# Imagining Land Justice Regenerate Hecomm DIS

#### PRACTICE

Before diving into this guide, consider grounding in these two practices:

- Invite a gentle, curious awareness of your body. As you read, take note where your heart quickens or when you lean forward in your chair. Similarly, note when you feel tension or contraction, or resistance. In all sensations, ask: Where am I called to go deeper? What am I being called to learn? What might Spirit's wildest imaginings be drawing us toward?
- Take a moment to acknowledge the land you're on. Give thanks for its gifts, and to the original Indigenous stewards who tended it for generations.

## Welcome

#### Dear Reader,

Welcome to *Imagining Land Justice*! This three-part series is the first publication of the N&N Land Justice Project, an initiative that supports religious communities to create new land legacies rooted in climate resilience and racial justice.

With each generation, the Earth herself is becoming more entangled by extraction and racism: 1500 acres of U.S. land are developed every day, 98% of private land is owned by white people, and our governing systems preserve profit, and white wealth, at all costs.

As sisters discern the future of their properties, many community initiatives – regenerative farms, habitat restoration projects, Black and Indigenous food sovereignty collectives, and beyond—are in search of land to steward, often inhibited by the rising costs of property. Given financial complexities and often unclear options on both sides of this equation, the choices can feel uninspiring, overwhelming, or downright dismal.

But what if we could address the situation differently? What if religious land transitions could repair histories of harm *and* nurture a future of climate-resilient communities?

We believe that this is possible, and that there are tools, models, and friends that can help us get there together. But as the adage goes, we can't go anywhere we haven't already been in our minds. Thus, in *Imagining Land Justice*, we explore critical calls of the climate justice movement—Landback, reparations, and regeneration—and ask: "What is possible?"

These guides are intended as a beginning, not an end. They don't include step-by-step instructions or prescriptive templates. It will be up to each of us to apply them in our own contexts, share with each other in the learning journey, and participate in the opportunities ahead.

For decades, sisters have been "living otherwise," caring for the needs of the Earth and standing up for justice. We pray that these pages further that legacy, en-courage your vision, and amplify the critical role that women religious can continue to play in this transformative moment. May we arrive, with every question and each imagining, one step closer to wholeness.

Onward, —the N&N Land Justice Team

# A Call to Repair the Web of Life

#### The climate crisis is unfolding in our

daily lives: Extreme weather events are more frequent, sea levels are rising, one-third of the earth's topsoil has disappeared since the 1970s, and the sixth mass extinction of wildlife on Earth is accelerating – with habitat loss cited as the number one reason.

After 500 years of colonization and extraction, the very sustainability of life on Earth is at risk. In this critical moment, we must shift to a mindset of regeneration — practices that proactively build soil health, increase carbon sequestration, prioritize biodiverse ecosystems, and tend to community wellbeing. Regeneration requires not only a shift in practices, but a spiritual shift in how we relate to land and Earth as participant, not as proprietor. It also requires the continued accompaniment of loving human hands on the land.

For decades, sisters have been at the forefront of this shift in both mindset and method, embodying a "new cosmology" of oneness with creation. From the ground-breaking Genesis Farm to the Green Mountain Monastery, the Adrian Dominicans' permaculture gardens to Mercy Ecology Institute, and literally dozens more examples, sisters have stewarded their lands into dynamic ecosystems, abundant gardens, and vibrant classrooms of life. As the climate crisis roars around us, many religious communities are discerning the future of these very sacred places and relationships. This guide imagines possible futures for these lands that embody the ideals of climate justice – centering the needs and visions of those most impacted by climate change. Often called **frontline communities**, this group includes Indigenous peoples, Black communities, people of color, working class people, and others who have been most hurt by the extractive economy.

As the <u>Climate Justice Alliance</u> teaches us, to have a Just Transition — that is, to shift from an extractive economy to a regenerative one — the transition itself must be just and equitable, redressing past harms and creating new relationships of power. The call to climate justice challenges us to create new economic realities built on shared ownership, reciprocity, and community wellbeing. The pages ahead will feature real models that re-think property in this paradigm:

How might we heal the land, while alsos seeking right relationship with those most harmed by extraction and oppression?

Might we discern the future of our lands in partnership with those who have had the least access to land, waters, and healthy food?

What could it look like for lands to be protected from development — while still being loved, held, and cared for by human hands?

What would be possible when these sacred lands could love these communities back again?

#### **CLIMATE JUSTICE IN ACTION:** MEET THE SHINNECOCK KELP FARMERS AT ST. JOSEPH VILLA

In Hampton Bays, NY, six Shinnecock women tend a regenerative ocean farm, spurred by the vision of restoring their waters and reconnecting with their lands. By farming kelp — which captures carbon at a rate 30 times greater than trees — the Shinnecock Kelp Farmers are not only reclaiming an ancestral tradition of growing seaweed, but they are repairing the algae blooms caused by billionaires' septic systems.

When the dream for the Shinnecock Kelp Farmers began to materialize, the collective approached the Sisters of St. Joseph of Brentwood, who own a retreat center property on ancestral Shinnecock land. "As soon as I got the email, I thought, 'this is a no-brainer'," reflects Sr. Joan Gallagher, an active Earth Matters Committee member who was in leadership at the time. "It was so in line with our Land Ethic and everything we've been working for."

After a few more conversations, the Shinnecock Kelp Farmers took up their sacred work at St. Joseph Villa, where it resides today.

The tribe and the Brentwood community had been building relationships for years — the sisters were regular supporters at Shinnecock-led protests against the development of ceremonial lands. "We are just here to support and to be in solidarity," shared Sr. Joan.

Using the sisters' land, and supported by Greenwave, a sustainable ocean farming incubator, the Shinnecock Kelp Farmers plan to launch not only a kelp hatchery, but a network of sustainable ocean farms and a fertilizer business within the bioregion.

"By exercising our sovereignty and sharing our gift of connectedness with the natural world, we want to clean the waters that are so important to all of us," shared founding member Tela Troge.

Becky Genia, another founding member, reflected on the relationships among the three collaborating groups. "It's time for the people who are dead serious about caring for Mother Earth to seek each other out. This isn't a native issue, a rich or poor issue. It's about the divine mother – that everything she has given us, we must reciprocate. Now, the allies are showing up...It's not a whole lot of us, but the momentum is enough."

Traditional Ecological Knowledge, or "TEK," is the intimate understanding of a certain place, as well as the proper care and cultural uses of all its inhabitants, developed over centuries. In contemplating regenerative land use, listening to the wisdom of its first stewards is a matter of climate adaptation and cultural restitution.



**LEFT:** Danielle Munnannock Hopson Begun wades into the Shinnecock Bay to tend the lines of kelp growing underwater. (photo: Brittany Koteles)

# A Fight for the Commons

#### The "solidarity economy" movement is

building real alternatives to capitalism. It seeks to shift wealth into shared ownership and governance, and to prioritize planet and people over profits.

#### Land is the original currency of the

extractive economy – first through the invention of individual property, and then through the monetization of land.

The extractive economy fundamentally relies upon the theft and extraction of the land, waters, and resources upon which all life depends – in other words, the theft of **"the commons."** While the concept of land ownership, or privatization, is actually rather new in history, it is so deeply entrenched in our economic system that it may seem natural – "the way things work."

But land privatization is not a natural phenomenon. Over the last 500 years, the commons have been stolen, privatized, and stripped of their natural resources, for the profit of white landowners. From a history of enslaved peoples working plantations, to the current reality of migrant workers growing tomatoes for \$2.17 an hour, this system forces "landless" people to work in order to afford the "cost of living."

Our current economy has always benefited those who already have land and wealth, and exploited those who don't. In other words, the least likely people to have wealth are the people who have been most oppressed by extractive, racial capitalism – and yet, it is their labor that the system depends upon. Consider, for example, that 37% of Black families in America have a net wealth of zero, and that the typical white household has 16x more wealth than a Black one. Similarly, while BIPOC people comprise 70% of the farmers in the U.S., they own less than 2% of the farmland. When we see the story for what it is, we can recognize that wealth and land should have never become this concentrated, and that poor people don't deserve sympathy or charity they deserve justice and solidarity.

The solidarity economy exists to put our commons — our land, labor, wealth, and life — back into the hands of the people. When land, labor, or other resources are put back into the hands of the community, people often refer to this as **commoning**.

To understand more, let's look at the notion of land ownership in both frameworks. In our current, extractive economy, people who cannot afford land ownership are required to pay a landowner in exchange for being able to live on land. Just by having enough capital to own land, the landowner gains *more* wealth. In a solidarity economy, there are several alternatives to rent that prioritize shared ownership. One example is the East Bay Permanent Real Estate Cooperative (EBPREC) in Oakland, California. Powered by "everyday investors" with \$1,000 shares, EBPREC buys property and develops it as a permanently affordable housing cooperative. Instead of having a landlord, residents co-own the property along with investors and community members! Existing residents get to stay and enjoy the same returns as investors.

The chart below shows some other examples of how the solidarity economy builds local wealth, shared ownership, and the wellbeing of people and planet. With even a modest amount of wealth or land, there are direct, tangible ways to practice solidarity and build a more fair, democratic, and resilient economy.

	<b>EXTRACTIVE ECONOMY:</b> Profit-driven, concentrated power	<b>SOLIDARITY ECONOMY:</b> People-driven, shared ownership
INVESTMENT	Wall street investments that make owners of capital even more rich	Democratic loan funds that invest in local communities, where residents and stakeholders can vote on investments, too
LAND & HOUSING	A speculative housing market that raises the cost of living and forces people out of housing. "Developers" that degrade forest or farmland and sell it for a profit	Housing cooperatives or community land trusts, where all members jointly own land or housing Agrarian Commons that protect collectively owned, regenerative farmlands Community-driven mutual aid, savings, and loan funds that invest in local projects, and that create tools specifically to help poor people access banking
BANKING	Profit-driven banks that invest in fossil fuels, and who don't let poor people in – keeping them unbanked and trapped in predatory lending cycles	Community-driven mutual aid, savings, and loan funds that invest in local projects, and that create tools specifically to help poor people access banking
BUSINESSES	Corporations' profits go to a small number of stockholders and corporate leadership	Worker-owned cooperatives re- invest profits and wealth in workers and local communities

"New forms of cooperation and community organization can be encouraged in order to defend the interests of small producers and preserve local ecosystems from destruction. Truly, much can be done!"

-Pope Francis

## Regenerating the Commons

#### Protection from development is a core

concern for many – but it can be done in ways that still keep "hands on the lands."

#### With many loving stewards unable to

afford the "cost" of land, how might land legacies model another way?

While we must fight against the monetization and runaway development of land, we don't want to fence off the Earth from human touch — especially when there is so much ecological repair needed to be done, and so many loving stewards are unable to afford the "cost" of land.



How can a land legacy help to rebuild the commons, grow the solidarity economy, and heal us?

While interests in regenerative practices is growing among younger generations, affordable land access and tenure remains an incredible challenge to theh movement. More often than not, full-time land stewards or farmers have to rent the land they are working to heal. It isn't uncommon for that land to be suddenly sold from under them to developers or commercial farmers — meaning those stewards have to start anew building soil health, water systems, and relationships somewhere else. According to the American Farmland Trust, 11 million acres of farmland have been developed in the last 20 years – that's 62 acres during the hour you spend reading this guide.

Communities of color working with land know this even more intimately: 98% of all rural lands are owned by white people, and Black farmers are losing 30,000 acres of farmland every year. To support the growing wave of regenerative land practice, we must find ways to expand land access to the stewards of the past, global present, and future.

Thankfully, there are many ways to do that, and more creative solutions are coming out of the woodwork in this very moment. The next few pages will explore a few tools that have been used to protect land for regenerative purposes, while expanding access to communities.

**LEFT:** Josephina Starr volunteers on a farm run by Island Harvest Food Bank. (photo: Sisters of St. Joseph of Brentwood, NY)

### **TOOL #1: CONSERVATION LAND TRUSTS**

**Conservation trusts** are non-profit entities whose mission is to preserve and protect land. They do this in two ways: fee ownership and conservation easements. **Fee ownership** is when the trust buys (or receives) land to hold in the trust. A **conservation easement** is a legal agreement that restricts certain activities on a property, such as development or the building of certain structures. While every conservation easement is unique, it must fulfill <u>one of the conservation purposes</u> <u>stated by the IRS</u>, such as recreation, habitat protection, open space, or historic preservation. All easements "run with the land," meaning that the restrictions do not change over time, even if the property owner does.

Conservation land trusts are effective partners in ensuring protection from development and the preservation of natural resources and open space. In some cases, trusts can also acquire land through donations and purchases.

There are also some **important limitations** to consider about conservation easements. First, easements do not move land into common stewardship. While the easement protects the land in perpetuity, the deed itself is still privately held. **Easements alone do not achieve the goals of equitable land access or regenerative stewardship.** 

Second, easements are not designed to evolve and adapt. When considering climate change, developments in energy and technology, and an uncertain future; this can put an unintentional burden on future stewards. For example, one conservation easement prohibited compromising the "viewshed" of a bucolic property. When a new steward bought the property and began to lay cover crops – a key regenerative practice – some neighbors complained to the conservation trust about a "ruined viewshed," endangering the farmer's ability to use this method. In another example, a farming education center couldn't be built because the easement didn't allow any more buildings on the property. The takeaway: Create easements thoughtfully, in consultation with future stewards, in ways that don't unintentionally inhibit emergent needs.

There are a growing number of land trusts that, in addition to protecting land, work to expand access and cultural use by Indigenous peoples and people of color. **Black and Indigenous land trusts** like <u>Sogorea Te' Land Trust, The Native Conservancy</u>, or <u>Northeast Farmers of Color Land Trust</u> can be wonderful local partners for the goals of a just land transition.

#### CASE STUDY: BRENTWOOD CSJ COLLABORATES WITH A LAND TRUST

The Sisters of St. Joseph in Brentwood, NY are stewards of a 212-acre campus in one of the most densely populated (and lowest income) parts of Long Island, NY. The sisters reached out to Peconic Land Trust to support them in fulfilling their Land Ethic when planning for the future. After evaluation, the land – which hadn't been farmed in over 50 years – was said to be full of prime agricultural soils! The sisters were amazed to learn that Suffolk County would pay them to put a working farm easement on the property, which protects the land as farmland – in perpetuity. The sisters reinvested the money from the easement into irrigation, cover crops, and the costs of finding farmers to lease the land.

Now, seven farmers are farming 27 acres of organic farmland. Most of the food is sold locally, including \$25,000 in coupons from the Farmers Market Nutrition Program, making local produce available to low-income families. (*This pullout section is from the amazing <u>Faithlands Toolkit</u>.)* 

## Regenerating the Commons

## **TOOL #2: COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS**

**Community land trusts (CLTs)** are also non-profit entities created to protect land while ensuring permanently affordable land access. They do this by separating ownership of the land title from ownership of the home (or of other activities on the land).

In a housing example, the CLT buys parcels of land and owns them permanently. People can purchase a house *on top* of the the land, but they rent the land *underneath* the house from the CLT through a long-term, renewable lease. If a homeowner decides to sell, the cost is restricted by the CLT to preserve the affordability for future low- to moderate-income families.

Most commonly, CLTs are seen as a tool for affordable urban housing, but they can be used anywhere — in fact, the first-ever CLT, New Communities Inc., was in rural Georgia, created by Black organizers to protect land access for their community of farmers.

By separating the ownership of land and housing, neighborhoods can guard against the unpredictable effects of the speculative market, which is the driving force behind gentrification and rent hikes, rural farm consolidation, and the ongoing loss of land.



#### **CASE STUDY: WOODLAND CLT**

The second-ever CLT was started by a Glenmary sister in 1979. Living in a poor rural community in East Tennessee, Marie Cirillo was troubled that 90% of land was owned by mines. With support from Rev. Charles and Shirley Sherrod from New Communities, she organized a first communal purchase of 40 acres.

Forty years later, the Woodland Community Land Trust is one of the largest and oldest rural community land trusts in the U.S. with more than 450 acres for housing, economic development, education, gardening, and permaculture.



**TOP:** Callie Walker's farm, now part of the CVAC. (photo: Agrarian Commons) **Bottom:** Marie Cirillo. (photo: Schumacher Center for New Economics) "My hope for the future is that the sisters will see their collective power. They have large land holdings throughout the region and have a strong voice that can be shared with the larger community. They are examples of how to live in agreement with nature."

Claude Stephens, Regenerative Design at the Sisters of Loretto community (speaking in the film Sacred Land)

### **TOOL #3: AGRARIAN COMMONS**

The **Agrarian Commons** is a unique model of ownership, relationship, and tenure that protects farmland in perpetuity, expands land access for the next generation of farmers, and builds local food systems. Unlike most land trusts, each Agrarian Commons is comprised of a two-entity legal structure that affiliates a national land trust with community commons to hold farmland in perpetuity for land access.

There are thirteen Agrarian Commons across the country. In each Commons, a diverse nonprofit board holds the title for all the land in that local trust. The land is leased for 99 years (or as long a

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state allows) to farmers, and the lease payments are reinvested in property management and legal support. Not only is the land protected for regenerative stewardship in perpetuity, but the community can support and engage, health is restored to the land, the wealth stays local, and the entire food ecosystem is strengthened.

Groups like Agrarian Trust are creating the legal models, financial solutions, and conditions for collaboration and learning that make thriving, regenerative, localized food systems possible.

#### **CASE STUDY: LAND DONATION TO AN AGRARIAN COMMONS**

When Callie Walker inherited her father's 100-acre farm, she dreamt of collectively stewarding the land with others, but had a hard time finding dedicated co-farmers. During her search, she learned of Agrarian Commons' vision to support BIPOC-led, regional food systems. "Being white in a segregated world, I could have accidentally shifted the land to all other white people," she reflects. Agrarian Trust was a perfect partner to ensure that the land was loved, while expanding access and equity.

Callie and her husband Dan decided to donate the majority of their farm to the Central Virginia Agrarian Commons, and are working with its local board of farmers and stakeholders to complete the process. They carved out a much smaller property to retire on, also to be donated when they pass.

A Methodist pastor, Callie is motivated by Jesus's call to 'sell all you have, give to the poor, and follow me.' Aware of the deep injustices regarding land access in this country, Callie reflects: "Once I came into property ownership, I knew I would be responsible to God to move that along into other hands."

Of course, there are benefits, as well, and Callie is looking forward to aging alongside new neighbors who are committed to the land. "In a way, I'm trading my assets for neighbors for the long haul. I want the people who come here to be fond of me as an old lady — to bring me food, to think of me as an auntie next door," she says. "When it comes to owning private land, we'd rather be a part of the Commons."

## **Imagining a Thriving Commons**

#### We can't create a future we haven't

already been in our minds. The situations in this spread are fictional, but they feature real organizations and support networks. We hope that they animate the tools highlighted throughout this series!

#### IMAGINE...SEEDING FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Three sisters live together in a small urban apartment near a clinic run by their community. They have access to a small roof and a five-hundred-squarefoot cement backyard. In the neighborhood, they are seeing the rise of youth unemployment, obesity, and diabetes at once. It doesn't help that the only grocery store in the neighborhood had closed permanently during the pandemic.

Through the Black Permaculture Network, they learn about a local group that builds employment opportunities for youth and people returning home from prison by building backyard and rooftop permaculture gardens. Over the next year, teens come for two-week permaculture intensives with teachers from the Black Permaculture Network. They build raised beds, an earthen oven, an herb spiral, a vertical green wall, and a pollinator garden on the roof with rain barrels. The sisters' previously-barren space is suddenly attracting teens and butterflies!

#### IMAGINE... SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS LAND STEWARDSHIP

After two centuries of tending the land they live on, a religious community has limited capacity to keep on top of invasive species — but are weary of hiring more land maintenance staff. But through the help of local and national networks, they are put into touch with members of the tribe who were the original stewards of the land. Slowly, their mindset shifts from a staffing challenge, to an invitation to collaboration.

They are amazed to learn that the tribe has already established a cultural skills program, and they are searching for land to host their demonstration garden and ceremonial sites. After more than a year of relationship building, the sisters enter into a **cultural use easement** with the tribe, which grants the tribe free use of the land for regenerative and cultural purposes in perpetuity. In their second year of partnership, the group is already supplying fifty local families with healthy and culturally-relevant foods and holding ceremony on the land again.

Over time, the sisters and the tribal group begin a conversation about officially donating the land to the group's 501(c)3, supporting the creation of a cultural center and thriving community hub.

**LEFT:** Members of Canticle Farm, an urban garden and spiritual community with Franciscan roots in Oakland, CA (photo: Canticle Farm)

**FAR LEFT:** Srs. Carol Coston and Corinne Sanders, OP at the Adrian Dominicans' permaculture garden. (photo: Adrian Dominican sisters) "This work activates a widening embrace. As we begin to listen to the anguished cries of the natural world, we draw ever closer to the generation which is responding...by living in harmony with Earth and addressing the inequities among human communities."

#### Sr. Chris Loughlin, OP

#### IMAGINE... PARTNERING WITH A COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

Through various ministries in the city, a community of sisters have gotten to know many families who are struggling with the rising costs of living, fighting unjust evictions at the height of the pandemic.

By showing up in solidarity for affordable housing, the sisters learn at a recent gathering that a **community land trust** (CLT) has started in the city. More than 40 families have been able to build equity through the CLT, while ensuring that costs will remain affordable for generations to come. Unfortunately, the waiting list has grown to over 300, and the CLT is eager to create more housing.

Meanwhile, a school the sisters owned – ideal for the purpose – had been sitting vacant for several years. Over the course of a year, the sisters and the CLT members agreed that they would sell the land underneath the school into the CLT.



The CLT can't afford the market value, but the sisters can't afford to donate the building outright. They settle on a **charitable sale** (also known as a **bargain sale**), which is the sale of land to a tax-exempt organization for less than market value. Charitable sales come with special tax benefits to the selling party.

The sisters always assumed they'd have to sell the lot to a developer. But in the end, the income from the sale and the tax benefits were more than enough. And that's not to mention the joyful day they helped one of their kindred families move into a new unit in the renovated school!



# Nore Imagining

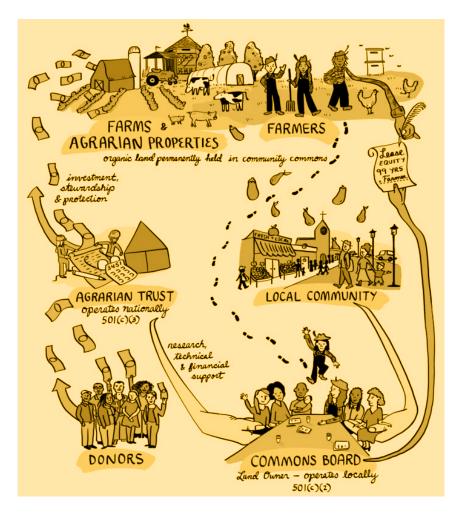
#### IMAGINE... CATALYZING A LOCAL AGRARIAN COMMONS

A congregation owns ten acres of mowed grass in an area that faces encroaching development and rapidly disappearing farmland. They put out a call for local farmers, and discover a group of low-income Latinx farmers who are forming a cooperative so that they can secure land together, rather than continuing to lease.

After learning about the Agrarian Commons model, the sisters propose the idea of launching a local Agrarian Commons alongside the farming collective, with the sister's land as the starting point.

After a year of relationship building and some agreement setting, they entered their land into ownership by the Agrarian Commons via a 501(c)(25) trust. This Commons is governed by a diverse board that includes sisters, members of the Latinx cooperative, local farmers and food activists they found through networks like the Black Land Food & Justice Project, and representatives from the national umbrella entity, Agrarian Trust.

Over the next several years, with support from the NN Land Justice network, they find two other religious communities, a church, and two retiring farmers in the area who impart their land to this "Commons" as well. Here, the sisters' land has become the catalyst for a whole regional movement for climate justice and food resilience!



**ABOVE:** An illustration of the Agrarian Commons model, entitled *Many Communities, One Trust*. (photo: Agrarian Trust)

**OPPOSITE PAGE, FROM LEFT:** Farming on Little Jubba Central Maine Agrarian Commons, Community day at Soul Fire Farm, and the Shinnecock Kelp Farmers tending kelp lines. (photos: Agrarian Trust, Soul Fire Farm, and Brittany Koteles.)

#### IMAGINE... HAVING A VARIETY OF FINANCIAL OPTIONS TO DO IT.

#### ... IN A POSITION OF FINANCIAL ABUNDANCE,

the community decides on **Fee Simple Donation**. In this arrangement, the sisters transfer their title to the 501(c)25 entity "free and clear."

Or, perhaps they choose a **Remainder Interest Donation**, which means that they begin the donation process, but retain the right to live on the land for the remainder of their lifetimes – able to age in place on the land they love, and beginning to welcome the next generation of stewards into the story.

#### ... IN A POSITION OF FINANCIAL HARDSHIP,

the community would like to donate their land, but their cost of care requires financial remuneration and the local stewards can't afford the property's market value.

The sisters commit to working with the Commons to **fundraise** for the rest of the cost over two years. Through a network of Catholic donors, supportive climate justice organizations, and national support structures, the project raises \$2M and the deed transfers at the end of two years. The sisters get what they need for care, and the land is protected, accessible, and lovingly stewarded forever.

#### IMAGINE... CREATING SOMETHING ENTIRELY NEW AND NEEDED, TOGETHER.

Five religious congregations with urban properties want to protect their lands while expanding affordable housing. They love the Community Land Trust model, but no CLT exists in their areas, and they don't think they have the capacity to start one themselves.

Together, the five communities along with help from friends with backgrounds in law, real estate, and regenerative stewardship decide to form a CLT together to hold title to all the properties and consolidate their care.

The group secures a small grant to staff the project, and 18 months later, the sisters transfer their property titles into the Sacred Trust, a unique, CLT-inspired land trust that works across the Midwest — contributing to a growing ecosystem of land protection strategies that also expand access and equity.

#### ...AND SO MUCH MORE.

Dig into more resources and ideas at <u>www.nunsandnones.org/imagine</u>.







#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We extend our deep thanks and solidarity to Agrarian Trust, Movement Generation Justice and Ecology Project, the Sustainable Economies Law Center, and the New Economy Coalition for their tireless work to build a world in which we all belong to the land again.

Many thanks to the sisters and community members who offered their time, feedback, and honesty during the beginning phases of the Land Justice Project. We are so grateful.

Ann Pratt, OP; Annmarie Sanders, IHM; Cathy Mueller, SL; Christin Tomy, OP; Cora Marie Billings, RSM; Corinne Florek, OP; Diane Poplawski, OP; Eileen McKenzie, FSPA; Elise Garcia, OP; Gloria Marie Jones, OP; Jessie Rathburn, CoL; Joan Gallagher, CSJ; Judy Carle, RSM; Julia Walsh, FSPA; Kateri Mitchell, SSA; Libby Comeaux, CoL; Linda Romey, OSB; Lisa Kane, OP; Lisa Reynolds, CoL; Mary Pellegrino, CSJ; Sue Ernster, FSPA; Toni Nash, CSJ.

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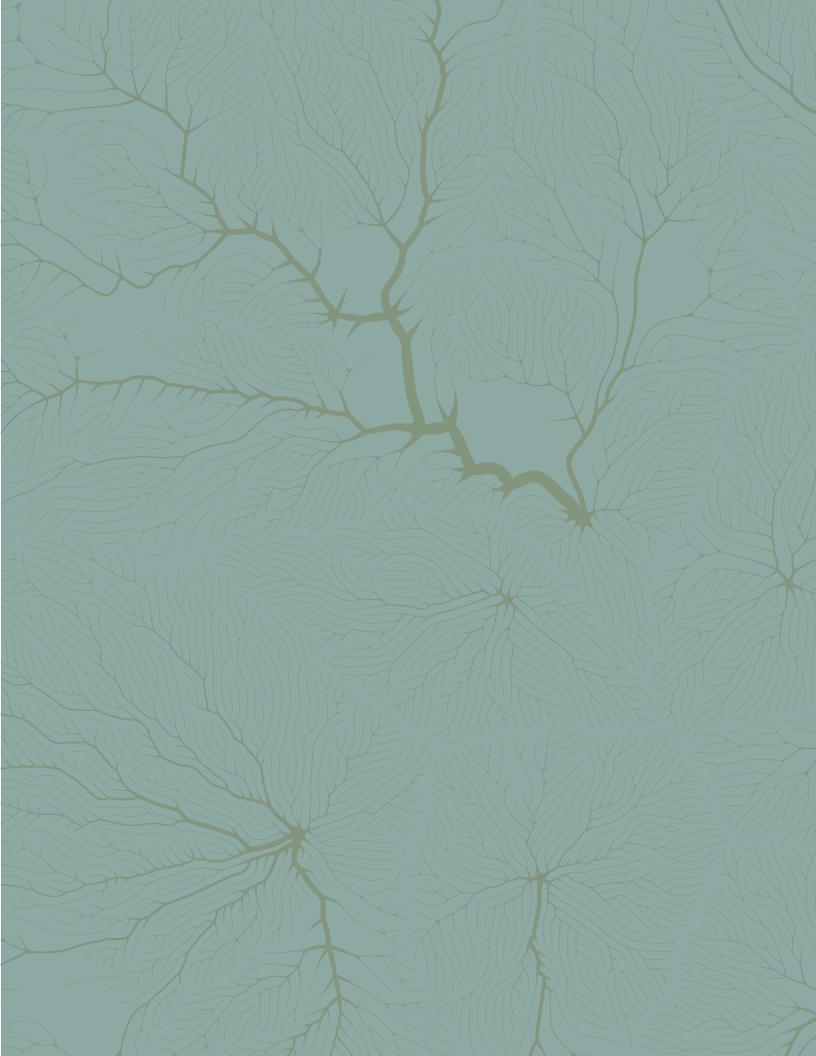
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Sacred Land film, directed by Spalding Hurst and the Sustainable Lands Roundtable,

2017.

Series authors: Brittany Koteles & Sarah Bradley Issue contributor: Alan Webb Design: Christina Tran



"And all the believers lived in a wonderful harmony, holding everything in common. They sold whatever they owned and pooled their resources so that each person's need was met."

Acts 2:44-45 (Message version)



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