

*Good morning from Florida, a place with lots of water. And wherever there is water, there are humans misusing and polluting it. Here's what Jim Antal, a climate justice leader with the UCC, has to say about caring for water and for all creation.*

For me, faith and hope are rooted in the conviction that, regardless of how bad things may be, a new story is waiting to take hold. God is calling us—as individuals and congregations—to work...to champion that new story.

That's what the Water Protectors of Standing Rock have done. Their courageous, unflinching discipline inspired thousands to join them and millions to imagine with them the new world that is waiting to be born. They prepared themselves through prayer and ritual to [speak truth to power]. They were fueled by hope for a revolution rooted in love.

We cannot accept God's invitation to help create a new story unless we are willing to take action. We become partners with God when we act in unfamiliar, untested ways. Those new

actions will be guided by a preferred future that embraces:

- resilience in place of growth
- collaboration in place of consumption
- wisdom in place of progress
- balance in place of addiction
- moderation in place of excess
- vision in place of convenience
- accountability in place of disregard
- self-giving love in place of self-centered fear

As broken-hearted as God must be over what we have done to the gift of creation, God still has a dream. God dreams that humans seek spiritual rather than material progress.

God's dream envisions a just world at peace because gratitude has dissolved anxiety and generosity has eclipsed greed.

God dreams of a time when love and mutual respect will bind humanity together, and the profound beauty of creation will be treasured.

Let us embrace God's dream as our own. Suddenly, the horizon

of our hope comes nearer. As we live into God's dream, we will rediscover who we truly are and all of creation will be singing.

*Would you please join me now in reciting together today's*

*Unison Prayer:*

*Creator God, we give you thanks for your creation and everything in it. Teach us to love and care for our communities and neighbors, near and far. Please help us to remember you and your gift of water now and always. May we recognize the holiness in all the earth's water and strive for its care and protection. In your Spirit we pray. Amen.*

*-- Randall Braaksma, a member of the Creation Justice Team at  
DUCC*