deployed unilaterally by a country, a group of countries, or even by some of the wealthiest individuals on the planet. Some of them, along with their foundations, such as those of Bill Gates and Elon Musk, as well as others associated with Silicon Valley and Big Tech, have funded this type of research. Musk reacted enthusiastically to the Stardust announcement on X, suggesting that his satellite constellation could be used to help prevent global warming.

Stardust's activities and the lucrative business it envisions could unleash a race to develop these proposals commercially. The fact that greenhouse gas emissions are not being reduced and that warming is increasing is an incentive for their business. The less climate action there is, the larger their market will be. Stardust has spent large

sums on U.S. lobbying. Academic proponents of research and experiments in solar geoengineering, such as David Keith at the University of Chicago, former Stardust advisor Janos Pasztor, and the Degrees Initiative, have claimed to distance themselves from commercial initiatives like Stardust and a previous one called Make Sunsets, which attempted to establish itself in Mexico in 2023 but was rejected by the government. However, the reality is that both companies state that they based their work on the geoengineering studies of these and other academics. The Stardust case clearly shows that if a technology is researched and developed, regardless of who does it, it will be used by those with the resources to do so, according to their own interests.

Given the prevailing injustices, inequalities, and geopolitical tensions in the world, solar geoengineering cannot be governed or managed democratically. Therefore, its research and development directly contribute to existing inequalities. This argument was cited by more than 600 scientists and academics from 62 countries who are calling for an international Solar Geoengineering Non-Use Agreement. A proposal for such a treaty was also supported in 2025 by the Conference of African Environment Ministers (AMCEN).

This is a translation of the article that originally appeared in La Jornada: https://www.jornada.com.mx/2025/11/29/opinion/018a1eco

A Couple of Late items.

From Barbara

Here is a photo I took yesterday of our Wild Cherry tree which has just come out into bloom. I have never seen so may flowers on it before. The photo does not really do it justice.

The wonder coast by Iain Dryden

About halfway through this book describing the wonders of our world I came across this passage which could be relevant here.
‘Making manufacturers accountable for the afterlife of their products would help (the rubbish left at beauty spots), for we are monkeys programmed by biodynamics to discard banana skins and let them rot, as our rubbish did before this age of disregard.’

The Big Plastic Count is back again from 9th to 15th March. You are asked to record everything you throw away that is made from plastic.