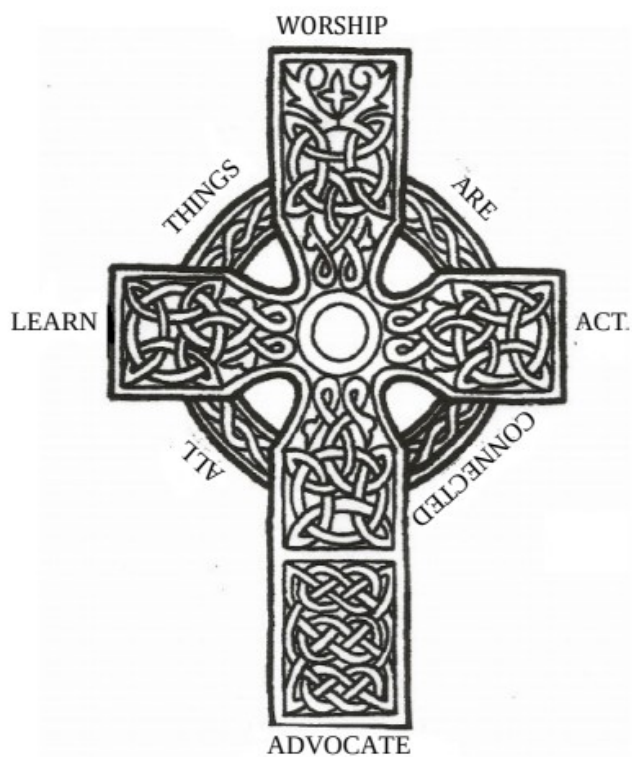


## Planting your Green Team



Growing Earth Stewards

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# **Prayer for a Green Team**

**We thank you, dear God,  
for the Creation of our earthly home  
in the vastness of your universe.**

**You graced us  
with all that is necessary for our existence.**

**Help us to learn about  
the interconnectedness  
of the web of life that sustains us.**

**Enlighten our hearts and minds  
as we begin to learn about Earth Stewardship.  
And guide us as we invite others to join us on this  
journey.**

**That we might all be as Christ to the world.**

**Amen.**



## Reasons For Having a Green Team

Care for creation is a vital part of who we are as Episcopalians. The national church has emphasized its importance by having creation care as one of its core ministries. Our own bishop and the Diocese of Kansas are dedicated to creation care. Our Episcopal services are filled with references to the care of creation in collects and prayers, and in Eucharistic Prayer C. Here we remember God's creation of "the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home."

Most everyone agrees with the importance of this ministry, but as everyday concerns often keep us so busy, we might feel the concept of caring for creation a bit vague and remote.

Having a parish Green Team can begin to sharpen the focus and deepen the connections between our spiritual roots and why we are called to become stewards of this earth. A Green Team can help the congregation see that earth is a "harbor, a garden, a holy place" (from Tom Chapin's CD, *"This Pretty Planet"*). The team can emphasize that all living things, including humankind, are bound together in many interconnected communities - so diverse and yet so dependent on the health of each other. Creating a vision and a mission for each person as a creation care Earth Steward is a primary goal of a Green Team.

Building such a vision and a mission of creation care needs at least three things to bring it to life:

belief in its importance,  
education about environmental issues, and  
practical step-by-step actions and advocacy.

This guide offers the Green Team members many choices as they build a unique program of creation care that fits their congregation. Making creation care inviting, engaging and consistent over time is up to the dedication of the Green Team.

The outside world is asking for communities of faith to stand up and to be partners in finding ways to face urgent and real threats to a healthy planet. How can we be part of striving for solutions to the consequences of our changing climate, if we do not do all we can to reduce our negative impacts on the environment? A Green Team can offer opportunities to gain understanding of the environmental issues based on accepted science as well as offering the world real hope through faith in God. We can also live up to our values as we advocate for the most vulnerable affected by environmental injustice.

Creation care is gaining in momentum in our Episcopal church, in our own diocese, and with many other people of faith. Communication is vital to keep ideas and information flowing and useful.

It is like circles within circles of influence that will change the world over time. A Green Team is an important part of this synergy by praying, learning, acting and advocating for a more just and healthier world.

May God bless our Green Team efforts.

## **Planting Your Green Team**

Every parish is a unique entity with its own character, resources, size, and parishioners who are willing to participate in creation care. Most churches can bring together four or five individuals who will form the Green Team. In this model, the team divides responsibilities of leadership, education, and plans, and provides opportunities for individual and group actions and advocacy. The Junior Warden can be on the team or be an important ally in carrying out projects and reporting actions to the vestry.

Smaller churches might be unable to gather four or five individuals to act as a Green Team, but that should not prevent a church from doing Creation Care work. In that case, the Green Team can consist of one or two people. The smaller congregation can participate in Green Team discussions and activities, and form a partnership with the Green Team leaders.

Whether a Green Team is large or small, the team can ask for volunteers to help with projects. Some members can take the lead in communication and teaching, while others can lead projects. Green Team ideas and projects can be shared with the parish's minster group.

## **Starting the Green Team**

First, identify a Green Team leader. Clergy or wardens might ask for a Green Team leader, or a parish member can volunteer. Make the congregation aware it needs a person called by God to this ministry.

Organize a parish meeting to introduce the idea of a Green Team. Food and fun are helpful.

If holding a meeting is not feasible, create an announcement for the parish newsletter.

The leader can:

- Begin the meeting with prayer and discussion of spiritual roots of creation care.

- Explain why your parish is being called to have a Green Team.

- Ask the participants or the congregation if they do anything to save money on electric, gas, water bills at home. Relate savings to the running of the church.

- Ask the participants or the congregation about their favorite places to visit in nature and how to conserve them.

- Facilitate a group discussion of personal relations with nature and how these stories point toward creation care efforts.

- Discuss possible individual actions/small projects—forming a dream list. They explain that the Green Team's goal is to help all become better Earth Stewards.

- Ask others to join the team. If no one steps forward, ask the group to pray about it, but end with something positive so they leave with a smile.

The new Green Team or partnership should meet as soon to define leadership roles and review the guide. Regular communication between the team, vestry, and congregation is important.

Next on the Green Team's agenda will be planning how to explain the spiritual roots of creation care, hold educational events, encourage individual action and advocacy steps.

Some small projects done at the same time can build interest and are more noticeable. Examples might be office and kitchen recycling, easing out plastic or Styrofoam cups for coffee hour and offering to wash the dishes if ceramic plates and cups are used.

Other actions include asking the minister to preach on creation care, introduce the Episcopal Creation Care Pledge and guided lessons on how to use the "Sustain Our Island Home Carbon Tracker".

With a small congregation, the pace might be slower, but never underestimate the power of a smaller congregation for getting a lot of great things going. The Green Team will need to rely on effective communication and delegation to get things done and have fun on field trips, too.

Provide ways to pass on the leadership tasks. Leaders and team members may come and go, but the creation care work needs to go on. After all, you are helping the entire congregation to become good Earth Stewards. You're set to go!

## **Identifying Potential Green Team Members**

How do you find the people to be involved in your parish Green Team? Some people will already have an interest in environmental issues or have a spirituality that aligns with a ministry of creation care. But there are other types of people who are likely to find this work interesting and fulfilling that you can recruit to be a part. With some education about how their own interests are a part of a ministry of creation care and environmental stewardship, they can become active and effective Earth Stewards.

Some examples:

- Those who like the outdoors, camping, or hiking
- Those who are concerned with justice and caring for those who are under-represented
- Those who love animals or are concerned about the conservation of species and habitat
- Farmers, ranchers, and gardeners
- People who are concerned about the safety of our food and the availability of organic foods

## **Green Team Participation**

Try not to have too many projects in progress at one time and find a way to teach concepts like the difference between climate and weather and why too much carbon is causing the earth's temperature to rise.

Engage the youth and ask what they are learning at school. Foster a “we are learning together attitude”. Expect lots of questions—but keep focused on reliable scientific information.

Be extra kind to those who have disagreement with the cause of climate change. Return to talking about conservation ethics, disaster recovery costs, and the human costs of pollution.

Remember the role of group spirit in getting folks to participate. Look around at the talent in your parish—an artist can design t-shirts or posters, a teacher might write articles for your church newsletter or lead a book club, a farmer might provide a place for a bonfire and a sing along, a grandma might help beginning gardeners or the beekeeper a lesson on pollination.

Have fun! Keep going!



## Green Team Goals

- To prayerfully seek God's guidance in all our Creation Care work
- To help provide resources and leadership for Creation Care worship
- To nurture, inspire and teach (ourselves and our congregation) about our spiritual roots in caring for creation
- To inform (ourselves and our congregation) about the environmental crisis & environmentally related justice issues
- To provide opportunities for action as Earth Stewards (individual or as a group)
- To encourage all to be advocates for a healthy, clean and more just environment
- To reduce the carbon footprint of our parish
- Work with our vestry and leadership to ensure our church policies, procedures and purchases reflect our creation care goals

These are general goals. In order to meet these goals, define action steps for each goal. These action steps should be time sensitive, workable, and measurable.

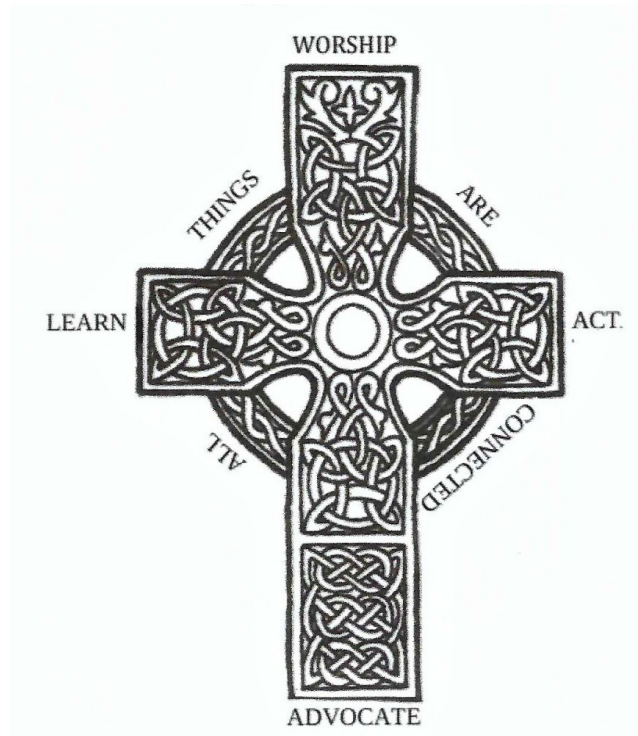
The goals are open ended, so that you can design your work to fit your parish. The objective is to become informed and active Earth Stewards.

## Working With Your Minster

Minsters are small groups of churches designed for mutual support and sharing of resources so that they can reach out to their neighborhoods and communities. Working with your minister and other churches within your minister can be a way to do creation care work, allowing you to increase the impact with a combined effort. Here are some suggestions for working with your minster:

1. Identify the minster shepherd and ask for contact information of church Green Team leaders. Get in touch with these leaders and plan a get-together or a Zoom meeting. Resolve to meet on a regular basis.
2. Support and encourage other minsters' Green Team efforts and share resources and ideas.
3. Plan joint congregational services around creation care. Join forces in holding retreats for youth and/or adults.
4. Look into the possibilities of saving money on big ticket repairs or upkeep, like air-conditioners, furnaces, etc., by economies of scale. A contractor might reduce prices if gathering similar projects from different churches. Alternatively, a pool of willing volunteers to do some of the work might be shared.
5. With maturing relationships, bigger community actions and advocacy might be planned to carry out together, for example: community recycling where none exists or a fundraiser for assisting in a local disaster recovery effort.

## Our Model for Service – the Celtic Cross



Our Cross explains our Creation care journey. It reveals the steps we will take as Earth Stewards.

First, we come before God in a variety of ways of **worship**, that our spirit may join with His Spirit as we reach out to the world He created and offer the care it so needs.

But to be effective, we, at the same time, need to **learn** what works so our actions bear the fruit of blessing God hopes for.

Then, guided by that Spirit, we **act** in ways to restore and redeem the health of the world around us.

And we also need to **advocate**, to witness to the larger community, that we all are part of this journey of saving the Creation for the future blessing of generations.

**For all things are connected in God...**

# Worship



For you shall go out in joy,  
and be led back in peace;  
the mountains and the hills before you  
shall burst into song,  
and the trees of the field shall clap their  
hands.

Isaiah 55:12

# Spiritual Roots of Creation Care

When our ancient Hebrew faith ancestors tried to understand how our God had brought the world into being, they were certainly divinely inspired. The pattern of creation they recorded for us closely parallels the path of the world's evolution discovered eons later by scientists. And these ancestors, rooted in a nomadic culture, could see the world for what it was, for they lived intimately, deeply within it. No concrete, skyscrapers, car fumes, or video screens to get in the way of their view!

They knew that they were blessed by a Creator who cared for all that He had made, and... He said it was *good*!

But they also knew they had a special place in that world, for He made them to carry some of the same stuff of Himself...for he made them in His image! And if this world was to live well, as it offered humans to do, so they would have to be part of the answer. So we were called to be able to love as He loves, to care as He cares, and be stewards of the earth, like He has been since time began!

The most important task of a Green Team is to help the congregation connect spiritual beliefs to the concept of creation care. The stronger and deeper the roots of this spiritual work, the more each parishioner will view creation care involvement as a natural outcome of their spiritual life and not just isolated actions. A Green Team should try to do all it can to impress upon each person the uniqueness of the earth in the great expanse of space and how interconnected the systems are that sustain life. This wondrous gift from God comes with responsibilities to steward creation, protecting it for ourselves and our future generations.

Every aspect of the work of the Green Team should have spiritual connection as a foundational element. The best place to start is to discuss your goals with your priest, deacons, and music director. Begin with Inserting some creation care themes in the prayers of the people and occasionally using green liturgies. Coordinating music and hymns to complement these themes will strengthen the impact of the message. A creation care sermon will often reach people where other methods fall short. Besides church services and Sunday school lessons for all ages, the Green Team can organize storytelling sessions, retreats and out-door services that reconnect people with nature.

In this section of the guide, your Green Team will find many resources that will help you as you mentor your Earth Stewards. These resources will be listed by topic to assist you in looking for what may be needed. Feel free to find other resources as you develop as a Green Team. Please remember that adding a spiritual element to everything you do from learning about environmental issues, to promoting action to advocacy helps all of us to remain grounded in the hope that only comes from our belief in God.

# Ways to Start Your Creation Care Journey

The following resources will help your Green Team get started on this spiritual topic.

## **A Catechism of Creation: An Episcopal Understanding**

The Catechism of Creation was written in a traditional question-and-answer format. Part I outlines the doctrine of creation. Part II presents the basic information about scientific discoveries and the history of the universe and life. Part III presents the biblical basis for the church's commitment to an ethic of creation care and suggests ways in which individuals and organizations might live out this ministry.

[www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/03/CC-CreationCatechism.pdf](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/03/CC-CreationCatechism.pdf)

## **The Cosmic Walk**

The idea of a cosmic walk (from the very beginning of the creation to the emergence of humankind) was developed by Sister Miriam Mac Gilles. She is part of the Genesis Farm in New Jersey. Her walk is in the woods and consists of several stations, denoting marks in time. The idea is now worldwide and takes many forms. It fits nicely with the poem, "Contemporary Genesis", which can be found in the Additional Resources section. The information from this site or the poem can be used to make your own Cosmic Walk.

Videos of cosmic walk examples can be found on-line; search for "cosmic walk". The examples demonstrate this physical way of understanding the vastness of time in the history of the universe.

[worshipwords.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/PDF-The-Cosmic-Walk-complete-script-1.pdf](http://worshipwords.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/PDF-The-Cosmic-Walk-complete-script-1.pdf)

A Green Team might choose to have a multiple session study of the creation story using the catechism, the Genesis poem, and your own cosmic walk. It might look like the following, but the number of sessions per topic should be flexible:

- Read and discuss the Bible's creation story. This is a good time to introduce the Green Bible that has references to creation in green ink. It also has essays written by many notables, including Bishop Tutu.
- Read and discuss the Catechism of Creation. The understandings gleaned here will help you as you begin talking about climate science in future classes.
- Read and discuss the poem "Contemporary Genesis", relating it to the Bible and the catechism.
- Do a cosmic walk of your design. Make sure there are parts where prayers

might be said along the walk. End with covering a summary of Part 111 of the Catechism of Creation, which explains why the church supports creation care.

## The Way of God's Creation



### **The Way of God's Creation**

A journey of penance, hope,  
and commitment

Episcopal Diocese of Kansas

*The Way of God's Creation* is a devotion that takes participants on a journey from birth, through various stages of growth, and understanding of creation, to the realization that their well-being and that of the creation are intertwined. This connection compels all to care for the Creation as we care for ourselves and others. It is "a journey of understanding, penance, hope and commitment" as we develop into considerate human beings. The devotion consists of 14 stations and is meant to be held in an outdoor setting, if possible. While it may be walked as a private devotion, there is a leader's guide to accompany it that will help for group devotion. It requires some preparation of signs for the stations. *The Way of God's Creation* booklet and leader's guide can be downloaded from the Diocese of Kansas Care of Creation website, in the Spiritual Practices section. [episcopal-ks.org/care-of-creation](http://episcopal-ks.org/care-of-creation)

## The Episcopal Care of Creation Pledge

"As The Episcopal branch of The Jesus Movement we long to grow Loving, Liberating, Life-Giving relations with the whole of God's creation. Together, we pledge to protect and renew the Earth as well as all who call it home. Together, we are living The Way of Love and make our commitment to Creation Care actions."

Please go to [www.episcopalchurch.org/ministry/creation-care/vision/](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministry/creation-care/vision/) to discover the meaning of the pledge in depth.

## Bibles, Bible Quotes, Green Liturgies & More

The Green Team will continue to find a variety of helpful resources under this topic. Also, the Green Team should be a role model for others in nurturing their own spiritual roots. The resources listed are enough to get the Green Team well on its path to growing Earth Stewards. Remember that new resources are always waiting for discovery.

## The Green Bible

***The Green Bible***, published in 2008, is a study Bible which focuses on environmental issues and teachings. Included are essays and comments from well-known environmental leaders.

## The Creation Care Bible Challenge: A 50 Day Challenge

***The Creation Care Bible Challenge: A 50 Day Challenge*** was published April 22, 2022 (Earth Day) by The Forward Movement Organization. It was edited by Marek P. Zabriskie. It includes essays and commentaries from well-known writers like Professor Katherine Hayhoe, Rev. Fletcher Harper, and Bishop Mark Andrus.

## Liturgies and Creation Care Prayers

Some of the most popular green liturgies and prayers are for the Season of Creation which begins September 1<sup>st</sup> and goes through October 4<sup>th</sup>. It often ends with the blessing of the animals and a tribute to St. Francis.

Information can be found at:

[www.episcopalchurch.org/season-of-creation-and-st-francis-day-resources/](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/season-of-creation-and-st-francis-day-resources/) .

## Rogation Days

Rogation days are traditionally celebrated for three days prior to Ascension Day. They are intended to celebrate agriculture and rural life, but the Book of Common Prayer has expanded their purpose to include commerce, industry, and the stewardship of creation. They can be used in parishes as another way to remember in worship the blessing and responsibility of God's creation. Go to [episcopal-ks.org/care-of-creation-liturgical-resources/](http://episcopal-ks.org/care-of-creation-liturgical-resources/) to find liturgies and prayers to be used for Earth Day Rogation Days. You may click on The Book of Occasional Services to find information on a Rogation Day procession.

The Diocese of Kansas Creation Care website contains links to liturgy and prayer resources. [episcopal-ks.org/care-of-creation](http://episcopal-ks.org/care-of-creation)

## Other Faith Expressions

Sometimes it is interesting to see what others in the Anglican Communion are saying and doing in their approach to Creation Care prayers and liturgies. Please remember to get the blessing of our bishop before using these in an official manner.

[churchofengland.org/media/17766](http://churchofengland.org/media/17766)



A 35 page document containing Creation Care prayers, intercessions and more. Especially moving is a reading of the Lord's Prayer with two voices.

[www.toronto.anglican.ca/diocesan-life/social-justice-advocacy/creation-care](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/diocesan-life/social-justice-advocacy/creation-care)

Earth Day prayers, a climate fast, conversations about climate, and resources for children.

The *New Zealand Book of Common Prayer* is a good resource for prayers that have a creation care or nature theme. One example is this alternative version of the Lord's Prayer:

Eternal Spirit, earth-maker, pain-bearer, life-giver,  
Source of all that is and that shall be.  
Father and Mother of us all,  
Loving God, in whom is heaven:  
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe.  
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world.  
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings.  
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.  
With the bread we need for today, feed us.  
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.  
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.  
From trial too great to endure, spare us.  
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.  
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever.  
Amen.

## **Other Faith Groups' Views on Creation Care**

We are learning how to be more culturally tolerant of people's backgrounds, beliefs and traditions. Often the best approach is to ask them to lead you in learning about them. Please keep this in mind as we learn together to understand and respect each other as God's children. Included are some websites on other faith traditions Creation Care statements and a website with resources for our youngest Earth Stewards on the Golden Rule. All are to help bring communities together in their care for God's world.

***Mother Earth Spirituality: Native American Paths to Healing Others in Our World*** by Ed Mc Gaa (Eagle Man) takes the reader on a journey of spiritual healing to help people better understand the perspective of others related to creation care.

***Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and Teachings of Plants*** was written by Robin Wall Kimmerer. She is a citizen of the Potawatomi Nation and a professional botanist. It is full of good information about how nature's plants connect with us and heal us on many levels.



For statements on different faith groups views of Creation Care please go to [www.interfaithpower.org/up-content/uploads.2022/03/faith-traditions-statements-on-creation-care/](http://www.interfaithpower.org/up-content/uploads.2022/03/faith-traditions-statements-on-creation-care/) and [pantheism.net/native-americans/](http://pantheism.net/native-americans/)

Check out the website of the Yale Forum on Religion site for another source on world religions and statements on creation care. Please go to [fore.yale.edu/world-religions](http://fore.yale.edu/world-religions)

## **Poetry, Literary Reflections, and Sermons**

Poetry often finds a way to be absorbed and digested more completely than a lecture. A cinquain is a simple type of poetry that can be by youth leaders or with adults to make poetry fun. It starts with a word, the subject of the poem, then has 2 words that describe the word, 3 words that say what the subject is, 4 words that describe the subject in actions and a final word sums up the topic. For example: sun/ bright, fierce/ far away star/ gives us light daily, hot. The children can show off a thoughtful poem and adults can have a laugh before a serious topic or put into more concise words their feelings about a topic, for instance plastics.

An old, but delightful little book written in 1928 by John Oxenham is titled, ***The Te Deums and the Sacraments***. Especially meaningful is the poem God's Sunshine: "And so behind life's darkest cloud's, God's love is always shining."

***Earth Prayers From Around the World: 365 Prayers, Poems and Invocations for Honoring the Earth*** is edited by Elizabeth Roberts and Elias Amidon and published in 1991. This book can be a valuable resource for the Green Team.

A document was written in 1992 at the Earth Summit called The Declaration of Interdependence. Please go to [davidsuzuki.org/about/declaration-of-interdependence](http://davidsuzuki.org/about/declaration-of-interdependence) The poetic words of the Declaration of Interdependence were woven into The Earth Charter [earthcharter.org/read-the-earth-charter/](http://earthcharter.org/read-the-earth-charter/) .

A recent sermon (2022) by the environmental leader and Episcopal priest, Margaret Bullitt-Jonas for Earth Sunday Can be found at [revivingcreation.org/earth-sunday-and-resurrection-hope/](http://revivingcreation.org/earth-sunday-and-resurrection-hope/) . You can sign up for her blog at [revivingcreation.org](http://revivingcreation.org)

**This guide's Additional Resources lists other spiritually focused resources that will add to your Creation care worship and prayer life**

# Learn



# Learn



Let the wise also hear and gain in learning,  
and the discerning acquire skill...

Isaiah 1:5

## Learning about Environmental Issues

Learning about environmental issues is an ongoing process, the more you know, the more you discover there is to know. However, it is also true that informed people usually make better decisions. If these decisions are made with both a religious framework and knowledge of current issues, they will have a greater effect on the Earth Steward's carbon footprint and will likely influence others around them to follow their lead.

These observations should encourage any Green Team to begin an education program that is full of useful information and engaging for the participants. Such an education emphasis means that the Green Team's efforts will carry on through the years developing Earth Stewards that learn, act, and advocate because they are nurtured by their spiritual roots to care for God's beautiful creation.

One way or another, the team will need to bring up and discuss what climate change is and why it is occurring. Beginning with a local problem like Kansas weather and climate might help people become interested before you bring information to them about how climate change affects Kansas farms. Bringing in a trusted scientific speaker would be a great help. Sometimes, however, the Green Team must do the explanation.

If a discussion becomes heated, turn the discussion toward real examples and possible mitigation strategies if they keep happening. Refrain, as much as possible, from political discussions.

## Why Climate Change Reports Are Important to Any Green Team

The Climate Power Education Fund website [www.climatepowered.us/climate-impact-report](http://www.climatepowered.us/climate-impact-report) has Climate Impact Reports that are updated regularly with current climate facts.

This scientific information provided to the nations of the world in climate change reports is supporting policies to keep our planet healthy and sustainable. It is up to the Green Team to encourage their Earth Stewards that in their individual and combined efforts, they have power to help our country meet our climate care goals. Think of the multiplying effect of all Earth Stewards engaging together to lower their carbon footprints, throughout Kansas, the Episcopal church, in the US, and beyond. Everyone has a role to play in this ongoing effort to steward our beautiful planet, our only home.

**This guide's *Additional Resources* includes a number of basic learning resources to help the Green Team inform its congregation of the observable realities facing God's world today.**

## Discussing Environmental Issues

Green Team leaders are not expected to be experts in environmental science, nor do the participants in learning need to commit to a college course in order to work their way toward being good Earth Stewards. It will, however, take a bit of homework on the part of the leaders in the Green Team to bring the information to their audience.

An example step-by-step approach:

1. When exploring any environmental issue, be sure and check out several trusted websites or other sources to get a balanced view of the topic. Use well known sites. Be suspicious of wildly different “facts”.
2. Read through the different websites and other sources with an eye for words or terms that might need to be explained or clarified. For example, folks may really, if they thought about it, know the difference between weather and climate. However, they may question how a cold snap lasting for a long time could happen if global warming exists? Warming of the planet makes the climate less predictable and more extreme, thus very cold weather can happen even as the globe warms. It only takes a few degrees of warming to greatly affect the day-to-day weather.
3. List important facts about the subject you wish to share with your audience.
4. Present your information in a clear and basic manner, making time for questions and discussions. Set some informal ground rules, like no politics and mutual respect. Expect a few folks to take exception to your material. Make an attempt to allow them to give their opinions. If they begin to bring politics into the discussion or become strident, explain that we respect differing opinions, but we will leave politics to individual choices. Redirect the conversation to events that have happened - a storm, a forest fire, or some other factual event. After the meeting, speak to them about presenting their opinion with facts and substantial information at a future meeting.
5. Try to relate the information to your local area and discuss some possible actions by individuals and others.
6. Give a brief summary of the topic toward the end of the meeting. End on a positive note.
7. Check back later to see if the information was retained and if actions were taken.
8. Do a short re-teach and praise any actions taken. This re-check might be in a quiet conversation and not necessarily in another session.

Steps 3-8 in this model have to do with delivering the message and following up with an action. It is a good idea to include actions with any learning sessions.

One of the best actions is to sign up and use the carbon tracker at [www.sustainislandhome.org](http://www.sustainislandhome.org). It has many examples of small steps that an individual or family can do to reduce their carbon footprint. The small steps taken will add up over time.

*Climate change* is the long-term alteration of a typical climatic pattern causing unpredictable weather to occur. It is caused by a warming earth which in turn is caused by the large amount of greenhouse gases going into the atmosphere from the burning of fossil fuels. Our climate has changed over the centuries, but the amount of greenhouse gas emissions has greatly increased, which is the main cause of an ever-warming earth. This results in more severe storms, droughts, floods, and wildfire. Consequences are very costly to human health, as well as human infrastructure (water systems, roads, buildings and social infrastructure) and the reason for the dire warning noted in the IPCC Report.

## Let's Not Forget the Kids

Here are some hints for working with our youngest Earth Stewards to ensure that they have a good beginning on their creation care journey. One function of the Green Team is to assist the Sunday school teachers and youth directors in any way they can. The Green Team can offer suggestions, research ideas, offer physical help (especially for outings and trips), help with vacation Bible school and be another adult in the room when needed. Please, be respectful and remember that, though important, creation care is just one of the topics to be covered by the teachers. Here is a list of helpful websites that will give the Green Team some information that they may pass on to teachers or use to interact with the children when appropriate.

Many teachers use the information provided by the Episcopal Relief and Development organization called, Abundant Life Garden. After finishing this program and an outdoor experience day, the children may be recognized by the congregation through a special Rite of Passage Liturgy. A link to this Rite of Passage can be found on the Care of Creation Task Force page: [episcopal-ks.org/care-of-creation](http://episcopal-ks.org/care-of-creation).

Check out the following sites for teaching about climate change. Go to [www.nrdc.org/stories/your-guide-talking-kids-all-ages-about-climate-change](http://www.nrdc.org/stories/your-guide-talking-kids-all-ages-about-climate-change) and [climatekids.nasa.gov/menu/teach](http://climatekids.nasa.gov/menu/teach). These websites may even help you explain concepts to adults. Another good information source is a list of threatened and endangered species. Go to [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org)

It is always worthwhile to teach kids about “Leave No Trace” outdoor ethics and behavior, especially in preparation for a hike or outing. Go to [Int.org/our-work/youth-education/](http://Int.org/our-work/youth-education/) .

The older youth might be interested in some of the lessons found at this Episcopal website on environmental justice issues.

Make use of your public library for books that might be of interest to children. Does your church have a library? If so, the Green Team might consider purchasing creation care books for young readers.

Have fun spending time with these young Earth Stewards. Help them to experience the wonder and awe of God’s beautiful earth.

References:

Abundant Life Garden: [www.episcopalrelief.org/wp-content/uploads/church-in-action/](http://www.episcopalrelief.org/wp-content/uploads/church-in-action/)

Environmental justice: [lessonplans.episcopalchurch.org/climate-justice-curriculum-for-youth-and-young-adults/](http://lessonplans.episcopalchurch.org/climate-justice-curriculum-for-youth-and-young-adults/)

**This guide’s’ Additional Resources contains  
more learning opportunities and ideas**



# Act

Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:17

## PROTECTING OUR PLANET STARTS WITH YOU



<h3>BIKE MORE DRIVE LESS</h3>  <h3>EDUCATE</h3>  <p>When you further your own education, you can help others understand the importance and value of our natural resources.</p> <h3>Volunteer!</h3>  <p>Volunteer for cleanups in your community. You can get involved in protecting your watershed too!</p>	<h3>reduce REUSE recycle</h3>  <p>Cut down on what you throw away. Follow the three "R's" to conserve natural resources and landfill space.</p> <h3>choose sustainable</h3>  <h3>seafood</h3> <p>Learn how to make smart seafood choices at <a href="http://www.FishWatch.gov">www.FishWatch.gov</a>.</p>	<h3>PLANT A TREE</h3>  <p>Trees provide food and oxygen. They help save energy, clean the air, and help combat climate change.</p> <h3>Don't send chemicals into our waterways</h3>  <p>Choose nontoxic chemicals in the home and office.</p>
<h3>CONSERVE WATER</h3>  <p>The less water you use, the less runoff and wastewater that eventually end up in the ocean.</p> <h3>-SHOP- WISELY</h3>  <p>Buy less plastic and bring a reusable shopping bag.</p>	<h3>Long-lasting light bulbs - ARE A - BRIGHT IDEA</h3>  <p>Energy efficient light bulbs reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Also flip the light switch off when you leave the room!</p>	

[oceanservice.noaa.gov](http://oceanservice.noaa.gov)

# Act

## **Actions We Can Do as Individuals or a Group**

On this journey of “Growing Earth Stewards”, we have begun the work of inclining their hearts and minds toward the religious roots of creation care and have given them some basic knowledge of environmental issues. Now it is time to help them put into practice some specific actions that will eventually add up to the kind of world that works for all and can be sustained for ourselves and our posterity.

These actions start with taking the Creation Care Pledge of the Episcopal Church, if they have not already taken this pledge. The pledge may be found at [www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/creation-care/pledge/](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/creation-care/pledge/).

The pledge says, “In Jesus, God so loved the whole world, so we love the world God loves. Concerned about the global climate emergency, drawing from a range of approaches for our diverse contexts, we commit to form and restore loving, liberating, life-giving relationships with all of creation.” To gain a further understanding of what the terms loving, liberating and life-giving mean in different settings, click on the link “Explore the Covenant”.

Within that context, there are personal things that can be done around our homes, yards, and in ways we choose to carry out our lives. We can take better care of our vehicles and choose to carpool or walk more often. We have choices to make on purchasing, toting, storing, cooking and disposing of food that will be good for the planet. Actions can also be for a more sustainable workplace, a greener church, and a greener community. It calls for a deep examination of what it really means to reduce, repurpose, repair and recycle in our world. It is not easy with many pressures on us to consume more and toss faster, and our need to keep up with technology and with our neighbor. In our fast-paced world, many children grow up unable to repair most things, thus, more things end up in landfills. Most communities now have recycling services or recycling centers which have helped keep our cities clean. However, we now know that some items we thought were recycled are instead ending up in poorer countries where they have little means of dealing with these mountains of our trash. We must do at least three things to solve this problem: reduce our consumption, ask manufacturers to take responsibility for the end use of their product and help those poorer countries find safer and less polluting ways of dealing with our recycling items.

As with the section on learning about the environmental issues that beset us, there is always one more layer of action we can take to lower our carbon footprints. Therefore, it is important that all our Earth Stewards sign up and use the carbon tracker at [www.sustainislandhome.org](http://www.sustainislandhome.org). At this site, Earth Stewards will see firsthand how every action they list will reveal savings on their footprint profile.



The Green Team may need to show others how to use this carbon tracker system. This could be in a Sunday school forum or at a “help station” in a corner of the parish hall. Before signing onto the carbon tracker, ask folks to jot down their usual utility expenses. The site does not require personal information and is safe. After Earth Stewards have been working with the carbon tracker for a several months, lead a discussion about money saved (everyone loves to save money) and energy saved. Some more advanced Earth Stewards may stay engaged if the Green Team asks them to share experiences. Be sure to discuss the multiplying effect there will be when everyone becomes engaged in creation care actions in the parish, in the diocese and beyond.

The next section will deal with some specific suggestions and websites to help the Green Team educate Earth Stewards where to begin with simple individual actions.

## **Growing Earth Stewards, One Positive Act at a Time**

Now that many of your Earth Stewards have pledged to take creation care seriously and have signed up for the carbon tracker, it is time to get more intentional about actions that individuals can take. Remember that you can pick an environmental issue to learn about and then add actions, or just begin with home related actions. It is often easier to begin with home, yard and food related actions because the results are easier to track. The Green Team can use many ways of encouraging actions. The team may ask a construction worker to demonstrate ways to insulate your home. Bulletin board pictures, DVD's, panel discussions, gardening advice for saving water, Sunday school talks and church newsletter articles are a few ways of reaching your Earth Stewards.

## **Actions We Can Do to Help Protect the Earth**

There are many actions, ranging from simple to those that require more investment, that we can do to help protect our environment. Many of the actions will also help us save energy and use our resources wisely, which will often save us money.

### **The home**

#### **Insulation**

If your home needs more insulation, adding insulation can reduce your energy bills. Before you add insulation, identify if and where more is needed, the type of insulation to add, and if you can do it yourself. Any air sealing should be done before adding insulation. Incorrect installation can lead to additional problems, so if you are not sure how to proceed, professionals can help.

### **Caulking and sealing**

Check around windows each fall and spring to see if caulking or sealing is needed. Also check each door for weather stripping, and check to see if there are gaps when an outside door is closed. If door gaps need to be fixed right away, block with sand-filled draft blockers. If the house is an older home, an energy audit will show homeowners where the house might be leaking. Making upgrades will save on energy costs in the long run, paying for the cost of an audit.

### **Windows & window coverings**

Blinds, shades and curtains, can all help conserve energy. Open window coverings during the day to allow sunshine in to help heat a room, and close window coverings in the evening. If new windows are needed, check if they have an energy star rating. Inspect screens to make sure they fit well and are intact and that storm windows are used. In an extreme cold weather event, a blanket can be placed over drapes to add another layer of warmth.

### **Roof**

Make sure that the gutters are cleaned and that they function well for each season. Water can get under shingles and cause problems. If a new roof is needed, think of the lightest color to reflect heat. Check for proper flashing between roof and chimney. If you have a fireplace, make sure the chimney sweep makes a yearly visit. Lots of cool air can escape up the chimney if the flue on the fireplace is left open in the summer. If it does not close tightly, consider some type of a plug. Remember to remove the plug or open the flue when using the fireplace. You will get smoke in the room if it's still closed and you light a fire.

### **Water leaks & water use**

Check all sinks, toilets and appliances for leaks. Teach the family to turn off faucets completely. Just a tiny drip in a faucet can lead to more than 1,000 gallons of water wasted, and a toilet that runs will run up the water bill in a hurry. Do not run the faucet to get water cold or when brushing teeth, shaving or washing hands. Say no to single-use plastic water bottles and keep water in the refrigerator instead of running until it is cold at the faucet. A low flow shower head will save water and a five-minute shower is quite a water saver. You can also put a bucket in the shower and use the collected water for watering plants.

### **Lighting**

LED bulbs are the most efficient bulb, replacing the CFL (compact fluorescent) type. They last for up to 100,000 hours, are easier to dispose of because they don't contain mercury, and can be used for outdoor fixtures. LED bulbs come in various color temperatures, which are measured as **kelvins**. 2000 kelvins (warmer light) is about right for a living area, and 4100 kelvins can be used in areas where a "daylight" feel is preferred. Light bulb brightness is measured in **lumens**, not watts. (A watt is a unit of

electrical power; you are billed for kilowatt-hours). LED light bulbs can also be used in solar-powered outdoor lights, which work well for walkways and garden areas. These are inexpensive and use no power from the grid! “Dark sky” outdoor lighting requires fewer lumens and helps reduce light pollution. Although LED bulbs last for a long time, it is still a good idea to do as your mom said, “turn out the lights” when you leave a room.

### **Saving energy = Saving money**

One of the best investments a homeowner can make is purchasing a programmable thermostat. As the name implies, you can set the times to turn the heat or air-conditioner up, down or off. It makes good energy and good money sense to not cool or heat a house when nobody is home. These thermostats can be very simple or complex.

Make a habit of dressing for the weather because just a 2-degree change in temperature in a home will impact energy bills and be better for the environment because the consumption of energy will be lower. If the family is fussy, adjust the temperature higher or lower one degree at a time to help them become acclimated. Help them enjoy the changes in their wardrobe. Sleeping cool at night under a down comforter is good for your health.

### **Heating and cooling**

When needing a new furnace or air-conditioner, homeowners should look at the Energy Star website. Obtain enough information about a unit before purchasing one. Watch for new innovations in air conditioners that might make purchasing a new one good energy sense. Renters can ask landlords to make a wise purchase. Look for places in the home to add fans, which can help the air conditioner make the room comfortable without changing the temperature setting, resulting in lower energy bills and a lower carbon footprint. Remember to change the direction of ceiling fan blades so warmer air will flow down from the ceiling in winter. Change furnace filters regularly and have both air-conditioners and furnaces serviced regularly.

### **Electricity**

Encourage all to wash dishes and clothes with full loads. This will save both on water use and energy use and save the homeowner money. Little things add up--encourage families to break the habits of grazing for food while the refrigerator door is open, leaving the door open or the window open while running the air-conditioner or leaving all the lights on when out of the room. Use a power strip to turn off electric “vampires” when not in use. Turn the water heater temperature down a few degrees. Wash most clothes in cold water and invest in a nice down comforter for the bedroom. If considering solar, be sure to find expert help before buying or signing a contract--there are different options and different types of systems. Many companies will now “rent to own” or some other payment plan. Be sure to understand current laws and regulations

about connecting to the grid (if that is what the unit will do). Also make considerations for plugging in an electric or hybrid vehicle in the future.

### **Appliances**

Encourage Earth Stewards to review appliance energy efficiency information, which can be found on the Energy Star website before purchasing new appliances. Energy Star ratings should contain the yearly cost and energy usage. Learn how to do some simple repairs so you can keep the machine going a bit longer. Most appliance companies will recycle the unit for a price. Consider purchasing a tankless water heater installed closer to the bathroom. This may cost less energy to run but be more costly up front. For more information go to a home store and compare with regular hot water heaters.

### **Safety**

If a generator is used for electric outages, it should be operated safely. Never use one inside the house. Develop a plan for extreme weather events, summer wind and rain and winter snow and ice. This will be increasingly important as we experience more extreme events. Many people can be caught off guard with sub-zero days and the resulting high cost of heating their homes. For electrical appliances, water heaters, and electric vehicles, verify that your electrical system can handle the electrical load.

### **The yard**

Just like the earth care actions for the home, there are many things you can do to care for the yard. In our country, we love a big yard of grass that takes a lot of water and chemicals to grow. You can still have grass and a lower ecological footprint with a few changes. Consider a smaller area for grass and more areas for plantings. Choose the type of grass that grows well using less water and do not cut it close to the ground. Conserve water by choosing to water in early morning or evening and using drip watering for flower beds and garden. Attract birds to the yard with pollinator plants and use bird feeders and birdbaths. Try some interesting landscaping ideas like butterfly gardens and rain gardens. A rain garden is a good solution for a low spot that is often hard to maintain.

A rain barrel or two will gather water off the roof, saving on water bills. It also can reduce runoff problems. Rain barrel water is not to be used for drinking or cooking. The use of gray water is subject to many health codes so be sure to check before doing any project.

Choose to plant native plants that use less water and thrive better in our growing zone, a small pond with solar powered circulating water for plantings and fish, and a trellis can provide a place to sit and a structure for grapes.

Beekeeping can be fun. Look for local beekeeper for advice on how to start. Go to [www.facebook.com/EpiscopalBeeKeeping/](https://www.facebook.com/EpiscopalBeeKeeping/) for encouragement. Did you know Kansas has more than 400 native bee species? In order to learn more about pollinators and conservation topics in Kansas go to [www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/kansas/](https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/kansas/).

If stuck with gardening questions, call the local extension office for help from a master gardener. Growing trees for shade and or a wind break will lower energy bills. One tactic is to employ goats to chomp down the grass. Realistically speaking, you are most likely to reduce emissions by using a battery powered mower or an old-fashioned push mower, especially for a small area that needs mowing. There are other garden tools that are battery operated as well. If you are not bothered by trailing electric cords, there are corded models too. Both are better for the environment than gas powered machines. Mulch the leaves in the yard instead of burning or collecting in bags. They provide food for the grass and can be used around bushes and trees. Build a compost bin to reduce landfill waste and create good food for plants. Research alternatives to toxic pest and weed control methods.

## **Storage shed/garage**

Be sure to deal correctly with any hazardous waste or chemicals, left-over paint, or other items you might find in cleaning out the shed or garage. Call your county to find where to dispose of them properly. Always take recyclable items to a proper disposal site. Sometimes people, especially in country settings, will dump garbage or items they do not want to take to a recycling center or to a landfill. Please report this type of behavior. Collect sensitive documents and electronic waste to dispose of when there are community drives to do so, if not available, organize one.

## **Food**

Planning the kind of diet we eat is important to individual health and to individual carbon footprints. To help Earth Stewards see the global connections between what is grown or managed for food and the environmental impacts go to [ourworldindata.org/environmental-impacts-of-food](https://ourworldindata.org/environmental-impacts-of-food). This site clearly shows that what we consume has a great effect on the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that are emitted in their production. One kilogram (2.2 pounds) of beef emits 60 kilograms (132 pounds) of greenhouse gas while one kilogram of peas emits one kilogram of greenhouse gas, and one kilogram of poultry emits 6 kilograms of emissions. As a society, we are probably going to continue to eat meat, but we can reduce the amount and eat more vegetables and grains.

As consumers, we should be aware of where our food comes from and if it is produced in a sustainable way. We also should be careful in the amount of food that we throw away. It is astonishing that in the US, we throw away about 40 million tons per year. That is 30% to 40% of the US food supply and adds up to about 215 pounds per person each year. Why? There may be many reasons, but among them is poor planning for meals, serving sizes that are too large, poor storage habits, distaste for “left-over food” and misshapen veggies and fruits. Did you know that wasted food is the largest category of material that goes to municipal landfills? Composting is a great way to use food scraps. Decide to make good use of the food that is not eaten off your plate and that has gone bad by making a compost pile.

Making a complete grocery list to meet your meal plans is a good way to buy just what is needed. Go to the store after a snack (less impulse buying) and store food promptly and properly when home. Consider washing fruits and veggies to remove the chemical residue. There are good soaps and sprays on the market for this. However, you can make your own. A vinegar wash is one cup vinegar in three cups of water. Another is one cup water, 2 tablespoons baking soda and one teaspoon lemon juice. Reading food labels is very important to health and human well-being. When we choose to ignore food facts, our health is affected and leads to higher health care costs.

Another way to use food scraps is to make soup stock. Keep a closed container in your freezer for veggie peelings, meat bones, soft tomatoes, etc. When ready to make stock, add water, a bit of onion and a tablespoon of vinegar and simmer on the stove or in a slow cooker. Strain off the liquid and use to make homemade soup.

A word about pots and pans: The pans with non-stick coating can flake off and cause plastic particles to be in your food and inside you. When cooking on the stove top, use lids to cover the pans. The food will heat faster and use less energy. Get into the habit of Meatless Friday or Meatless Monday. Eating less red meat is recommended by doctors and good for the planet because cattle belch methane. Try the new plant-based meat, just be aware of added ingredients and find out how it is processed. Want to make your own plant-based “meats”? Are you interested in the mindful eating practice? The practice will help you enjoy food more and may even reduce weight. When you are thankful for your food and mindful of each bite, you will toss less away.

### **Are you and environmentally aware shopper?**

Here are some tips as you shop:

- Do you need or just want an item? Reduce is the first in the list of Reduce, Repurpose, Repair and Recycle.
- Just say no to single use plastic bags and items, like plastic straws.
- You can use cloth bags in the grocery store and mesh or net bags for produce.
- Purchase less and choose quality products that will last.

- Use a list. For food shopping make a meal plan and a list.
- Consider packaging and try concentrates for soaps, etc.
- Consider farmers market, co-ops, local shops, and organic.
- Buy in season, then can or freeze for later.
- Look for least toxic chemicals in cleaners or non-natural ingredients.
- Buy just what you will use, store food properly and compost food waste.

## Transportation

Statistics for the transportation sector show that it accounts for 26% of the total amount of greenhouse gasses from the US. When you break down that figure, 59% of it comes from passenger vehicles, 23% from medium to heavy duty trucks, 9% from aircraft and 9% from trains, ships and other modes of transportation. Therefore, it will really help the Earth Steward's carbon footprint to reduce the use of the car. If possible, ride the bus, carpool, share rides, bike, hike and walk more often.

Make sure tires are properly inflated and routinely rotated. The car should have regular oil changes and maintenance. To get better gas mileage, avoid fast starts, sudden stops and long drive-thru lines. One of the best tips is to not let off or pick up your child in the long line of cars in front of the school. There is no need to warm the car up. It is a waste of gas. Scope out alternative routes to avoid traffic snarls. Avoid carrying excess weight in the car or using roof-top baggage carriers. On the highway, use cruise control. A passenger car getting about 22 mpg and driving about 1,500 miles in a year will emit about 4.6 metric tons of carbon dioxide. Thus, reducing the number of miles driven will help reduce total greenhouse gas emissions.

Besides carbon dioxide, the average passenger car also releases methane, nitrous oxide, and hydrofluorocarbons from leaky air-conditioners. To that list add the emissions from extraction, refining, and transporting the fuel to gas stations. Given the number of cars on the road and the number of miles driven, you can really understand how emissions continue to rise from this sector of our economy. For more information about electric and hybrid vehicles, look in Consumer Reports Magazine for tips. If possible, reduce the number of cars you have.

Make a to-do list before driving and plan to do several things in one trip. When the car is at the end of its life, consider donating it to a good cause. Often, the car needs just a bit of work to have new life. Also, the various parts can be used for repairs on other cars. Never dump it or dump the tires. It might cost something to recycle tires, but that is far better than having them end up in the waterways or fouling an otherwise natural spot. If you change the oil or other car fluids yourself, be sure and dispose of them properly. Some suggestions are lube places, gas stations, garages, or car parts stores. Check before bringing them to the establishment. Always use a closed container. Most places that sell batteries or tires will recycle them. Some might add a charge. Used

tires can have a second life as dog beds, swing, flower gardens or other creative re-use ideas. Do not burn tires because they are full of toxins.

One mode of transportation, flying, has a huge carbon footprint. According to some statistics, one person on a flight of about 1000 miles will burn 500 pounds of carbon dioxide. Right now, 12% of the total emissions from the transportation sector is from air travel. We must watch this sector carefully and hope that airlines do all they can to move to batteries and electric planes. If you must fly, consider buying offsets. The extra money goes toward green jobs. Ask your airline or search on-line for carbon offset information.

## **Personal products**

There are at least four considerations for the personal care products we purchase: do they contain ingredients that might harm us, do they harm the environment, are they over- packaged, and do they deliver what they promise.

The Environmental Working Group has a website which has information on at least ten categories from sunscreen to baby care products and many household cleaning products, too. They also claim that products they have verified do not contain any of the unacceptable chemicals on their long list.

Whichever personal care product information you choose to follow, it is true that most cosmetic and beauty product manufacturers are self-regulating as to ingredients, but the FDA does regulate their sale and can take them off the market.

The chemical BPA once found in baby bottles is now banned and food suppliers have been switching to other preservatives to use for can linings. However, BPA remains, in small amounts, on the surface of store receipt paper. BPA is suspected of affecting the unborn, brain development and blood pressure.

Phthalates are found in a lot of products like bath soaps and often are not listed, since they can be hidden under the term “fragrances”. Phthalates are not just one chemical, but a whole family of chemical with different effects.

When thinking about the safety of natural products like vitamins, minerals, herbs, enzymes, amino acids, cultural products, like Chinese herbs, and homeopathic medicine, make sure you check with your doctor for interaction with any medicines you are taking. The FDA plays a similar role with natural products as with cosmetics. Having natural in the name does not mean that they have no side effects. The FDA has a website with dietary supplement information.

The area of personal products that impacts the environment the most is over-packaging. Some reasons for over-packaging: inefficiency in packaging, shrinkflation (a product has shrunk in size and the manufacturer wants to continue to use the same size



container), shelf space (larger box means more attention), premium packaging (looks expensive), consumer wants (like the over-packaged tiny cubes of cheese, a few crackers and three slices of pepperoni for lunch boxes), and the ever-present blister wrap. Sometimes it is used to keep a toothbrush clean or to keep customers from stealing a few nails or screws. These bits and pieces of plastic are not recyclable and end up in the trash and may find their way to streams. As consumers, there are things we can do to reduce the amount of plastic packaging. For example, we can buy a larger tub of yogurt instead of 10 little containers and shop at home stores that allow you to buy things without blister wrap. If we must buy items packaged in plastic, be sure to tuck the plastic deep into the trash so that they will not fly freely into the air. The thoughtful consumer will choose personal products wisely for health and for the environment.

## Save Energy & Save Money

- Air seal and insulate your home. Pay attention to the attic space, caulk and seal cracks and around windows, weatherstrip around doors and make sure there are no gaps. Make sure that the insulation is appropriate for your house's construction.
- Purchase a programmable thermostat to regulate the temperature in your home. Aim for lower temperatures in winter by encouraging layered clothing, snuggle throws for evenings, comforters for beds. Reverse in summer to keep the air conditioner from running up bills. No need to heat or cool during hours when nobody is home.
- Use power strips to turn off devices when not in use. If something is plugged in and not turned on, it still is using electricity.
- Purchase Energy Star appliances. Use dish and clothes washers when full. Resist "grazing" with the fridge door open.
- Turn down the temperature in the hot water tank and wash most clothes in cold water. If you can, use a clothesline. Place a dry towel in the dryer. It absorbs some of the moisture and clothes dry faster.
- Replace regular bulbs for LED light bulbs. They use less energy and last longer. Turn out the lights and devices when you are not using a room.
- Update your heating and cooling system, if you can. Change filters regularly and have it checked yearly.
- Evaluate windows, and weatherstrip if you can. Update windows, if that is the best option. Open drapes to let sun in and close at night. Make sure storm windows are in place and fit well. << Updating windows is not always cost effective. Old windows can be weather-stripped.
- Remember to close the flue for any fireplace when not in use. It is like leaving a window open. Make sure the flue is closed when the air conditioner is running.
- Plant trees and shrubs for shade and wind protection.

## Actions Within the Church Community

Just as with individual actions, Green Team leaders can encourage the Earth Stewards to join in on actions that will demonstrate their commitment to their promises to care for God's creation. Green Team leaders may need to begin projects and will need help from volunteers to carry out the program or project for the long term. If volunteering is proposed as a wonderful opportunity to be a part of something instead of a chore, more people will volunteer. Be sure and get permission from your clergy and vestry before beginning. Remember, you are cultivating habits, so be patient and don't try to do too many things at the same time. Here are some suggestions:

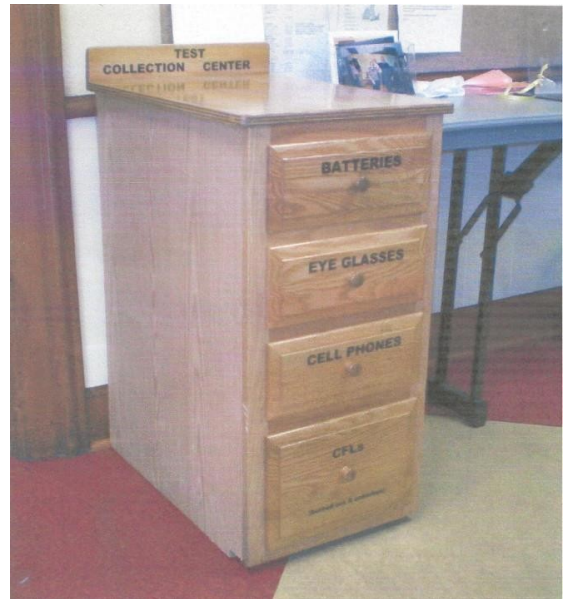
- Office and kitchen recycling bins. Put instructions on the lids and patiently remind folks to rinse containers and add no garbage. Monitor the bins to keep area clean. Checking for a clean area may always remain the Green Team's responsibility.
- Begin using ceramic cups, plates and silverware for coffee hour. Green Team leaders may need to do the dishes for a while before getting volunteers and jump in to help as needed.
- Purchase a large water jug with spigot for coffee hour. Make sure you have enough room in your refrigerator to ensure cold water. Encourage meeting leaders to use the jug for meetings to discourage plastic water bottles.
- Consider purchasing free-trade coffee for after church. Explain the reasons and take up a collection to cover the more expensive drink.
- Use real glass cups and not plastic cups in communion "hubs". If your congregation uses tiny cups instead of the communion chalice, consider asking the clergy to purchase kits with real glass cups. Work with altar guild to wash/sanitize the cups.
- Encourage environmentally friendly products. Ask the vestry to consider purchasing environmentally friendly cleaning and yard care products. Also consider purchasing sustainable palms for Palm Sunday. Try to eliminate all Styrofoam products and individual plastic cups and utensils.
- Set up a collection chest (see photo). It can collect used batteries that can be recycled. Other small items can also be collected. One example is to collect discarded frames and lenses for eye doctors to reuse and cell phones to be refurbished. A volunteer or team leader may need to do the recycling.
- When an adult mentors a child or youth about reduce, re-purpose and recycle, we leave out the concept of repairing. Many older adults know how to repair things. It might be a fun activity to get the two groups together to have fellowship and to learn new skills - a great combination!
- Take a tour of some of the properties around the diocese listed in the brochure developed by the Land Use Mini of the Creation Care Task force. Use it as a time of prayer and fellowship.

- Earth Stewards can assist the junior warden in working around the church, changing light bulbs to LED's, adding motion-sensors to turn on lights, beautifying the flower beds and yard, and other tasks.
- You can create colorful light plate switch plates to remind people to turn off the lights and save energy. See the photo of some examples below.
- Collaborate with your minster. Some actions need a bigger group. The project could be organizing an electronics recycling event, or a shredding event, preventing the burning of sensitive documents which is better for air quality, or even helping set up a recycling center in areas where one does not exist. Perhaps setting up a task sharing a list of skilled people who can help minster members do tasks for a bit less money. A secondary benefit would be a ready list of skilled workers to help restore the area after a disaster.
- Plan a trip or a retreat for your church's youth group to talk about environmental issues. Gather ideas from the youth and do not overlook their volunteer capabilities.
- Take part in Earth Day Events or plan one yourself. Carry your church banner down your main street to let the town know you are caring for creation.
- Ask your lay readers and deacons to add earth centered prayers in services.
- Can you connect with other Green Teams in different denominations in your town or city? Perhaps you can develop a continuing relationship that could work on big problems. Examples might be a series of lectures on environmental topics, a community garden or a community fruit or nut grove, regular city/town clean-ups, working together on Habitat for Humanity homes, food drives for community food pantries and many more.
- The list is endless. Begin thinking of what you want to do. Go slowly in the beginning but be consistent. Becoming an Earth Steward takes a lifetime.

Example light switch plates and collection bin:



Light switch plates by Craig Myers-Arenth



Collection bin

## **Action Suggestions for Our Youngest Earth Stewards**

Children love to take part in action-oriented lessons. Here are a few suggestions to help you as you work with Sunday school teachers. Please, work within their schedules and under their guidance.

- Help the children make pinecone bird feeders. Tie string to a medium sized pinecone, roll it in a tray filled with shortening or lard, then roll in another tray filled with bird seed. Hang on a sturdy tree branch. This might be an action after the children have learned about what birds eat and where they live.
- Help children plant vegetable seeds in containers and care for them after learning where food comes from. When ready, they can take them home to replant.
- After learning about recycling, the children learn to recycle in the classroom. Your team can help them make small posters to remind everyone to recycle at home.
- Bring to class samples of good and poor soils. Discuss why good soil is important. Discuss composting. Have them draw a picture for home. For fun, play Tom Chapin's song "Good Garbage" on his CD called "This Pretty Planet".
- Discuss how eco-justice is based on the Golden Rule and caring for others.
- Earth Day gives everyone a chance to march around the church or the community with posters drawn by the kids. As kids are making posters take time to talk about caring for the planet and why that is important.
- Outdoor art projects can be lots of fun. Leaf and tree bark rubbings, sun bleached stencils, plaster casts of critter footprints, leaf/tree identification, what lives inside a rope circle on the ground and more see, listen, touch, smell and taste activities (stick to known tastes like sugar, salt, and lemon). All these activities help children come to know the world around them and to love its diversity.

## **For Older Children and/or Youth Group Actions**

Green Teams can help with organizing, providing transportation, and leading discussions under the direction of the teachers or facilitators for these more involved activities.

- Camping or Canoe adventures Kids will use Leave No Trace ethics. Discuss lessons learned after trips, especially how to care for our outdoor parks, lakes, and rivers. Plan a city cleanup effort.
- Retreat Days to discuss certain creation care topics.
- 
- Gather old towels and blankets for the pet shelter and consider a food drive for the pets in their care.
- The Green Team might consider a mentoring program where skills like simple repairs, gardening, restoring furniture, etc. are taught to older children by skilled adults. This is living into the slogan of Reduce, Repurpose, Repair and Recycle.
- Think about asking the youth director if any young person might be interested in helping the Green Team on one project, for the school term or longer. If you decide to do this, be sure to value their ideas, give them real duties and credit when the task or term is finished.

As the Green Team begins to work with the teachers and the children, there will be wonderful, new and exciting ways of interacting and growing along with our youngest Earth Stewards. Often actions by the children and youth will lead the way for the adults.

## **Caring for the Physical Plant**

The church building and the yard around the building are, of course, a major responsibility for the vestry and clergy to manage. The Green Team can be a helpful partner in this endeavor. All will have a great interest in keeping energy costs as low as possible and keeping up to date on maintaining a safe and welcoming worship space without too much of a strain on the church budget.

Of course, the Green Team is interested in making sure that the church does all it can to lower its carbon footprint. In fact, the church could be just like an individual in signing up for the carbon tracker found by going to [www.sustainislandhome.org](http://www.sustainislandhome.org). Most of the time these goals will be mutual goals.

Sometimes, like hoping for a roof-top solar system, the Green Team might need to lobby for funds to be able to save energy costs in the future. Just like a regular individual home, the building needs constant upkeep to prevent unnecessary or emergency spending. It also needs to keep up to date with all the same upgrades as a home. It doesn't matter if your building is newer and has been well maintained or older

and showing signs of aging, the best way to find out where the needs are is to complete an energy audit. This is likely to cost a bit of money, depending upon the provider.

## **Some Guidelines for Using the Do-it-yourself Energy Audit**

The *Do-it-yourself Energy Audit* was first developed by the Interfaith Power and Light organization. When Kansas briefly had its own Interfaith Power and Light Affiliate, the self-audit was revised to better fit the work being done by the Green Team at Trinity Episcopal Church. It has been revised again by the Creation Care Task Force Green Team Mini that prepared this guide. In order to make the Do-it-yourself Energy Audit easier to use, it is to be found in a separate PDF file:

[.episcopal-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Energy-Audit-CCGT-form-1.pdf](https://www.episcopal-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Energy-Audit-CCGT-form-1.pdf)

Here are some general suggestions for using this Energy Audit:

- The Green Team Leaders should print out and read through the steps
- Obtain clergy approval and invite the junior warden or others to help.
- This will be a detailed look at systems so go slowly and take notes.
- When finished, review your notes and prepare a report to vestry.
- The report will outline the needed fixes in priority order.
- Some repairs can be done by church volunteers. Take the lead on this.
- Some actions will be beyond volunteer abilities. Make priority lists.
- Decide if there is a need for a professional energy audit.
- Be sure and date all changes made and prepare schedules for the future.
- Do the homework on the most efficient replacement items to buy.
- Help vestry budget for needed items and set aside funds for upkeep.
- Is now the time for solar because a roof needs replacing? Get several bids.
- Check to see if minster partners need big items. Lower cost for bulk purchases?
- Schedule the next self-energy audit “walkabout”.
- Have someone check energy cost before and after fixes. Report results to all.

**This guide’s *Additional Resources* contains more action opportunities and ideas**



# Advocate



Thus says the Lord:

Maintain justice, and do what is right,  
for soon my salvation will come,  
and my deliverance be revealed.

Isaiah 56:1



Photo: Greenpeace

## **Advocating for a Healthy, Clean, and Just world**

Now, the Green Team is tasked to take the next steps in encouraging Earth Stewards to advocate for the changes that will result in a cleaner, safer, kinder and more sustainable world. As your Green Team has symbolically traveled around the cross (see cover) it has become apparent that every part of creation is connected and the action of one makes a difference to the whole. Your Green Team has done a good job--now continue to dig deeper into current environmental issues, increase individual and parish action steps, and introduce advocacy and outreach actions that are a good match for your parish.

## **Why Should the Green Team Encourage Advocacy?**

Advocacy is more than just voting or persuading others to vote for a certain policy or person. It is the act of engaging others in a meaningful dialogue in order to work for solutions for problems. For example, we all know that one time use of plastic bags is a huge part of the plastic pollution problem. As wonderful as it is to get Earth Stewards from one congregation to carry re-usable bags to the grocery store, we know that this alone will not solve the plastic bag pollution problem. This is the kind of problem that will take many levels of advocacy and changes in public policy to resolve.

Our Green Teams can motivate Earth Stewards to take steps beyond personal actions to work with others toward sustainable solutions. These advocacy steps might be done as individuals, such as supporting a group like the Nature Conservancy.

Your Green Team might decide to host a panel discussion on the topic of one- time use of plastics. If enough energy is generated from the discussion, a task force of interested people might decide to study the issue and go forward to visit the city council. It may eventually lead to a city policy that reduces the use of plastic bags. Had the Green Team not brought together information to motivate the Earth Steward to do more beyond personal actions, no tangible solution might have been reached for the local plastic bag situation. In other words, local advocacy is one good way to bring about real solutions and success builds upon success.

The Green Team should be aware that their Earth Stewards will have different levels of comfort in higher levels of advocacy. It should be made clear that any advocacy step is a choice and that all levels are important in reaching toward solutions. We know, at least in this example, that without a certain amount of “making voices heard” any policy change may be easily ignored. It might mean more work, but the possibility of real steps toward a solution is worth the effort.

### Some steps to take in advocacy

The following are some general steps to take in the advocating process. Your Green Team or your Earth Stewards can choose which advocacy steps might fit which problem issue. These steps gradually get a bit more involved in their scope. It is exciting to know that your efforts might be key in motivating a person to run for office or enter the mission field. Explore your possibilities for advocacy:

- Raising awareness of the issues with studies, readings, panel discussions, Sunday school lessons, guest speakers, etc.
- Making known the many different organizations that are doing good work on environmental issues.
- Holding an advocacy day at church or with others
- Contacting others who are in charge or who govern
  - Writing post cards or signing petitions
  - Advocating on the computer
  - Calling on the phone
  - Visiting in person
- Getting the word out through public notice for meetings, newspaper articles and pictures, letters to the editor, Facebook, blogs, podcasts, YouTube, etc.
- Registering voters, working on poll access issues, working with organizations like League of Women Voters in assuring fact based, non-biased information is presented to all in a transparent and accessible manner. Please remember, that church leaders should stick to fact-based statements on policies and refrain from endorsing a particular candidate to insure our 501-c-3 status.
- Participate in public rallies and/or participate in peaceful protests when appropriate.
- Run for public office

### Questions to ask as you prepare to advocate:

- Teach Earth Stewards to check the status of all organizations before supporting or donating to their cause. Charity Navigator is a good place to do a check. See the site at [www.charitynavigator.org/](http://www.charitynavigator.org/)
- Before deciding to support or write about a topic of advocacy, do your homework. One example is supporting Green Faith's demand's ([greenfaith.org/take-action/greenfaith-international-network-our-ten-demands/](http://greenfaith.org/take-action/greenfaith-international-network-our-ten-demands/)) that were presented to the Climate summit in November in Scotland of 2021. Make sure you have all the facts and know the opposition's point of view.
- Look at many different sources on the same subject. Ask yourself, do the facts add up and make sense over a variety of sources.
- Check facts, write them out. Check the facts again. Make sure that you have stated these facts in the most straightforward manner possible. Remember

- that your goal is to work for real solutions.
- Does the information you are gathering from other sites make you feel like they were fair and just or do they move you to anger, fear or hate. If so, look again at your source. The goal is dialogue not division.
  - Practice reading your message to others. Does it hang together? Is it fact based and fair? If not, retrace your steps. If it is, more forward and be assured you are on the right track

## Organizations to Help with Advocacy Actions

There are thousands of worthy causes out there to be supported by your Green Team or by individuals in your parish. Your church might be involved in an outreach program or there might be a local cause you wish to support. It is always best to go local first. The following is a list of possible organizations to support. It will be divided into categories to help you find the ones you want to help support. Some fit into several categories but are placed under the focus of the organization. They are not in any specific order.

The categories are:

organizations that protect the natural habitat and wildlife,  
human health & sustainability,  
environmental justice,  
parks/land/trees/oceans/waterways,  
general creation care advocacy and  
those that emphasize education.

In any advocacy actions, a good rule of thumb is to refrain from endorsing a specific political campaign or person as a church sponsored group. However, individuals may do as they please. Be diplomatic and considerate in supporting “hot button issues” and stick to facts that have been verified by several sources.

The Episcopal Church has good guidelines on advocacy. Be sure to discuss advocacy projects with your clergy and vestry.

It is also a good idea to check out the credibility of the any organization you support by checking their rating on the Charity Navigator at [www.charitynavigator.org](http://www.charitynavigator.org).

**This guide's Additional Resources contains  
more advocacy opportunities and ideas**

## A Few Words about Disaster Planning

Unfortunately, disasters happen and because we are now living in a world that is continuing to warm, we know that more disasters are likely to occur. Thus, “blue-sky days” are the perfect time to make plans to ensure personal safety, develop plans to protect our properties, and network with others to be more resilient as people and communities.

This disaster planning is not usually part of the job of the Green Team, but the team can assist with the planning. One of the most practical ways the Green Team can help any disaster plan coordinator is to provide a physical map of the church building that shows the exits and best and quickest way to get people to the basement or safest place for a tornado or high wind event or the best exits to use in case of fire.

The Green Team can strongly encourage the church leadership to appoint a Disaster Plan coordinator. They can then do the specific planning that is necessary for survival and thriving after any disaster.

Here are some basic websites to get information.

The first website is a manual of disaster planning from the United Church of Christ and their insurance board. Please go to [www.ucc.org/disaster\\_index/disaster\\_resources/](http://www.ucc.org/disaster_index/disaster_resources/) Then click on Disaster Preparedness Manual for Churches. It will be helpful in getting started.

Another website to check is [www.template.net/business/plan-template/church-disaster-plan/](http://www.template.net/business/plan-template/church-disaster-plan/)

The Green Team can help parishioners by using a five- week series of church bulletin inserts listing practical things to do to prepare for times of disaster. Please go to [www.episcopalrelief.org/what-we-do/us-disaster-program/safechurch/](http://www.episcopalrelief.org/what-we-do/us-disaster-program/safechurch/) The inserts will be at the third bullet point. The series is called, “A Season of Resilience”.

Now is the time for getting together a comprehensive disaster plan. Time spent planning will prevent chaos later and may save lives too.

It is always a good idea to contact city or county offices for local evacuation plans and routes. Communicate with nearby churches as to their plans. When you include community stakeholders in an integrated disaster plan, remember how important it is to have a workable communication system, ways to not only cooperate and collaborate with others, but also coordinate efforts.



# Additional Resources



Photo by R. Charles Pearce

## Worship

### Spiritual Life Resources

Creation Care is a spiritual calling and the Green Team needs to focus on their own spirituality as they reach the hearts and minds of others in becoming Earth Stewards. “The Way of Love” from the national Episcopal church can be extended to the care of creation. Please go to [episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love/getting-started](http://episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love/getting-started)

The Diocese of Kansas has a great number of resources available at their spiritual Life website. Please go to [episcopal-ks.org/spiritual-life](http://episcopal-ks.org/spiritual-life). A possible idea for a Green Team is to plan for an environmentally related quiet day or retreat.

For a secular perspective on religion/spirituality in the environmental movement go to an article on the subject by YES Magazine. To find the article go to [www.yesmagazine.org/environment/2022/03/15/religion-spirituality-climate-change](http://www.yesmagazine.org/environment/2022/03/15/religion-spirituality-climate-change).

## **Scripture in Support of Environmental Stewardship**

Collected by Nancy Hanson, Trinity Environmental Stewardship Team

### **Old Testament**

Genesis 1:1-2:1, Story of Creation

God is pleased with all his creation. God creates mankind, someone “like ourselves,” and appoints them masters over all other moving creatures on earth. God gives to man for food every seed-bearing plant and fruit-bearing tree. (Note: no animal flesh.)

Genesis 6:1-9:17, Story of Noah and the Flood

Mankind has become sinful; God decides to destroy them (& all creation with them, though the animals have not sinned). God spares Noah, the only just man left, and commands him to save all the species of animals so that life can continue. When all disembark after the flood, Noah offers animal sacrifices, which pleases God. God then gives man the right to eat animal flesh. But the blood, or life of the animal, mankind is not to consume. It belongs to God and is to be returned to the earth.

Exodus 23:10-11, First mention of the Sabbath Year, every 7th: the land shall lie at rest; crops remaining on it shall be left for the wild animals to eat.

Leviticus 25:1-12 & 18-22, Institution of the Sabbath Year for the Land, and the Jubilee Year.

The land is not to be cultivated every 7th year, and every 50th year.

Follow God’s statutes, and the land will yield increase.

Various admonitions:

Exodus 22:30, before sacrificing a lamb or calf, allow it seven days with its mother.

Exodus 23:5, release your enemy’s abused donkey.

Exodus 23:12, the Sabbath is to be a day of rest for the ox and donkey too.

Exodus 23:19, Don’t seethe a kid in its mother’s milk.

Deuteronomy 20:19-20, Sensible preservation of fruit-bearing trees (when laying siege to a city for capture).

Deuteronomy 22:6, Don’t take the dam with the young.

Deuteronomy 25:4, Don’t muzzle the ox as it treads the grain.

Deuteronomy 28, Blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience.

Job 12:7-10, Ask the beasts, and they shall teach thee.

Psalms 19:1-6.

Psalms 65:12-13.

Psalms 104, Blessing God for his creation, majesty, loving care, in appointed order of harmonious creation.

Psalms 115:16: The heavens are the Lord’s heavens, but the earth he has given to



human beings.

Psalm 145:15-16.

Psalm 147:7-11.

Psalm 150.

Proverbs 3:19-20. "The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens; by his knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew."

Ezekiel 1:4-25, The four living creatures, with heads of lion, ox, man, and eagle, in the prophet's vision of God.

Compare with Revelations 4:6-9.

Ezekiel 34, Warning against the "bad shepherds" of Israel.

(Can be read with application to our use of God's creation in a general sense.

Certainly, underscores God's expectations of good stewardship.)

### **New Testament**

Mark 16:15, Preach the Gospel to every creature (Col. 1:23).

John 1:1-14 (especially 10, 11, & 14), "The Word"/"The Light" was in the world, which was made by him, and the world knew him not; "and the Word was made *flesh* and dwelt among us."

Ephesians 3:9, Hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.

Romans 1:20, Things of him from the creation are clearly seen.

Romans 8:22, For we know that the whole creation groaneth.

### **Stories about or by Jesus that demonstrate his deep appreciation for the ways of natural things and the fact that He found God's wisdom lovingly expressed in nature**

Matthew 6:25-34, and/or Luke 12:22-34, Jesus on anxiety (includes the line about the lily being more glorious than Solomon).

Matthew 7:7-11, and/or Luke 11:9-13, On God's answering prayer (won't give a serpent for a fish, etc.).

Matthew 7:15-20, and/or Luke 6:43-45, Knowing where good and bad fruits come from.

Matthew 8:18-22, and/or Luke 9:57-60, Foxes have holes and birds have nests; Son of Man has nowhere....

Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; and/or Luke 8:22-25, Jesus calms the storm.

Matthew 10:16, I send you out as sheep among wolves; be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

Matthew 10:29, Two sparrows sell for a farthing, yet one shall not fall on the ground without your Father....

Matthew 13:1-9, Mark 4:1-9, and/or Luke 8:4-8, Parable of the sower.

Matthew 16:2-4, and/or Luke 12:54-56, Jesus rebukes hypocrites for being able to read the weather signs but not the time (of the Kingdom of God).

Matthew 13:31-32, Mark 4:30-32, and/or Luke 13:18-19, Parable of the mustard seed.

Matthew 21:18-19, and/or Mark 11:12-14, Jesus' cursing of the fig tree.

Matthew 24:32-33, Mark 13:28-29, Luke 21:29-31, Parable of the fig tree.

Luke 5:1-11, Miraculous catch of fish at Jesus' command.

Luke 23:31, Jesus on road to Golgotha to be crucified, "If they do this when the wood is

green, what will happen when it is dry?"

John 12:24, Except a corn of wheat...die....

John 15:1-8, Parable of the true vine and its branches.

Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-2, Matthew 4:1-2, Jesus is driven by the Spirit into the wilderness after his baptism.

Matthew 26:30&36, Mark 14:26&32, Luke 22:39, John 18:1-2, On the night before his crucifixion, Jesus retreats to the Garden of Gethsemane (*as was his custom*) for intense, private communication with God.

*Celtic Spirituality* has a great appeal to many people because its way of looking at caring for creation. Here are resources for you to use on your spiritual journey as a Green Team as leaders in growing Earth Stewards.



Please go to [www.northumbriacommunity.org](http://www.northumbriacommunity.org) to find many interesting resources including daily prayer, weekly reflections and more.


*The lives of the saints* offer inspiration to us through their life stories and prayers, St. Francis stand out in his example of his love for God and for love of his created world.

## **St. Francis**

Francis was born in 1182 to a merchant couple who imported fabrics to sell in Italy. His parents thought Francis would become a merchant like them. However, he decided to join the first crusade. On his first night out, he had a vision that God was telling him to return home. He obeyed his vision, was jeered by his friends and neighbors. He vowed he would not engage in war and would wait for God's direction. He became a preacher and taught others about humility, simplicity, and prayer. Although his parents were wealthy, he lived a life of poverty. He taught that all God's creation, from the tiniest insect to the tallest tree, were to be respected. When others took up arms in later crusades, Francis went to Muslim leaders with a message of peace. He attempted to express God's brotherhood by truly living the Gospel. He died in 1226. He founded the order of Franciscan Friars and is the patron saint of environmentalists. His feast day is October 4th.

Most reflective of the spirit of St. Francis and his care for Creation is found in the canticle, *Brother Son, Sister Moon*. 1982 Hymnal.

ord, make me an instrument of  
Thy peace ; Where there is hatred,  
let me sow love ; Where there is  
doubt , faith ; Where there is despair,  
hope ; Where there is darkness , light ;  
and where there is sadness , joy. 

 Divine Master , grant that I may  
not so much seek to be consoled,  
as to console ; to be understood , as to  
understand ; to be loved , as to love ; for  
it is in giving that we receive , it is in  
pardoning that we are pardoned , and it  
is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

*St. Francis*

### **A Native American Prayer**

Oh, Great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the winds, and whose breath gives life to all the world -- hear me -- I come before you, one of your children. I am small and weak. I need your strength and wisdom. Let me walk in beauty and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset. Make my hands respect the things you have made, my ears sharp to hear your voice.

Make me wise, so that I may know the things you have taught my People, the lesson you have hidden in every leaf and rock. I seek strength not to be superior to my brothers, but

be able to fight my greatest enemy, myself. Make me ever ready to come to you, with clean hands and straight eyes, so when life fades as a fading sunset, my spirit may come to you without shame.

Prayer by Yellow Hawk, Sioux Chief

## **Prayer For Guidance in Tending God's Earth**

*Poem written by Nancy Hanson, chair of Trinity, Lawrence's  
Environmental Stewardship Team, 2021*

Merciful God,  
Creator and Lover of all that is good,  
for the marvel of all your works,  
    in awe we praise You!  
For the revelation of your dynamic, sustaining grace—  
    most perfectly in your Being Incarnate, Jesus the Christ;  
    continuously through the wonders of your creation  
    and in the lives of all who love you—  
    in delight we worship and adore you!  
For your inestimable generosity and loving kindness  
    in providing us, your creatures,  
    a home on your garden planet, Earth,  
    and entrusting us with its care—  
    in humility we thank you!  
By the power of your Spirit,  
    guide us, your servants, we pray—  
    to insight and knowledge,  
    wisdom and understanding,  
    respect for, and empathy with, all your creation,  
    good and right decisions,  
    courageous actions,  
    and joyous thanksgivings,  
    as we tend your garden—  
as we love and cherish your beloved Earth ecosphere,  
    our exquisite home  
    in your resplendent universe.

And so grant that,  
    reflecting faithfully your Image in caring for your Earth,  
our home in this mortal life,  
    we may enjoy the heavenly blessings  
    of your eternal kingdom.  
Glory to you—  
    Great Creator, Inspiring Spirit, Love Incarnate!  
Amen.

## **A Contemporary Genesis**

**By Gary Lagerloef, Ph.D. (Used by permission of author)**

Before it all began  
There was nothing.  
No space, no time, no matter, nor energy  
Nothing.  
Except perhaps God.  
God of nothing, and God of everything.  
God who is infinite possibility.  
And God said, "let's see what the possibilities are."

Then there was light.  
All light and all energy,  
Infinitely dense and infinitely hot.  
All that was needed to make a universe was encoded within the first second.  
A burst of inflation.  
Atoms formed.  
Hydrogen and helium; 3:1.  
All made in a few hundred seconds.  
And God said, "The possibilities look good!"

The opaque fireball lasted 300,000 years;  
Cooling, expanding.  
Until light decoupled from matter.  
All became dark, transparent.  
Thus darkness was separated from the light.  
And the cosmic radiation took flight.  
And God said, "Now that's done."

Gravity reached out her tentative fingers,  
Random pockets of denser stuff,  
With time, fell into clumps and strands  
Of billions of proto-galaxies.  
The first stars formed,  
And light shown again in the heavens,  
Like birthday candles, arrayed  
To celebrate a billion years of comic evolution.  
And God said, "It's looking better all the time!"

Ancestral stars of hydrogen and helium,  
Solitary blast furnaces for our basic ingredients,  
Makers of heavy elements,

Raw material for future projects.  
After billions of years of heavy industry,  
Died and gave their bounty in supernova splendor,  
Spreading the seed of newly created matter.  
Carbon, Oxygen, Iron, and more – into stardust.  
And God said, “Nice work!”  
With time, gravity cast her net again,  
Gathering dust into new star systems,  
With residue orbiting on the peripheries,  
Hard rocks and gas balls  
Thus our solar system came to be.

By 4.5 billion years ago,  
And 10 billion since work began,  
The third planet from our sun had taken shape,  
And God said, “This one has possibilities.”

A billion years passed while the planet churned and cooled,  
Harnessing an atmosphere from stellar gas.  
Multitudes of icy comets fell, while steam erupted from within;  
All turning to rain to fill low lying places with seas.  
Thus the land was separated from the waters.  
Where carbon combined with many elements,  
A primordial soup.  
And God said, “Time to liven things up here.”

Complex interacting compounds,  
Self-organizing into catalytic webs,  
Pre-biotic structures, self-contained,  
Drawing energy from the surroundings,  
By 3.5 billion years ago,  
The first bacterial cells evolved,  
Soon learned to photosynthesize,  
And filled the air with oxygen.  
Fractured crustal plates in ponderous motion.  
Remade the surface with mountains  
Trenches, lava flows and volcanoes.  
1.5 billion years ago,  
The surface teemed with microbial life,  
And God said, “Let’s liven it up still more.”

So microbial life advanced,  
Learned locomotion, sexual reproduction  
And more complex cells began to link up.  
By 700 million years ago, early sea animals appeared  
In an explosion of diversity, the Cambrian age.

Skeletons and shells left the first telling imprints  
On ancient sea bottoms.  
The rest is history.  
A torrent of life am and went;  
Fish amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, insects  
And multitudes of other invertebrates and plants.  
Then from amongst all these, very recently,  
The rise of *home sapiens*.  
And God said, "There is much work yet to do."

## **Chant from 2020 Earth Week**

*This chant from 2020 Earth Week was used at the National Cathedral and could be used in a creation care focused liturgy at your parish.*

*Chant from 2020 Earth Week Multi-faith Worship Service, Washington National Cathedral, Used in "TEST Tidbits", May 13, 2020.*

All humankind is one vast family,  
This world, our home.  
We sleep beneath one roof, the starry sky.  
We warm ourselves before one hearth, the blazing sun.  
Upon one soil we stand, and breathe one air, and drink one water, and  
walk the night beneath one luminescent moon.  
The children of the Universe are we, family of one blood,  
Members in one worldwide family, this Earth, our home.

All humankind is one vast family,  
This world, our home.  
We acknowledge the damage to our roof, the starry sky.  
We recognize the rising heat which harms our seas, our plains, our forests, and the life  
therein.  
We lament the painful consequences of our choices on the sacred soil, and air, and  
water.  
The children of the universe are we, family of one blood.  
Members in one worldwide family, this Earth, our home.

All humankind is one vast family,  
This world, our home.  
We pledge our care to all the life beneath one roof, the starry sky.  
We honor all who seek the warmth of blazing sun.

We will remember that upon one soil we stand, and breathe one air, and drink one  
water,  
and walk the night beneath one luminescent moon.  
All children of the Universe are we -- creatures of the land, and sea, and air,  
All life that lives upon, within, this Earth, our home.



### **A conversation between God and St. Francis**

The following is a very interesting conversation between St. Francis and God on the subject of lawn care. Not wishing to leave anyone out, St. Catherine has a zinger of a "one-liner". This little story has been on the internet for a long while and was brought to our attention by a person in our congregation. The best teaching often takes place through laughter. *A Good Story, Author Unknown.*

Cast: God, St. Francis, St. Catherine

Imagine the conversation God might have had with St. Francis, on the subject of lawn care.

GOD: Frank, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistle, and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect, no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long-lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honey bees, and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But all I see are these green rectangles.

ST. FRANCIS: It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The suburbanites. They started calling your flowers "weeds" and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

GOD: Grass? But it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds, and bees, only grubs and worms. It's temperamental with temperatures. Do these suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

ST. FRANCIS: Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

GOD: The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the suburbanites happy.

ST. FRANCIS: Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it - sometimes twice a week.

GOD: They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?

ST. FRANCIS: Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

GOD: They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

ST. FRANCIS: No, Sir. Just the opposite; they pay to throw it away.

GOD: Now let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

ST. FRANCIS: Yes, Sir.

GOD: These suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

ST. FRANCIS: You aren't going to believe this Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they  
drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

GOD: What nonsense! At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. Plus, as they rot, the leaves from compost to enhance the soil. It's a natural circle of life.

ST. FRANCIS: You better sit down, Lord. The suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

GOD: No. What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter and to keep the soil moist  
and loose?

ST. FRANCIS: After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something which they call mulch.  
Then haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

GOD: And where do they get this mulch?

ST. FRANCIS: They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

GOD: Enough. I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the arts.  
What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?

ST. CATHERINE: Dumb and Dumber, Lord. It's a real stupid movie about ...

GOD: Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis.

# Learn

Your beliefs become your thoughts,  
Your thoughts become your words,  
Your words become your actions,  
Your actions become your habits,  
Your habits become your values,  
Your values become your destiny.

Ghandi

## ***Discussing the IPCC Report***

To help explain climate change, references to the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) Climate Assessment Report are provided.

This example will help you collect other information and provide a way to talk about global warming.

1. Read the websites cited under the summary paragraph on the IPCC's Report.
2. In reading the above information, what words stuck out as being something a few people might not know or might be unsure of the meaning?

Some definitions:

The IPCC stands for Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. This panel was formed by the United Nations to gather and synthesize information from scientists selected by their own governments and other scientists to assist member nations in their deliberations at earth summits. A long process of peer review is followed over 6 to 8 years before a report is given. The IPCC sticks to facts and leaves policy making to the nations present at the summit.

COP26 is another name for the Summit held in Scotland in November 2021. COP stands for the "Council of Parties". These are the nations joining in the discussions at the summit.

Greenhouse gases are listed as water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, ozone, nitrous oxide, and chlorofluorocarbons.

The greenhouse effect is when the sun's energy enters the earth's atmosphere, warms the earth and is then reflected to space. This heat is partially stopped from reflecting because of the gases in the atmosphere. This process does keep the earth warmer, but excessive amounts of gases, mainly emissions from the burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil, and natural gas) cause more and more energy from the sun to be retained like in a greenhouse. This causes the earth to warm more and more. This is called global warming.

PPM (parts per million) is the way the emissions, especially of carbon dioxide are measured in the atmosphere. The current level as of July 2022 ranges from 415 to 420 PPM.

Reference: NOAA Global Monitoring Laboratory,  
[gml.noaa.gov/ccgg/trends/monthly.html](https://gml.noaa.gov/ccgg/trends/monthly.html)

## **Climate Change: IPCC Climate Change Assessment Reports**

The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) has published a series of assessment reports that review the latest climate science. Three working groups have recently contributed to the Sixth Assessment Report.

The Working Group I contribution, *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis*, released in August 2021, states that nations need to drop greenhouse gases by 25% by 2030 and by 50% by 2035 to remain within the Paris Accord goal. If we delay and reach the 50% goal by 2050 instead of 2035, the goal will likely become unattainable. The consequences will be more of the same climate change caused disasters listed above.

The Working Group II contribution, *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability*, was released in February 2022. This report was written by 270 top scientists from 67 countries with help from NOAA scientists.

The Working Group III contribution, *Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change*, was released in April 2022 and focuses on emission reduction and climate change mitigation efforts worldwide.

It is important to note that the IPCC does not do the scientific research. In fact, they have the task of putting together a comprehensive report that synthesizes over 14,000 scientific papers as well as input from scientists, governments, businesses and individuals. Contributing scientists are chosen by their nations, not the UN. Therefore, the reports contain the best information available at the time it is presented.

References: [www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-cycle/](http://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-cycle/)

## ***Climate Change in Kansas***

As suggested above, studying our own state's weather and climate first before learning about how the changing global climate is affecting our state might keep folk interested long enough to learn about climate change. Introduce the changing climate and explain why it is happening and what a changing climate means to our state discussing the concerns of farmers and ranchers to make it relevant to your audience. This website may be helpful: [statesatrisk.org/kansas](http://statesatrisk.org/kansas)

## ***More Facts about Greenhouse Gas Emissions***

In 2020, according to [www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions](http://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions) the breakdown of emissions in the United States for different sectors is as follows:

Transportation	27%
Electricity	25%
Industry	24%
Commercial & residential	13%
Agriculture	11%

Total emissions of carbon dioxide in 2020 was 5981 million metric tons. This basic chart tells us that working on actions to reduce emissions from our vehicles might be a place to begin lowering our carbon footprint.

The website [www.bloomberg.com/graphics/carbon-clock/](http://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/carbon-clock/) shows the current PPM level in real time.

[www.climate.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/climate-change-atmospheric-carbon-dioxide](http://www.climate.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/climate-change-atmospheric-carbon-dioxide)

We put more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than natural processes can remove. Before the 1960's the amount of increase was at around 0.6 ppm. Between 2009 and 2018 the growth rate was about 2.3ppm per year. The rate of increase is 100 times faster than it was 11,000 to 17,000 years ago. The greenhouse effect keeps the planet from freezing; however the excess emissions keep in too much heat and cause the earth to warm. These greenhouse gases keep in heat. Carbon dioxide dissolves into the oceans and reacts with the ocean water making it more acidic. This in turn bleaches the coral reef, affects shellfish and reduces the health of the ocean and the ability of it to adequately feed us. All things are connected and part of the web of life. We know that emissions are causing a strain on the ability of earth to sustain us. At what point do we say, we must seriously deal with the problem of ever-increasing emissions?

## Other Environmental Issues

### Water Health

Having clean water to drink, clean rivers, lakes, streams and ponds is important to human health and other species that depend upon these waters for their lives. In the United States, the top agency caring for water quality is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). They in turn depend upon government policies such as the Clean Water Act and the Clean Drinking Water Act, although influences of top leaders also can guide the agency's action..

To learn more about water health, visit [www.epa.gov/environmental-topics/water-topics](http://www.epa.gov/environmental-topics/water-topics). This is a comprehensive site that includes information on septic systems, safe drinking water, watersheds and waterways, lead in water, climate change and water and even a section on fracking and more.

If you want more information about fracking, go to [www.epa.gov/uog](http://www.epa.gov/uog). Fracking is a source of water pollution and has been identified as a cause of earthquakes. You can search for more information about the connection between fracking and earthquakes.

To learn about solutions to the world's water crisis, visit any or all of these sites: [lifewater.org/water-crisis/](http://lifewater.org/water-crisis/), [water.org/our-impact/water-crisis/](http://water.org/our-impact/water-crisis/), and [www.unicef.org/stories/water-and-climate-change-10-things-you-should-know](http://www.unicef.org/stories/water-and-climate-change-10-things-you-should-know).

If you are interested in the Ogallala Aquifer, go to [agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/dwr/managing-kansas-water-resources/information-about-kansas-water-resources/ogallala-high-plains-aquifer](http://agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/dwr/managing-kansas-water-resources/information-about-kansas-water-resources/ogallala-high-plains-aquifer)

To learn about water pollution, begin by going to [www.ucsusa.org/resources/coal-and-water-pollution](http://www.ucsusa.org/resources/coal-and-water-pollution) to find a great description of all the ways water quality is affected by mining, mine draining, mountain-top removal, coal sludge and coal ash.

To learn about the chemicals called PFAS that are being leached into drinking water from non-stick cooking pans, fire-fighting foam, and stain resistant clothing go to [waterkeeper.org/news/help-keep-dangerous-forever-chemicals-out-of-our-water/](http://waterkeeper.org/news/help-keep-dangerous-forever-chemicals-out-of-our-water/) This is an advocacy group, but well known for the job it does in different states as Waterkeepers.

To learn more about the Clean Water Act, go to [www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-clean-water-act](http://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-clean-water-act)

When looking at advocacy sites, it is important to choose sites that are well known and check information with other sites before using the information.

## **Ocean Health**

The health of the oceans of the world is important to the wellbeing of the diverse ecosystems that live in, on, and around them. The oceans are a big source of food and jobs for humans. They also act as a “sink” for some of the excess carbon in the atmosphere. Global warming is increasing the temperature of the oceans and, what might seem like a small rise in the temperature of the water, has a harmful effect on the overall health of the oceans.

There are many topics related to ocean health. The web is a wonderful tool to help you on your journey of discovery. Websites for children often have clear drawings that help describe hard concepts.

## **Plastic Pollution**

One of the worst of the pollution problems is plastic pollution. To begin a study of the problems of plastic in our oceans, please go to [www.oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/gyre.html](http://www.oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/gyre.html). This will give you information about the places in the world’s oceans where currents have brought together huge concentrations of plastic and other debris floating in the ocean. The largest of these gyres (there are five of them) is the size of the state of Texas! This debris is not just the plastic bottles, flip-flops and foam coolers floating, but is often a “cloudy soup” of bits of partially broken-down plastics. Often this goo can be found from the top of the ocean to the bottom. It is no wonder fish or other marine creatures see these bits of plastic as food.

Around 60% of the plastic come from land- based activities and 20% from boats, ships, off-shore oil rigs, cargo ships and cruise ships. Most large ships do not dump their garbage and effluent, but dumping does occur, and accidents do happen. Large bits of plastic trap or choke marine creatures or birds. As these plastic bits degrade, they act like sponges and attract oils spills and pesticides further increasing the danger to marine life. Adding to the goo are microbeads of plastic from shampoos, face scrub, and even toothpaste.

Microplastics, already tiny beads, are eagerly eaten by fish and travel on up the food chain to larger fish. Very little research has been done on the possibility of humans being harmed by eating fish who are consuming plastic bits. No connection has been made at this time. Only between 5-10% of the plastics we use are brought to landfills or are recycled. Compounding the problem further is the increasing number of new products made from plastic, the environmental impacts of extracting and refining the oil to use for these products and the problem of recycling itself. Often, recycled plastics in the U.S. go to poor countries that do not have enough funds to make new products or deal with huge mountains of plastic polluting their land and, perhaps, ending up in the ocean. Clean up schemes are actively trying to help, but the problem is so huge and new plastics keep coming faster and faster.

Reference: [oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/microplastics.html](https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/microplastics.html)

There have been some regulations that have helped, especially with microbead containing products, but we have a long way to go to solve the problem. It will take governments, individuals and corporate actions working together to begin to solve it. Two lessons come to mind. One is to emphasize that we should reduce the use of plastics in the first place. We can all reduce the amount of plastic we use. The other related lesson is that everything is connected. What you do has real consequences and there is no such thing as throwing anything “away”.

### **More facts about ocean health & plastics**

Here are the facts as reported at the website [www.5gyres.org](http://www.5gyres.org) about plastic in the ocean:

- If you gathered up the more than 5.25 trillion plastic bits or plastic “smog” you would have about 270,000 tons. This amount is less than one percent of new plastic being produced in one year.
- Because of the Microbead Waters Act of 2015, about 16 billion microbeads were diverted from the ocean. Check your personal products for traces of microbeads.
- 3,000,000 water bottles are used in the United States every hour and less than 30% are recycled. This hurts inland waterways and lakes too.
- 500 million plastic straws are used and discarded every day in the US. Just say “I do not need a straw” before being served. Wait-staff clean off unused as well as used from your table and dispose of both.
- 1,000,000 single use plastic bags are used in the US every minute.
- 40 billion plastic utensils are used every year in the US

Please go to [www.onepercentfortheplanet.org](http://www.onepercentfortheplanet.org) to find other not-for-profit organizations that encourage the reduction of plastic use to protect our oceans.

### **Ocean health and Overfishing**

Overfishing is another ocean health issue. The website [www.worldwildlife.org/threats/overfishing](http://www.worldwildlife.org/threats/overfishing) shows that 1/3 of the world’s fisheries are currently being pushed beyond their biological limits to recover easily. Trailing nets catching and destroying other marine life as well as the fish and climate change are the causes.



## **Dead zones**

To begin your search for information about hypoxia, or dead zones go to [oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/deadzone.html](https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/deadzone.html) There are 6,334 square miles of a huge dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico. In 15 years of monitoring, this is the 16<sup>th</sup> largest. The oxygen level is so low in these zones marine life is either dead or fled to other area. The cause is mostly from the runoff from crop lands containing fertilizer and toxic chemicals.

## **Melting sea ice**

Please go to [www.nasa.gov/feature/goddard/warming-seas-and-melting-ice-sheets](https://www.nasa.gov/feature/goddard/warming-seas-and-melting-ice-sheets) in order to discover about and see about melting ice sheets. Sea level has risen about 8 inches since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, two inches in the past twenty years, and is increasing at a faster pace because of global warming. This is a great worry for coastal communities and island nations. It does not take many inches to upset infrastructure.

## **Acidification**

To begin your study about acidification, go to [coastadapt.com.au/ocean-acidification-and-its-effects](https://coastadapt.com.au/ocean-acidification-and-its-effects) This a detailed site from Australia that shows what issues they have with this problem. If the ocean becomes acidic, the coral die or are bleached and shelled creatures are unable to survive or reproduce.

## **Air Quality**

Wildfire smoke is a source of air pollution, in addition to huge economic costs. Wildfires have many causes, but the ongoing drought conditions point toward climate change as a major influence of this issue. Better forest management can help as well as stricter building zones in fire prone areas. However, as climate change brings longer droughts in certain areas, the number of fires we will see increases.

Coal fired power plants produce many tons of greenhouse gas emissions. Air pollution from coal fired plants can lead to higher number of asthma cases, heart and lung disease, cancer and neurological issues. The worst problem is the amount of greenhouse gas emissions they send into the atmosphere which in turn affects climate change.

More information can be found at: [www.ucsusa.org/resources/coal-and-air-pollution](https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/coal-and-air-pollution)

Vehicle emissions are a source of air pollution, releasing particulate matter, smog forming carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide, and the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide. Electric vehicles might help, but they need batteries to run. These batteries use special metals that need to be mined. The batteries also need to be recycled and electric

“filling” stations need to be built. Stronger controls on vehicle emissions will help. The best solutions may be to walk and bike more, use public transportation, carpool, rideshare, and to consider an electric car.

More information is at:

[www.epa.gov/transportation-air-pollution-and-climate-change/carbon-pollution-transportation](http://www.epa.gov/transportation-air-pollution-and-climate-change/carbon-pollution-transportation)

Refineries and plastics factories are also great emitters of air pollution. To learn about pollution from refineries go to [sciencing.com/environmental-pollution-caused-by-factories-12071269.html](http://sciencing.com/environmental-pollution-caused-by-factories-12071269.html) and [www.theworldcounts.com/stories/pollution-from-plastic](http://www.theworldcounts.com/stories/pollution-from-plastic). These factories emit benzene, lead, hydrogen dioxide, and other contaminants into the air. They cause neurological issues, breathing difficulties, cancer, skin disorders, birth defects and other problems. These factories are also located in poorer areas and are of concern to scholars who study environmental justice issues, health care costs, substandard housing, and unemployment.

The above is just a snapshot of the environmental issues. There will be many more to study as the Green Team continues from year to year. Remember that you can call in speakers, do book studies, write articles for your newsletter, do Sunday school classes, create bulletin board displays, etc.

### **Land Use Issues**

There are many environmental issues to study that deal with land use. Have you ever wondered how the world is going to feed more than 9 billion people? To get started on researching that topic you could begin with the National Geographic article at [www.nationalgeographic.com/foodfeatures/feeding-9-billion/](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/foodfeatures/feeding-9-billion/). The article contains some interesting ideas. One is “freezing” the physical footprint of the world’s agricultural land and growing more on less land. This might call for a different type of farming practices. To find out more about some innovations being developed right here in Kansas go to [www.landinstitute.org](http://www.landinstitute.org). This organization in Salina, Kansas, founded by Wes Jackson, is developing perennial wheat and rice and working on different farming practices.

We can’t forget the importance of the tropical rain forest when studying land use. The rain forest has been a wonderful carbon “sink” for years, absorbing excess carbon from the atmosphere. It has also been home to undiscovered creatures and undiscovered natural medical breakthroughs. Unfortunately, the rain forest is being burned, logged and made into farms and ranches even though the world has begged local leaders to keep it intact. To begin your study, go to [www.npr.org/2021/07/15/1016469317/parts-of-the-amazon-rainforest-are-now-releasng-more-carbon-than-they-absorb](http://www.npr.org/2021/07/15/1016469317/parts-of-the-amazon-rainforest-are-now-releasng-more-carbon-than-they-absorb)

Another issue worth investigating are the advantages and disadvantages of factory farming. We know many of the worst problems associated with some large factory farms are air and water pollution, high use of antibiotics, in some cases, animal abuse,

and the potential of big problems when areas flood and pollutants are released into the water system, into streams and rivers. Look at [www.greenandgrowing.org/factory-farming-information/](http://www.greenandgrowing.org/factory-farming-information/) However, we love to eat the products produced, love the low prices, and ready supplies. To learn more about the advantages and disadvantages go to [www.futureofworking.com/10-advantages-and-disadvantages-of-factory-farming](http://www.futureofworking.com/10-advantages-and-disadvantages-of-factory-farming) To learn more about how some cattle operations are cleaning up their procedures, go [www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com/raising-beef/beef-sustainability](http://www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com/raising-beef/beef-sustainability).

The soil under our feet is rich with life and the earth should produce food enough for all, if we moderate the amount of meat we eat and are better at distributing food and helping stressed areas cope better with climate change. Think about inviting a soil scientist to talk to a study group about all the living organisms in soil and how healthy soil can feed us all. We must think more carefully about how we do the things to keep the land systems working sustainably.

Regenerative agriculture is concerned with the complete farming system including the animals, land, and the farming economy. Some information about regenerative agriculture can be found at [sustainableamerica.org/blog/what-is-regenerative-agriculture/](http://sustainableamerica.org/blog/what-is-regenerative-agriculture/) and [foodprint.org/blog/regenerative-agriculture-definition/](http://foodprint.org/blog/regenerative-agriculture-definition/) .

Another issue is the amount and kinds of pesticides and herbicides that are used when growing crops. What do they do to the soil, the waterways and to you? One website to use to begin your search is [www.nmhealthysoil.org/2021/05/13/pesticides-cause-widespread-harm-to-soil-health/](http://www.nmhealthysoil.org/2021/05/13/pesticides-cause-widespread-harm-to-soil-health/).

This site lists a lot of the different classes of pesticides and herbicides and their uses and potential harms.

People really want to discover how to protect wildlife and pollinators and still have a beautiful backyard. Please go to [ncipmhort.cfans.umn.edu/ipm-bmp-cultural-control/backyard-landscape-best-management-practices-pollinators](http://ncipmhort.cfans.umn.edu/ipm-bmp-cultural-control/backyard-landscape-best-management-practices-pollinators).

Are you curious about the process of developing GMO seeds. Is the process safe? Do GMO crops save on pesticide use? What is “drift” and what does this mean for farmers who grow non-GMO crops? To begin your search go to: [www.onegreenplanet.org/animalsandnature/the-environmental-impact-of-gmos/](http://www.onegreenplanet.org/animalsandnature/the-environmental-impact-of-gmos/). Let curiosity be your guide as you search for information about permaculture, habitat loss, urban sprawl, city food deserts and environmental refugees to name just a few topics. There are so many choices for study.

### **Extinction Threats and Loss of Biodiversity**

Extinction is the disappearance of one or more species. Biodiversity refers to the variability of species and of the variety of species within an ecosystem. The higher the

threat of extinction, the more the health of an ecosystem is threatened. One of the easiest websites to understand on this topic is from the Conscious Club: [www.theconsciouschallenge.org/ecologicalfootprintbibleoverview/extinction-biodiversity](http://www.theconsciouschallenge.org/ecologicalfootprintbibleoverview/extinction-biodiversity). Extinctions are a normal part of the process of evolution. However, the present rate and magnitude of extinctions are rising very quickly, 1000 to 10,000 times the background, or standard, rate of extinction. To understand some of the causes, go to [www.sciencedirect.com/topics/immunology-and-microbiology/species-extinction](http://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/immunology-and-microbiology/species-extinction). The international Union for Conservation of Nature has a Red List of extinctions. Go to [www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org). Beyond losing iconic creatures, the loss of biodiversity and increase in extinction leads to the overall decline in the health of ecosystems. To begin learning about this issue, go to [ourworldindata.org/search?q=extinction](http://ourworldindata.org/search?q=extinction). The topic of extinction and biodiversity is a complex one, however, even a beginning Earth Steward can wonder at the possible loss of the Monarch butterfly.

## Working with Children and Youths

### A Sunday School Lesson

by Susan Schackelford, Trinity, Lawrence

*A Sunday School lesson for younger children, preschool through second grade*

Genesis 2:15 Then the Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and guard it.

Genesis 1:28 [Then God said to Adam and Eve,] "I am putting you in charge of the fish, the birds, and all the wild animals" (Today's English Version)

Opening prayer:

Almighty God, and loving Father, we thank you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; and above all for your love shown to us in the Lord Jesus Christ. Help us now to learn to value and protect the land you have given us to cultivate and the animals you have put in our charge. in Jesus' name, Amen.



Demonstration:

Put a child in charge of a bowl of candy, asking:

Can you eat all of the candy now?

Can you take it home for later?

Can you share it with all your friends?

Put a child in charge of a splashy amount of dollar bills, asking:

Is this money yours now?

Can you spend it?

Whose money is it?

Put two or three children in charge of stuffed "pets", asking:

Can you dress them up in doll clothes?

Can you play with them and forget them?

What does it mean to be in charge of these pets?

Scripture:

Summary of how God created the universe and presentation of Genesis 2:15 and 1:18.  
Discussion of what it means to be in charge of something, and to be in charge of all the animals.

Habitats:

While showing pictures or flash cards of various animals, ask where each one lives.  
Have a balanced representation of animals living in the ground, on water, in trees and plants, those who build complicated housing for themselves.

Present the word "habitat" and verify that the children know what it means.

Discussion of how we can "guard" animal habitats and "be in charge" of animals.

Summary:

Have the children answer the following questions:

Who is in charge of the animals?

Who put us in charge?

Does it mean we can do what we want to the animals?

Who is supposed to guard the land?

Who told us to?

Does that mean we can do what we want to with it?

What is the name of the surroundings animals live in?

Activity:

If possible, take the children outdoors to observe different animal habitats: the ground, puddles, grass, bushes, trees, eaves, etc. Point out the connection between the protection of animal habitats and animal survival. Discuss ways that habitats might be protected and how we might help.

## Selected list of books about environmental issues

***This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs The Climate***, by Naomi Klein, published by Simon & Schuster in 2015

***The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming*** by David Wallace-Wells, published by Tim Dugan Books in 2020

***The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History***, by Elizabeth Kolbert, published by Picador in 2019

***A Perfect Threat: Population Control, Climate Change & Natural Resources Depletion***, by Dr. Craig R. Smith (MD), written in 2021

***Earth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet*** by Bill McKibben, published by St. Martin Press, in 2011

***Under a White Sky: The Nature of the Future***, by Elizabeth Kolbert, published by Crown in 2021.

***Finding The Mother Tree***, by Suzanne Simard, published by Knopf in 2021. It is all about how trees “communicate” with other trees. It also talks about the importance of trees in our warming world.

***The Future of Energy: The 2021 Guide to the Energy Transition***, by John M. Armstrong, published by Energy Technology Publishing in 2021. The necessary transitions were written by an engineer, but in plain language for easier understanding.

***The Poisoned City: Flint’s Water and the American Urban Tragedy***, by Anna Clark, published by Macmillan in 2019. This book about lead in the water in Flint is a cautionary tale for all who are concerned about water safety and human health.

***1001 Voices on Climate Change: Everyday Stories of Fire, Drought, and Displacement from Around the World***, by Devi Lockwood, published by Simon and Schuster in 2021.

## A few places to visit for restoration & education

The Land Use Mini-taskforce of The Care of Creation Task Force has developed a booklet that gives descriptions and directions for places to visit located in or near our Diocese of Kansas. Note the creation care tips at the end. To see their booklet, go to [episcopal-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Restoring-Our-Roots.pdf](http://episcopal-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Restoring-Our-Roots.pdf)

Here are a few places to go in Kansas and in Nebraska. Be sure to add your own favorites. A Green Team can go together as a team building outing or invite interested parishioners to make it a social and creation care focused outing.

Kansas State Parks: For information go to [travelks.com/kansas-parks/state-parks](http://travelks.com/kansas-parks/state-parks) . There are 28 parks in all parts of Kansas. Entry requires a park permit.

Cheyenne Bottoms includes around 41,000 acres of wetlands that attract millions of birds that migrate each year. Stop by the visitor's center and get a self-guided tour booklet. Go to [www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/places-we-protect/cheyenne-bottoms-preserve/](http://www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/places-we-protect/cheyenne-bottoms-preserve/) .

Tallgrass National Prairie Preserve: to get information, go to [www.nps.gov/tapr/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tapr/index.htm) The park has trails, historic buildings to investigate and tours (check for times). It is an absolute wonder in the fall when the grasses are full of color and sumac is bright red against white outcroppings.

Land Institute: go to [landinstitute.org/about-us/](http://landinstitute.org/about-us/) Check for times to visit the greenhouse where perennial wheat is being developed. A celebration of fall and a series of lectures called "Prairie Fest" is usually held the last weekend in September. There are also tours explaining Natural Systems Agriculture.

Arbor Day Foundation Greenhouse, hotel and interactive green space. For information go to [arborday.org](http://arborday.org). The Foundation is in Nebraska City, Nebraska. On display is a demonstration of heating and cooling for the hotel using wooden pellets in a sustainable manner.

Konza Prairie and Biological Station: The biological station is managed by Kansas State University. The focus of their research is prairie ecology. There is a public trail and tours (check for times). Go to [www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/places-we-protect/konza-prairie/](http://www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/places-we-protect/konza-prairie/) .



# Action

## Selected books

Here are a few books that might help anyone trying to become more active in their stewardship of creation. Check out the library and the bookstore for these and other resources.

***Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming*** is a solutions-oriented book edited by Paul Hawken and published by Penguin in 2017. His new book, *Re-Generation: Ending the Climate Crisis in One Generation* was published in 2021. The Pachamama Alliance, based in Kansas City, gives seminars on the books. Go to [www.pachamama.org](http://www.pachamama.org)

***Burn: Using Fire to Cool the Earth*** by Albert Bates and Kathleen Draper. It was published in 2019 by Chelsea Green. It is about using biochar to hold carbon.

***An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power - Your Action Handbook*** by Al Gore. It was published in 2017 by Rodale.

***Cooler Smarter: Practical Steps for Low Carbon Living*** by Union of Concerned Scientists, 2012. The UCS is a major voice for scientific information in the environmental movement.

***Diet for a Hot Planet: The Climate Crisis at the End of Your Fork and What You Can Do About It***, by Anna Lappe (daughter of Francis Lappe who wrote, “Diet for A Small Planet”). Anna’s book was published by Bloomsbury Press in 2010.

***The Soil Will Save Us: How Scientists, Farmers and Foodies Are Healing the Soil to Save the Earth***, by Kirstin Ohlson. It was published by Pilgrim/Random House in 2014.

***The Fight for Climate After COVID-19*** by Alice C. Hill. This is a Council on Foreign Relations Book and was published in 2021 by Oxford.

***Earth Detox: How and Why We Must Clean-up Our Planet*** by Julian Cribb. It was published by Cambridge Press in 2021.

***Planet Palm: How Palm Oil Ended Up in Everything--and Endangered the World*** by Joycelyn Zukerman. It was published in 2021 by The New Press.

***Saving Us: A Climate Scientist’s Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World***, by Katharine Hayhoe, published in Signal Press in 2022. Professor Hayhoe and her husband, Pastor Andrew Farley, wrote a book called, *A Climate for Change: Facts for Faith Based Decisions*.

***Global Warming Survival Handbook: 77 Essential Skills to Stop Climate Change or Live Through It*** was written by David De Rothschild and published in 2017 by Melcher Media.

## **DVD's/short films**

There are many short films and DVD's and YouTube presentations that might be helpful to the Green Team. Listed are two websites that have more than enough to get started. One DVD not listed is, *Earth from Space* made by NOVA and sold by PBS. (Go to [www.pbs.org](http://www.pbs.org) ) This DVD explains earth's natural systems and would be foundational in talking about climate change. The ISBN # is 978-1-60883-845-5.

The websites are [www.pbs.org/independentlens/blog/earth-day-watch-list-17-new-films-about-sustainability-climate-change/](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/blog/earth-day-watch-list-17-new-films-about-sustainability-climate-change/) and [mashable.com/article/best-climate-change-documentaries](http://mashable.com/article/best-climate-change-documentaries)

## **Action Steps**

### **Home related resources**

[www.energy.gov/energysaver/adding-insulation-existing-home](http://www.energy.gov/energysaver/adding-insulation-existing-home) Insulation basics

[get-green-now.com/save-energy-at-home/](http://get-green-now.com/save-energy-at-home/) Ways to save energy at home

[www.energy.gov/energysaver/energy-saver](http://www.energy.gov/energysaver/energy-saver) Department of Energy consumer resource

[home.howstuffworks.com/green-living/home-heating-and-cooling-efficiency-tips](http://home.howstuffworks.com/green-living/home-heating-and-cooling-efficiency-tips) Home heating and cooling tips, plus additional green living information

[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov) Energy efficient products

[climesense.com/how-smart-thermostats-help-our-environment/](http://climesense.com/how-smart-thermostats-help-our-environment/) Smart thermostats

### **Garden related Resources**

If you love gardening, go to: [www.episcopalchurch.org/good-news-gardens/](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/good-news-gardens/) or the webinars at [www.episcopalchurch.org/good-news-gardens-webinars/](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/good-news-gardens-webinars/) and find fellowship, prayers, and connection to others.

[www.thisoldhouse.com/gardening/21016338/how-to-build-a-rain-garden-to-filter-run-off](http://www.thisoldhouse.com/gardening/21016338/how-to-build-a-rain-garden-to-filter-run-off)

Rain gardens

[extension.psu.edu/rain-barrels](http://extension.psu.edu/rain-barrels) Penn State University information on rain barrels

[www.audubon.org/native-plants](http://www.audubon.org/native-plants) Native plants

[www.kansasnativeplants.com/guide](http://www.kansasnativeplants.com/guide) Kansas native plants

[www.arborday.org/](http://www.arborday.org/) Tree planting information

[www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/reducing-impact-wasted-food-feeding-soil-and-composting](http://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/reducing-impact-wasted-food-feeding-soil-and-composting) Composting

[www.lowimpact.org/lowimpact-topic/natural-pest-weed-control/](http://www.lowimpact.org/lowimpact-topic/natural-pest-weed-control/) Natural pest and weed control

[www.tipsbulletin.com/homemade-poison-ivy-killer/](http://www.tipsbulletin.com/homemade-poison-ivy-killer/) Poison ivy killer

### **Food Related Resources**

[www.usda.gov/foodlossandwaste](http://www.usda.gov/foodlossandwaste) Information on food loss and waste

[www.unep.org/thinkeatsave/get-informed/worldwide-food-waste](http://www.unep.org/thinkeatsave/get-informed/worldwide-food-waste) Food waste facts

[www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home](http://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home) Composting information

[www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov) Food safety information

[www.greenmatters.com/p/best-vegan-meat-recipes](http://www.greenmatters.com/p/best-vegan-meat-recipes) Vegan recipes

[www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/8-steps-to-mindful-eating](http://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/8-steps-to-mindful-eating) Mindful eating

### **Transportation Related Resources**

[www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/help-make-transportation-greener](http://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/help-make-transportation-greener)

[www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/discover-fuel-saving-tips](http://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/discover-fuel-saving-tips)

[www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/learn-about-green-vehicles](http://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/learn-about-green-vehicles)

[www.davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/air-travel-climate-change](http://www.davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/air-travel-climate-change)

### **Personal Products Related Resources**

[www.ewg.org/areas-focus/personal-care-products](http://www.ewg.org/areas-focus/personal-care-products) Personal care product information

[www.ewg.org/consumer-guides](http://www.ewg.org/consumer-guides) Environmental Working Group consumer guides

[www.fda.gov/cosmetics](http://www.fda.gov/cosmetics) FDA information on cosmetics

[www.cdc.gov/biomonitoring/Phthalates\\_FactSheet.html](http://www.cdc.gov/biomonitoring/Phthalates_FactSheet.html) Phthalates facts

[www.fda.gov/food/](http://www.fda.gov/food/) Information on food and dietary supplements

[www.simplicable.com/en/overpackaging](http://www.simplicable.com/en/overpackaging) Information about product over-packaging

## Advocacy

### Some selected books for the advocacy section

The following list is just a sampling of the many books that deal with advocacy. Check your public library and bookstore for more suggestions. These books are not listed in any order of priority.

***The Future We Choose: Surviving the Climate Crisis*** by Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett-Carnac, the architects of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement. It is a cautious but optimistic account of their efforts. It was published in 2020 by Knopf.

***The Borrowed Earth: Lessons from the Fifteen Worst Environmental Disasters Around the World*** by Robert Emmet Herman. The book details disasters and the brave advocates who tried to protect the environment. It was published by St Martin's Press in 2010.

***Advocating for the Environment: How to Gather Your Power and Take Action*** is written by Susan B. Inches. It was published by North Atlantic Books in 2021.

***The Urban Fix: Resilient Cities in the War Against Climate Change, Urban Leadership, Heat Islands and Overpopulation*** was written by Douglas Kelbaugh. It was published in 2019 by Routledge.

***Waste: One Woman's Fight Against America's Dirty Secret*** was written by Catherine Coleman Flowers. It is about the complex wastewater nightmare in Alabama and around America. It was published in 2020 by The New Press.

***All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis*** was edited by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson and Katherine Wilkinson and published by One World in 2021. It is a series of essays featuring women's voices in the environmental movement.

***The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for Trying Times*** was written by Jane Goodall, Douglas Abrams, and Gail Hudson. It was published by Celadon Books in 2021. Jane Goodall is actively encouraging youth to be hopeful and engaged. Please see [www.janegoodall.org](http://www.janegoodall.org)

***No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference*** was written by the young activist, Greta Thunberg. It was published in 2019. She has challenged world leaders by advocating for actions over just words.

***The Promise and the Peril of Environmental Justice***. This is a book about the true meaning of environmental justice and its place within the environmental movement. It was written by John H. Foreman Jr. and published by the Brookings Institution Press in 2000.

## **Examples of advocacy include:**

The Joint Statement from Pope Francis, Archbishop Welby and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew encouraging the world to take seriously the threats of climate change for the climate Summit in Scotland. Go to [www.episcopalchurch.org/?s=joint+statement+on+climate+change+by+welby.francis+and+Bartholomew/](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/?s=joint+statement+on+climate+change+by+welby.francis+and+Bartholomew/) and scroll down to the joint statement. You can join in this advocacy by inviting neighbor churches to read it and discuss it together.

Kansas ecumenical advocacy is an organization called Kansas Interfaith Action (KIFA). It promotes the awareness of violence, poverty, and environmental disruption, and offers advocacy opportunities to address these issues. You can support the goals of KIFA by attending open meetings or through donations. KIFA is active in following the bills in the state legislature. Go to [kansasinterfaithaction.org](http://kansasinterfaithaction.org)

Holding an alternative Christmas market, collecting money to pay for a goat or flock of chickens for Heifer International or collecting donations for Episcopal Relief and Development or donations for your local Habitat for Humanity chapter. You provide the Christmas cards and information about the charity and folks donate funds. They go away with a card to give as a gift saying they donated in their loved one's name.

Producing a brochure for visitors and newcomers showing the Green Team goals at your church or writing creation care information in your e-newsletter. These might attract new members for the team and increase visibility. To see an example of such a brochure or archived e-newsletter articles go to [www.trinitylawrence.org/test-link](http://www.trinitylawrence.org/test-link).

## Some Episcopal Resources to Help with Advocating

It is truly amazing: the resources available to your Green Team to help you grow in your knowledge and practice of advocating for environmental stewardship goals. Please go to <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/creation-care/>.

Under Loving Formation, you will find:

- Downloads for telling your creation care stories and different liturgies, including the Season of Creation.
- A link to sign up for the Creation Care Newsletter

Under Liberating Advocacy, you will find:

- A link for the Episcopal Public Policy Network (EPPN) which covers:
- The EPPN Creation Care Series
- Partner resources: “15 Steps to Effective Climate Communication”, “Let’s Talk Faith and Climate”, and “Mental Health and Our Changing Climate”.
- A link to Action Alerts where you can sign up for EPPN Action Alerts.
- A link to Partner Organizations to see other groups, including the Episcopal Ecological Network (EpEN)

Under Life Giving Conservation, you will find:

- Carbon Tracker that explains how the Sustain Island Home carbon tracker works and gives you a link to sign up for it.
- Good News Garden is another Episcopal program related to food, gardening, and environmental justice.

Episcopal advocacy or education programs:

Creation care books and other material can be found on these websites:

Episcopal Bookstore, [www.churchpublishing.org](http://www.churchpublishing.org)

Forward Movement Devotional, [www.forwardmovement.org](http://www.forwardmovement.org)

## More Advocacy Resources for the Green Team

To read a blog written by Rev. Margaret B. Jonas, Episcopal priest and environmental activist, go to [revivingcreation.org](http://revivingcreation.org). Her blog has sermons, book recommendations and environmental hints. She serves two dioceses in Massachusetts as missionary for the environment. You need to sign-up to receive her blog. She and co-author, Leah D. Schade, have also edited a book called, ***Rooted and Rising: Voices of Courage in a Time of Climate Crisis***. Published in 2019, It contains 21 essays from individuals, faith leaders and scientists.

## Organizations with similar missions

### **Natural habitat and wildlife:**

Defenders of Wildlife, [www.defenders.org](http://www.defenders.org)

Friends of the Earth, [www.foe.org](http://www.foe.org)

The Nature Conservancy, [www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org)

The World Wildlife Fund, [www.worldwildlife.org](http://www.worldwildlife.org)

The Environmental Defense, [www.environmentaldefense.org](http://www.environmentaldefense.org)

The Natural Resources Defense Council, [www.nrdc.org](http://www.nrdc.org)

The Audubon Society, [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org) or [www.audubonofkansas.org](http://www.audubonofkansas.org)

The Wilderness Society, [wilderness.org](http://wilderness.org)

Kansas Wildlife Federation, [kswildlife.org](http://kswildlife.org)

Student Conservation Association (teams of students working as volunteers in all 50 states), [www.thesca.org](http://www.thesca.org)

Center For Biological Diversity, [biologicaldiversity.org](http://biologicaldiversity.org)

### **Human health/habitat & Sustainability:**

Food & Water Action Fund (focus on ending fracking), [www.foodandwateraction.org](http://www.foodandwateraction.org)

### **Environmental justice:**

The Union of Concerned Scientists, [www.ucsusa.org](http://www.ucsusa.org)

Earth Justice (Because the Earth Needs a Good Lawyer), [earthjustice.org](http://earthjustice.org)

350.org (working on reducing emissions). [www.350.org/](http://www.350.org/)

Greenpeace, [engage.us.greenpeace.org](http://engage.us.greenpeace.org)

Greenfaith, [greenfaith.org](http://greenfaith.org)

Interfaith Power and Light (This is the site of the Calif. Group and organizer of the movement, [interfaithpower.org](http://interfaithpower.org))

Kansas Interfaith Action, who's work includes environmental justice and is a lobby presence in the KS legislature, [ctionnetwork.org/groups/kansas-interfaith-action](http://ctionnetwork.org/groups/kansas-interfaith-action)

Sustainability Action Network (Kansas based org. working for transitions), [www.sustainabilityaction.net/about](http://www.sustainabilityaction.net/about)

Earth Ministry (e-newsletter/resources), [www.earthministry.org](http://www.earthministry.org)

The Drawdown Association of Kansas City (supporters of the Drawdown Book--ideas and seminars), [climategkc.org](http://climategkc.org)

Climate and Energy Project, (KS projects on energy), [www.climateandenergy.org](http://www.climateandenergy.org)

Citizen's Climate Lobby (working with legislators of carbon tax), [citizensclimatelobby.org](http://citizensclimatelobby.org)

Creation Justice Ministries, [creationjustice.org](http://creationjustice.org)

### **Parks/land/trees/oceans/waterways:**

The Arbor Day Foundation (trees and more), [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org)

The Rainforest Action Network, [www.ran.org](http://www.ran.org)

Friends of the Kaw (Kansas Riverkeeper), [www.KansasRiver.org](http://www.KansasRiver.org)

National & International Riverkeeper Alliance, [www.waterkeepers.org](http://www.waterkeepers.org)

The Ocean conservancy, [www.oceanconservancy.org](http://www.oceanconservancy.org)  
National Aeronautical and Space Administration (NASA), [nasa.gov](http://nasa.gov)  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), [www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov)  
The Land Institute (perennial crops, sustainable farms, based in Salina, Kansas,  
[www.landinstitute.org](http://www.landinstitute.org)  
Kansas State University KCARE Program, [www.kcare.k-state.edu](http://www.kcare.k-state.edu)  
The Farmland Organization (national), [www.farmland.org](http://www.farmland.org)  
The Kansas Land Trust, [www.klt.org](http://www.klt.org)  
Rails to Trails Conservancy (bike/walk trails), [www.railstrails.org](http://www.railstrails.org)  
Humane Farming Association, [www.hfa.org](http://www.hfa.org)  
National Parks Conservation Association, [www.npca.org/](http://www.npca.org/)  
National Parks foundation, [www.nationalparks.org](http://www.nationalparks.org)  
The Trust for Public Land (works on regional/local parks), [www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org)

**General creation care advocacy:**

Sierra Club National [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org) , Kansas chapter [www.sierraclub.org/kansas](http://www.sierraclub.org/kansas)

**Education:**

US Environmental Protection Agency, [epa.gov/](http://epa.gov/)  
National Geographic Magazine is a good resource, also use the  
Web of Creation (resources), [webofcreation.org](http://webofcreation.org)  
Energy Star Program (guide to energy consumption of devices and products)  
[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)  
The Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology, [fore.yale.edu](http://fore.yale.edu)  
Greener Choices, [www.greenerchoices.org](http://www.greenerchoices.org)  
The Story of Stuff, [www.storyofstuff.org](http://www.storyofstuff.org)  
League of Conservation Voters (LCV), [lcv.org](http://lcv.org)

**May God bless our journey as Earth Stewards.**

*This guide was prepared by the Diocese of Kansas Creation Care Task Force Green Team.*