

Praise for Diana Ensign's *Faith, Hope, Action*

"Tackling the climate change crisis is a task so overwhelming that it stops most people from doing anything. Diana Ensign (who won WATER's Rosemary Ganley Essay Contest) breaks it down into doable chunks, offering something for everyone to try. *Faith, Hope, Action*, with its concrete examples, helps and challenges us. Whether building a house with recycled materials, probing one's faith tradition for inspiration, or eating healthily grown food, the options are endless: And the need is now!"

—**Mary E. Hunt, PhD, Co-Director, Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual (WATER)**

"Diana Ensign's *Faith, Hope, Action* connects the reader to current environmental challenges that may seem overwhelming at first, but she provides timely wisdom and guidance on ways everyone can take meaningful action to help our Earth."

—**Ellen Jacquart, Program Leader for Indiana Native Plant Society and former ecologist at The Nature Conservancy**

"In *Faith, Hope, Action*, Diana Ensign brings her passion for practical spirituality to the essential subject of Earth care. Her pragmatic insights remind us that we are the eyes, feet, and hands of God's presence. We open our minds to the Divine Mind, download Divine Ideas that are appropriate for each of us, and engage our passions to make this world a better place. We'll do amazing things together. Despair is not an option! We know what to do, and we do it."

—**Reverend Bob Uhlar, MS, Unity Minister, former Broadcast Journalist (WMAQ-AM; WBBM-AM Chicago), Kerrville, TX**

"*Faith, Hope, Action* is a poetic pilgrimage in which Diana Ensign follows the longing of heart, body, and spirit to live in reverent communion with living Earth. She bravely adds her voice to the growing global chorus of people who dare to speak out against our society's addicted, Earth-destroying systems. We must return home, she urges, by healing, learning, and daring to change.

As Diana invites us into her own life-changing journey, we find the courage to come home to Earth renewed.”

—**Liza Hyatt, Poet, Art Therapist, author of *Art of the Earth: Ancient Art for a Green Future*, and Founder of Earth Monk monastic community**

“In this captivating book, *Faith, Hope, Action*, Diana Ensign emphasizes the profound connection between nurturing our well-being and restoring harmony to our planet. By embracing a lifestyle that prioritizes our health, we not only heal our bodies but also contribute to the healing of our precious Earth. The act of consuming nourishing, wholesome food becomes a powerful tool, enabling us to care for ourselves, our loved ones, and our shared home on this magnificent planet.”

—**Carole Bishop, Co-Owner Pure Eating Way LLC, www.pureeatingway.com**

“With deep love for nature and our children, *Faith, Hope, Action* highlights the critical need for our communities to adopt renewable energy and advocate for green initiatives that make our world a better place.”

—**Leslie Webb, Co-Founder and President Carmel Green Initiative, <https://www.carmelgreen.org/>**

“*Faith, Hope, Action* is a welcome reflection on the need for urgency in caring for our planet and our fellow global inhabitants. Climate change and environmental destruction have pushed us to the brink of global resilience while we assume the planet will keep providing resources without constraints and without regard to the critical stabilizing role that nature provides. Diana Ensign’s urgent message is that we need to care for our earth and care for one another. Woven into this very personal narrative is a love of nature, a practice of deep listening, and a concern for future generations. Most importantly, this book imparts the message that change occurs in community and in conversation with each other.”

—**Gabriel Filippelli, PhD, Executive Director, Indiana University Environmental Resilience Institute, and author of *Climate Change and Life*.**

“Diana Ensign’s *Faith, Hope, Action* is packed full of environmental and climate issues that are being observed by everyday people, such as the decline of lightning bugs that were once abundant on summer nights. A change from industrial farming dependent on chemicals to regenerative farming practices improves the ecological system by producing healthier produce and a biodiverse habitat. Her book highlights the impact of human activities on our environment and the social injustice of industrial pollution on minority communities. Our elected officials need to address these concerns by encouraging the use of renewable energy and by cleaning up hazardous chemicals. The strength of *Faith, Hope, Action* is an offering of common-sense solutions that have been proven to work.”

—**Ron Rhoads, Climate Reality Leader, Heartland Chapter**

“Diana Ensign's thoughtful, in-depth, and insightful book, *Faith, Hope, Action*, illuminates a path for all to follow. Her passion to heal encourages everyone, each in their own unique way, to be part of the solution for the most challenging issues of our time. Diana's inspiring message brings to mind a quote from Cesar Chavez, ‘It starts with your heart and radiates out.’”

—**Charlie Wiles, Executive Director, Center for Interfaith Cooperation**

Faith, Hope, Action is beautifully written with so much wisdom. I love Diana Ensign’s words: all of them. A respectful and sweeping perspective that gives hope, vision, and practical ideas for folks who care about our beautiful planet: a balm for the anxiety and grief so many of us feel! A highly recommended read for both a present and future people on a planet whose life-support system is in trouble. So grateful that this book allows our energy to turn to useful, helpful actions.

—**Dr. Candace Corson, MD, CEO of Corson Wellness, LLC**

"From my Christian faith perspective, all humanity has the responsibility for ensuring we live respectfully of the abundance entrusted to us by our Creator for the good of all. Diana Ensign's book, *Faith, Hope, Action*, beautifully illustrates the intricacy of human relationships to their

ecosystems. She has shown how positive, Earth-conscious actions result in life-affirming change for the whole Earth."

—**Reverend Amber Good, Faith & Ecology Education Director Teter Retreat & Organic Farm, Noblesville First United Methodist Church**

“Diana Ensign invites us to join her on her journey to reconnect with nature and offers reflections on the importance of both personal and collaborative action in protecting our common home, Earth. She sketches the many environmental challenges we face, including the existential threat of climate change, and quickly pivots to solutions. Diana’s thoughtful and encouraging approach is well-suited to inspiring action for anyone who has ever felt overwhelmed by dire reports of climate change.”

—**Lani Ethridge, Citizens’ Climate Lobby, Evansville Chapter**

“Diana Ensign’s *Faith, Hope, Action* is a wonderful distillation of how climate justice is inextricably linked to all other forms of justice. The injustices our society perpetuates that most heavily impact poor, migrant, and BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) communities—among other marginalized beloveds—are often directly related to our lack of careful stewardship for our shared world. *Faith, Hope, Action* provides a life-giving perspective for the care of all we love, and I am grateful that we are finally saying so out loud!”

—**Reverend Misha Sanders, Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation, GA**

FAITH, HOPE, ACTION

Ushering In A New Earth Era, Together

Diana J. Ensign, J.D.

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Book cover design by Arcane Book Cover Designs. <https://www.arcanebookcovers.com/>
Author photo by Tom Casalini. <https://www.casaliniporraits.com/>

Quotes from the book, *Dirt to Soil*, were used with permission of the author Gabe Brown.

Published by SpiritHawk Life Publications
Indianapolis, Indiana USA

Library of Congress Control Number 2024902740

Ensign, Diana

Title: Faith, Hope, Action: ushering in a new earth era, together/ Diana J. Ensign

—1st edition

p. cm.

ISBN: 978-0-9883320-3-4 (paperback)

ISBN: 978-0-9883320-4-1(ebook)

Subjects: 1. Nature Writing – Nature conservation – Religious aspects – Christianity 2. Environmental protection – Religious aspects – Christianity 3. Environmentalism – sustainable living. 4. Climatology – climate change

“In order to change an existing paradigm,
you do not struggle to try and change the problematic model.

You create a new model and make the old one obsolete.”

—**R. Buckminster Fuller, inventor, environmental activist**

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FAITH, HOPE, ACTION

PREFACE

*“One should pay attention to even the smallest crawling creature for these too
may have a valuable lesson to teach us.”*

—**Black Elk, Oglala Lakota (Sioux) Medicine Man**

On a visit to the sprawling farmlands in Southern Indiana, I met with Dorothy, who is ninety-one years old. She was telling me that she saw more fireflies in her yard this past summer than she has seen since she was a girl. She said, “I haven’t seen that many fireflies in over sixty-five years! It was amazing!”

The landscape near Dorothy’s home—where she and her husband have lived for close to seventy years and where they raised their seven children—has undergone drastic (some would say radical) changes of late. An abutting 300-acre corn and soybean farm owned by her brother is now being managed by his son, Pat. Pat is a firm believer in regenerative farming. Just a few years ago, he began planting diverse native wildflowers as cover crops and stopped tilling the soil. Under Pat’s management, the family farm also significantly decreased its use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers. As Pat explained to me:

“The companies developing and selling deadly chemicals during World War II needed a new market for their products when the war ended. That’s how we came to have all these harmful poisons being used on our farmlands and on our crop seeds, which are also coated with

toxic pesticides. Farmers till the land—killing the earthworms and plant roots—and then add chemicals to eliminate insects and bacteria, and we end up with dead soil.”

He notes that studies have shown substantial nutritional decline (lower levels of vitamins and minerals) in our fruits and vegetables because of farm soil depletion. The result of Pat’s regenerative farming efforts is healthier soil that results in better nutrition in the food crops.

An added bonus: Pat has witnessed a return of wildlife! The soil now contains worms, and the diverse native cover crops bring needed insects like bees, butterflies, and other pollinators, along with a multitude of songbirds. Eagles and hawks soar over his land, and quail make their home in a woodpile at the edge of the property. This healthy soil with deep roots from native plants also absorbs rainfall better, acting as a sponge to help alleviate flooding. What is more, the water on his land no longer contains all the harsh chemical poisons that run off into neighboring streams and water supplies. Finally, these healthier land practices store carbon dioxide in the soil, a critical step in combatting global warming.

Just this one person doing his small bit of good on this piece of land has benefited the entire ecosystem, including the arrival of lightning bugs in Dorothy’s adjoining yard.

Anyone who has watched Ken Burns’s documentary, *The Dust Bowl*, understands that what we do to the land can either carry enormous gifts—nutritious food, abundant wildlife, and clean water—or cause escalating devastation. The choice is ours to make. A well-known quote from Indigenous teachings reminds us, “What we do to the Earth, we do to ourselves.”

I am sharing Pat’s story because we each have tremendous power to make a positive difference in our local and global communities. We know destructive practices are still taking place across the planet, causing increased flooding, fires, droughts, air pollution, unsafe drinking

water, diseases, warming temperatures, climate disruptions, and species extinction. We, likewise, know climate change is here and that we are responsible for our part in causing damage to our Earth home.

According to NASA and as cited by Anthony Leiserowitz, PhD, a research scientist at Yale, “97% of climate scientists have concluded that human-caused global warming is happening.” Leiserowitz sums it up as follows: “Scientists agree: It’s real. It’s happening. It’s bad. . . . But there is hope.”

Fortunately, there are *numerous* actions we can take to help heal our planet, actions that lead us forward in nourishing ways. It’s merely a matter of implementing Earth-friendly practices and adopting healthier behaviors in harmony with Mother Earth.

Although Pat’s regenerative farming practices are a wonderful illustration of one individual making beneficial changes in his local community, it’s going to take ALL OF US working together to solve our global environmental challenges. Consider, for example, the widely reported story of the children who got trapped inside a flooded cave in Thailand. No one person had the solution for how to get them out safely, and no one person rescued them. It was the cooperative teamwork of countless people from across the globe working in unison with lots of ideas and a shared goal: to help save children caught in a dire, life-threatening situation.

Saving our Earth home for all children requires the same dedication, teamwork, urgency, and creative problem-solving. It requires us to work together for the common welfare of everyone.

With each healthy seed we plant, literally and metaphorically, we will cultivate seeds of wellness. Our actions then nourish collective seeds of change, seeds of courage, seeds of

compassion, seeds of hope, and seeds of love. Ultimately, our combined daily choices will create our wholesome earthly gardens. But we no longer have the luxury of time to argue and fight. We must begin implementing as many solutions as possible. As the saying goes, "If you are not part of the solution, then you are part of the problem."

So let us begin, this day, working for future generations of children who will look back at our commitments, our values, and our actions and say:

"Thank you for showing us how to take care of our Earth home, and thank you for protecting the land, creatures, water, and air so that we have healthy food, healthy bodies, healthy minds, and joyful spirits."

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