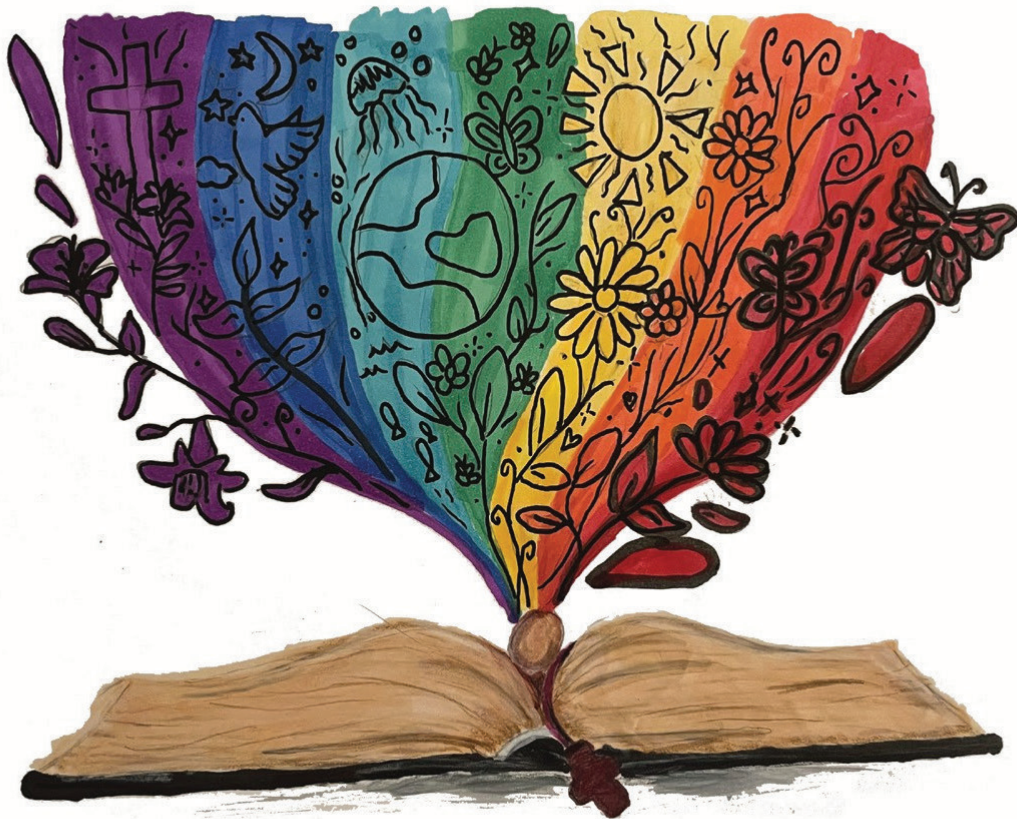


# CLIMATE **H** **O** **P** **E** AFFILIATES

## An Introduction



For new members, this pamphlet provides an overview of how Climate Hope Affiliates works. We are excited that you have joined with others throughout the country for this collective calling.

[ucc.org/climatehopeaffiliates](http://ucc.org/climatehopeaffiliates)

## Our Calling

Our calling is to address the interconnected crisis of climate change and societal injustice. We fulfill this calling by empowering people of faith and conscience to act.

“For surely I know the plans I have for you,’ says the Lord, ‘plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.’”  
Jeremiah 31:17

## Our Strategy

We live into our calling by using the power of relationships. We develop ongoing relationships with members of Congress, the local media, and the community at large.

We can visualize members of Congress as being on a ladder that extends from climate deniers at the bottom to climate justice champions and partners at the top. Most members of Congress are not climate justice champions, and our aim is to use the power of our relationships with them to move them higher on the ladder.

## Our Approach to Advocacy

Many organizations today offer transactional advocacy: sign the petition, transaction complete. Quick, easy actions like form emails without sustained engagement or empowerment are transactional advocacy.

Climate Hope Affiliates offers transformational advocacy whereby volunteers are trained and encouraged to succeed in accomplishing things as advocates they often never thought they could do previously. This might be meeting with a member of Congress and bringing them on board to our issue. It might be having a letter to the editor published for the first time. As a result of these accomplishments, advocates see themselves in a new light.

**Partners:** actively works with us in a coordinated way to achieve and protect legislation

**Champions:** regularly speaks out and taking action to achieve and protect legislation

**Supporters:** occasionally acts to achieve and protect legislation

**Neutral:** mainly avoids taking public stands and speaking on the issue

**Deniers:** actively opposes legislation that addresses matters of climate justice

# A Proven Approach

Transformational advocacy has proven to be an effective way to bring about change with Congress. With organizations like RESULTS, Citizens' Climate Lobby, and Catholic Relief Services, Sam Daley-Harris has pioneered this approach over the past 45 years.

## The Three Marks of a Transformational Advocacy Organization

Sam Daley-Harris on what sets transformational advocacy organizations apart from other advocacy organizations:

### #1: Recruitment and Building Community

If the organization is constantly bringing in new people, forming chapters, and sustaining their engagement with inspiring monthly whole-of-organization webinars, then it is confronting its members' sense of powerlessness and discovering ways to overcome it.

### #2: Training for Action

The organization is committed to providing training to their volunteers and equipping them to build relationships with and make key asks of elected officials. The organization is out to solve big problems and is constantly enhancing its members' effectiveness.

### #3: Encouraging Breakthroughs

The organization encourages its members to move out of their comfort zone, to step out of the way they see themselves and beyond what they think they're capable of. That's right: confidence grows and transformation happens when you're encouraged and supported in doing things you thought you couldn't do, and when you surprise yourself by making them happen.

Source: Sam Daley-Harris, "[Transformational Advocacy and the Disobedient Self](#)," *Stanford Social Innovation Review*



In our Climate Hope Affiliates, we call breakthroughs, “Moses moments!” Moses initially doubted that he could confront Pharaoh until he was supported and empowered to act.

# Doing What Success Requires

Successful advocacy requires work and the dedication of one's time. There are no shortcuts to achieving a more just and equitable society. To support members in doing the work required for successful advocacy, Climate Hope Affiliates offers local chapters a structure of support. After the initial chapter launch workshop, chapters will come together for four 90-minute trainings before embarking upon the regular life of a chapter, which entails two meetings a month.

## The Four 90-Minute Trainings

The four 90-minute trainings are designed (1) to build community as a local chapter, (2) to develop the chapter's internal structure as members assume roles, and (3) to begin learning advocacy through actual actions. Trainings will cover the following:

1. Strengthen bonds as a group by getting to know each other better.
2. Learn how to tell one's "story of self" or "story of calling."
3. Finish writing to all three of your congress members to begin setting up meetings with either them or their staff.
4. Learn how to write letters to the editor and then send off your first letters.
5. Read together articles on the practical and spiritual dimensions of advocacy.
6. Begin researching congress members.
7. Fill member roles.
8. Role-play meeting with a member of Congress.
9. Develop a "buddy system" that will help your group accomplish its goals.
10. Set group goals for the next three months.



Concord, New Hampshire  
Climate Hope Affiliate Meeting

# Monthly Meetings

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Once the four training sessions are over, chapters enter to the regular flow of chapter life with two meetings each month. Because of our emphasis on forming community and because chapters that meet together in-person for their meetings (rather than over Zoom) have proven to be more effective and durable, we strongly encourage chapters to meet in-person for both of these meetings.

One of the monthly meetings will begin with the chapter gathering to view a national hour-long webinar. These national webinars take place on the third Saturday of the month at 1 p.m. ET. They include a guest speaker, Q&A, a grassroots victory story from a local chapter member, the introduction of our monthly action sheet, and a mini-training designed to strengthen and support action. After the webinar is over, chapters meet for an additional hour for further planning and implementation.

The second monthly meeting takes place at a date, time, and location of the chapter's choosing. This is a 90-minute meeting to focus on local strategizing and action.

# Chapter Leaders

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Chapter leaders have three important responsibilities:

- Plan and coordinate local chapter meetings.
- Make phone calls to members to remind them of meetings.
- Attend three national Chapter Leaders each month that take place at 7 pm ET/4 pm PT on Sundays.

Proverbs 29:18 says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

This scripture points us toward the possibility of hope. For where there is a vision, the people shall flourish.

The beauty of the Climate Hope Affiliate model is that we seek to have a role for every member, so that Chapter Leaders do not assume more responsibilities than these.



# Chapter Member Roles

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Along with Chapter Leaders, other roles within a chapter include:

**#1: Liaison to Representative:**

Sets up meetings and develops relationships with congressional representative and their staff.

**#2: Liaisons to Senators:**

Set up meetings and develop relationships with Senators and their staff.

**#3: Newspaper monitor:**

Reads the newspaper for opportunities to write letters to the editor.

**#4: Outreach specialist:**

Finds and fulfills opportunities to table at events (local environmental events, town halls, church coffee hours, etc.)

**#5: Public speaking specialist:**

Finds and fulfills opportunities to speak at meetings and events (church group meetings, civic organization meetings, etc.)

**#6: Other roles:**

Church outreach, meeting hospitality, social media, fundraising, liaison to other environmental organizations, etc.

In the first training session, we seek to fill the roles for liaisons to members of Congress, because we will want to begin to seek meetings with members of Congress and their staff. All members are welcome to participate in these meetings once they are set by a liaison. A chapter will want to meet multiple times with their congressional offices over the course of a year. These meetings are a vitally important part of the life of the chapter.

# Intergenerational Advocacy

Climate Hope Affiliates grew out of two years of advocacy campaigns and congregational engagement events. Our annual Climate Hope Art Contest for Children and Youth became a popular event for congregations. The winning art becomes featured on advocacy cards that are collected and delivered to members of Congress. Our art contest winner also visits DC to meet with the offices of their members of Congress.

Our theme for 2025 was planting seeds of hope!



Natalie, 11-Years-Old, 2025 Winter  
Bethlehem UCC, Evansville, IN



Natalie with Senator Todd Young (R-IN)



Charlotte, 12-Years-Old, 2024 Winner  
Glenside UCC, Glenside, PA



Mallory, 16-Years-Old, 2023 Winner  
Middleburgh Heights Community UCC,  
Middleburgh Heights, OH

# The Partnerships and Coalitions Behind Climate Hope Affiliates

Climate Hope Affiliates is a joint initiative of the United Church of Christ and Creation Justice Ministries, which represents 36 different denominations that come together in common cause to care for God's planet and God's people.

Our vision aligns with the Equitable & Just National Climate Platform that centers economic and racial justice. With core leadership from leaders in the environmental justice movement, 346 organizations have signed onto the platform.



Equitable and Just Climate Platform

## A Note on Funding

As part of its annual budget, the United Church of Christ provides funding for the salary of the Climate Hope Affiliate Director along with part of the travel funds for chapter launches. All additional expenses for staffing, travel, or program are covered by generous donations to Climate Hope Affiliates.

### A Prayer for Climate Hope Affiliates

Dear God, Meet us amid our doubt, cynicism, and apathy. Meet us amid our despair and despondency. Meet us even in the places where all seems hopeless. Remind us that deep in the soil, life can and will spring forth. Remind us that right now seeds are breaking open, stretching forth and reaching upward. May we give thanks for these sprouting seeds—seen and unseen. May we give thanks for their stubborn refusal to stay buried below the dirt and clay. With gratitude, we pray for each and every Climate Hope Affiliate, each and every member. We rejoice in their commitment to growing a movement that cannot be contained nor denied until justice is won. Amen.

For more information and resources, visit: [ucc.org/climatehope](http://ucc.org/climatehope)