



Climate Hope

Andy Wells-Bean
Environmental Justice Fellow

Earlier this week, a couple of related items in my social media feed serendipitously arrived one after the other. First were the results of a survey that asked more than 1,000 academic, business, and political leaders asked to evaluate thirty-two global risks over the next two years and the next ten years. Climate change and its effects dominated the list. Second, a realtor friend posted: “I officially have my first client specifically moving to Detroit because of Global Warming... I’ve been telling you guys!” Indeed, experts and activists have been telling us. More extreme storms, droughts, ecosystem collapse, climate-forced migration: we are all going to see the impacts of climate change—and probably sooner than we expect. Climate change threatens the very viability of Earth as a habitable planet. In the face of the largest problem humanity has ever faced, how do we respond? What should our government be doing? Our community? Our churches? Our families? It can be an overwhelming question to ponder. Many of us make small changes, say a prayer, and then put it out of our mind. To engage more deeply could be disastrous to our mental health. Already, the American Psychological Association is wrestling with a huge growth in “climate anxiety” and “climate grief.” It is in this moment that a need for Climate Hope has emerged. The United Church of Christ is not new to the climate and environmental arena. UCC ministers actually coined the phrase “environmental racism” and played a leading role in kickstarting the environmental justice movement in the 1980s. More recently, the UCC ran a Climate Hope Cards Art Contest. Over 900 young artists from forty-four states plus DC drew, colored, and painted about climate hope, environmental justice, and protecting the Earth. Especially for the youngest generations, having hope for a livable climate is essential. For better or worse, they will see the results of the choices we all make now. Soon, the UCC will launch its Climate Hope Cards Advocacy Campaign. People from around the country will make the decision that fighting for climate and environmental

justice is worth the trouble. They will push our elected leaders to do what's needed to fight pollution and ensure that we have a safe planet. They will find hope working together to build the future we need. We cannot do it alone and we can't do it without hope. As organizer and educator Mariame Kaba likes to say, "Hope is a Discipline." Hope does not always come easy. It takes work. When you're ready, pick up your tools and join the work.

¹ [Chart: The Largest Risks Faced by the World | Statista.](#)

² [Is climate grief something new? \(apa.org\).](#)

³ ["Love" the overall winner in Climate Hope Cards youth art contest - United Church of Christ \(ucc.org\).](#)

⁴ [Recently immortalized on Sunrise Movement merch: "Hope is a Discipline" - Sunrise Movement.](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andy Wells-Bean is the Environmental Justice Fellow for the United Church of Christ.

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