



The Parish of St. Mary York

Faith in Action

Building hope for tomorrow in the face of climate change

Are you really calling me?

Guest author: Hannah Westner

Climate change is such a big and complex idea that it's difficult to get our heads around. And the anxiety and fear can make us try to protect our hearts.

But maybe you are exactly the person that God is calling to take action. What if you are supposed to listen? How can you really listen without exposing yourself to grief and fear?

Joanna Macy is a scholar of Buddhism, and a respected voice in the movements for peace, justice, and ecology. She teaches about a practice that can help us address many kinds of difficult challenges we might face in our lives.

This is how that practice can work in the case of climate change:

Gratitude: Think about a place that was really important to you during your childhood. Really take time to remember it and describe all your fond memories. What are you grateful for about that place?

Honour your pain: Think about what that place is like now. Has it changed? Or might it change in the future? What will it be like when your children or grandchildren visit there? How does that make you feel? If you feel sadness, anxiety, or fear, that's because you are witnessing damage to God's world. His world is a part of us, just as we are a part of it. We tend to want to block out the grief, but when we push away that pain, we also block out our power to become part of the solution.

See with new eyes: By acknowledging your grief or fear, you can free yourself to take action. Some time ago I found a quote that helped me stop trying to push the fear away: "To avoid a fear emboldens it." ~ Sue Monk-Kidd

Go forth: By actually allowing yourself to feel your fear, and by talking about it with others, you can find courage to move past it and begin to take action. You have the opportunity to make a positive impact on God's world.

In the next articles we will be talking more about different ways to take action.

For further reading:

www.theworkthatreconnects.org/spiral



Artist: Dori Midnight