



## *Climate Changed* Podcast Discussion Guide Season 2, Episode 3

**Guest:** Eileen Flanagan

**Title:** What is Mine to Do?

### **Welcoming Activity**

Recall these words from poet Lori Hetteen: “The whole world might be burning. But if we give up cake, if we abandon singing, we are certainly done for.” After reading this lovely poem, The BTS Center’s Executive Director, Rev. Dr. Allen Ewing-Merrill, asked questions about what brings you joy and what renews your spirit. Reflect on these. Jot some notes or doodle on paper, if that is helpful to you. Then go around the group sharing what it is that you could not do without.

### **Introduction To Episode**

In this episode, Nicole Diroff speaks with Eileen Flanagan, a Quaker author and climate activist. Eileen describes the various dimensions of separation that exist in our world today and how industries and decision makers benefit from maintaining those divisions. She calls for the coming together of disparate groups in climate activism, the various roles that a person can step into to play their part, and the importance of collective action in staving off despair. To illustrate these points, she recounts stories of nonviolent direct action which drew together people from once-separated communities to take on corporate contributors of climate change.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Eileen describes how division exists across various contexts. It occurs among races, species, geographies, classes, and beyond. What divisions occur in your city or town? Who benefits from maintaining these separations?
2. Of the four roles that Eileen lists (the helper, the advocate, the organizer, and the rebel), which one do you find yourself most comfortable embodying? Which other role have you not considered, and what might it be like for you to step into that role?
3. Do you agree with Eileen about collective action — that working together is a powerful way of combating despair? Why or why not?
4. “Direct action means acting in a way that those decision makers will feel the weight of the moral message that you're bringing,” says Eileen about nonviolent direct action. Have you considered participating in nonviolent direct action? If you have already participated, what was the experience like?
5. Regarding the phrase “preaching to the choir,” Nicole makes the point that it is vital to continue preaching to those who already recognize the issues. Our choirs need to be diversified and moved from church buildings to the public square. Who is your “choir,” or the people who feel similarly to you about ecojustice issues? What is the next step that you and your “choir” can take towards climate action?

## Closing Activity

Although Eileen has been working through the Serenity Prayer for some time, she points out that the earlier version used “we” language instead of “I” language. As a group, say this prayer together using the plural version:

God, grant **us** serenity to accept the things **we** cannot change, courage to change the things **we** can change, and wisdom to know the difference.

Throughout the week, recite this prayer using the plural version and notice how it shifts your perception not only of what work needs to be done, but who you can partner with to do it.