



40-Day Creation Care Challenge

Sign up for daily updates and reminders: info@gulfcoastcreationcare.org

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
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| <p>“If the simple fact of being human moves people to care for the environment of which they are a part, Christians [and people of all faiths] in their turn realize that their responsibility within creation, and their duty towards nature and the Creator, are an essential part of their faith.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">--Pope Francis, <i>Laudato Si</i>, Paragraph 64</p> | | | <p>17 February</p> <p>"All are from the dust, and to dust all return." - Ecclesiastes 3:20. Reflect with gratitude on the reality that we are all made of and fed by the earth, and that to the earth we will return. bit.ly/YesWeAreStardust</p> | <p>18</p> <p>Plan a garden today and start some seeds to germinate indoors. An herb garden in your kitchen window can be an easy way to begin. Start a community garden at your church. bit.ly/ACES-Lawn-Garden</p> | <p>19</p> <p>Get into the recycle habit. Paper, plastic, steel, aluminum, glass, batteries, light bulbs, electronics, compostable food, printer cartridges, clothing, etc. Check with your local recycling facility.</p> | <p>20</p> <p>If a single decision in Congress can either enhance or undo literally millions of individual acts of caring for the Earth, we can and must try to influence such decisions. Take time to write or call an elected official about a creation care issue.</p> |
| <p>21</p> <p>"Be still and know that I am God." - Psalm 46:10. Rest today. Learn how to "make the Sabbath a delight" with bit.ly/making-sabbath-delight</p> | <p>22</p> <p>Meatless Monday: Livestock account for more than 14% of global greenhouse gas emission. A meatless diet could cut those emissions by 63%! bit.ly/eat4good bit.ly/SwitchPlantBased</p> | <p>23</p> <p>Run your dishwasher only with a full load. Use its energy-saving modes when available, and avoid using the heated drying option. Skipping the heated drying option can cut dishwasher energy use by 15-50%.</p> | <p>24</p> <p>Keeping your tires properly inflated and ensuring that your car is well maintained can increase your fuel efficiency. Remove any extra weight from the car.</p> | <p>25</p> <p>Plant trees and shrubs that turn your yard into a bird oasis - and a carbon sponge. bit.ly/BirdOasis nwf.org/NativePlantFinder</p> | <p>26</p> <p>Take time today to repair something that you might otherwise have discarded and replaced. Rather than buying a bunch of new things, focus on what you already have.</p> | <p>27</p> <p>Want to host a film screening and discussion about Creation Care at your church? Check out this list: bit.ly/LifeOnOurPlanet bit.ly/Kiss-the-Ground unbreathable.org/ bit.ly/Cool-the-Planet</p> |
| <p>28</p> <p>Consider the gifts given to you. Pray about how you are called to use your time, talent, passion, relationships, and treasure to care for our common home. bit.ly/CreationStewardship</p> | <p>1 March</p> <p>In the US, >30% of all food is wasted. Reduce your food waste by planning well and eating leftovers. Consider composting what's left over at home. bit.ly/BeatFoodWaste</p> | <p>2</p> <p>Place an insulating cover on your water heater. "Blankets" can be found at hardware stores. Save money and energy by buying a new, efficient water heater. bit.ly/EfficientWaterHeater</p> | <p>3</p> <p>Reducing our carbon footprint is best, but for the more difficult challenges of our lives, i.e. flying, we can buy carbon offsets to support CO2 reduction projects. bit.ly/TranspClimateCh bit.ly/BuyCarbonOffsets</p> | <p>4</p> <p>Green grass lawns are not so "green." Learn how to cultivate grounds that are good for people, plants, and creatures at home: bit.ly/greenergrounds and at church: bit.ly/sacredchurchgrounds</p> | <p>5</p> <p>Fossil fuel divestment takes the fossil fuel industry to task for its culpability in the climate crisis. Check your pension and bank holdings and divest from fossil fuel holdings where possible. bit.ly/DivestFossilFuels bit.ly/GreenCredCards</p> | <p>6</p> <p>Organize a congregational stream cleanup for Earth Month in April - Project Clean Stream: bit.ly/projectcleanstream Season of Creation in September: alabamacoastcleanup.com</p> |

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| 7 Read Ephesians 5:8-14 and "live as children of the light" without electricity! As a Sabbath practice, turn off or unplug everything you can for half an hour. | 8 Choose local foods that are in season. Transporting food long distances, whether by truck, ship, rail or plane, uses fossil fuels for fuel and for cooling to prevent food spoilage. bit.ly/BuyLocalFood | 9 Turn your air conditioner thermostat up by one degree during the summer and down by one degree or more during the cooler months. Buy a programmable thermostat and replace dirty filters. | 10 Adjust your driving habits to improve mileage. If you must drive, avoid unnecessary braking and acceleration, saving up to 40% in fuel consumption. | 11 Water your garden in the evening or early morning, when the water evaporates less. Use a drip hose instead of a large nozzle. Plant only bulbs that are native to your region. | 12 It's time to swear off plastic bags. Get reusable bags to keep in the car or in a backpack. If the reusable bag isn't around, look for a box or another way to carry everything. bit.ly/TakeYourOwnBag | 13 Petition and lobby Congress (state and federal) to support rooftop solar and other sustainable energy in your region. bit.ly/EnergyAlabama ratesofsolar.com |
| 14 The average person spends 87% of their time indoors, and another 6% of their time inside a vehicle. Adopt a new spiritual practice that makes you more attuned to God's creation. bit.ly/spiritual-practices-nature | 15 Cook at home; share meals with family and friends; reduce take-out and fast foods. bit.ly/SustainableHomeCooking | 16 Re-wear clothes which aren't dirty and only run your washing machine when you have a full load. Using the cold water setting saves energy; avoid using the dryer. Read more here: bit.ly/DitchYourDryer | 17 Walk, take public transportation, carpool, rideshare or bike to your destination when possible. This not only reduces CO2 emissions, it also lessens traffic congestion and the idling of engines. | 18 Chemical fertilizers do long-term harm to soil and waters. Fertilize with mulch, compost and manure; use natural methods to remove pests. bit.ly/YardRenovation | 19 Shop selectively. While we can't produce all of our own needs, we can do our best to find companies that do it in a responsible way. As consumers, we can speak with our dollars. bit.ly/Shop-Sustainably | 20 Volunteer or donate. There are organizations out there trying to clean things up, so we can support them with either our time or our money. |
| 23 Read "Letter to a Young Climate Activist on the First Day of the New Decade" and reflect on the beauty that still surrounds us and the hope that we can find through collective action: bit.ly/RebeccaSolnitletter | 22 Purchase Fair Trade coffee, tea, chocolate and other goods. Regenerative farming practices are a potential solution to climate change. Make sure your church is serving fair trade coffee. bit.ly/FairTradeAction | 23 In your home, replace incandescent and compact fluorescent lights with LEDs. Each bulb replaced will save hundreds of pounds of climate pollution over time. bit.ly/chooseLEDs | 24 Time to trade in that gas guzzler for a car that gets 45+ miles per gallon. Technology is rapidly improving, so think about whether an electric car might be an option for you. | 25 Plant a tree. A single tree will absorb 1 ton of carbon dioxide over its lifetime. No place to plant a tree? Learn how to plant one in a national forest. Visit arborday.org and alivingtribute.org | 26 Just say no to bottled water and styrofoam cups. Carry your own mug and refillable water bottle with you as often as possible. bit.ly/StoryOfBottledWater | 27 At 8:30pm today, join hundreds of millions of people around the world who will be switching off all lights for one hour to commit to global climate action and more mindful energy use: EarthHour.org |
| 28 Rest today. Take a break from TV and internet. Turn off everything, and unplug it if you can. Play a game, go for a walk, or read a book! Read Blessed Earth's resources on Sabbath living: SabbathLiving.org | 29 Buy foodstuffs (and other consumables such as shampoos and detergents) in bulk, using your own reusable container when possible. bit.ly/BuyingInBulkTips | 30 Caulk and weatherstrip around doors and windows to plug air leaks. Insulate your walls and ceilings. This can save about 25% of home heating bills. Find project ideas and how-tos: bit.ly/weatherizehome | 31 Use traffic apps like Waze to help avoid getting stuck in traffic jams. On longer trips, turn on the cruise control, which can save gas. | 1 April Prevent contamination runoff. Don't use chemical pesticides or fertilizers on your lawn. On the driveway, avoid harmful cleaning products and take proper care of spilled oil. No matter where you live, the ocean is downstream. | 2 Set a timer for 5 minutes before your shower and see how your normal shower length compares. Try to finish your next shower before the timer goes off. Take another green step and install a low-flow shower head. bit.ly/TakeShorterShowers | 3 Work with a team at your church to celebrate Earth Week April 16-25. Interfaith Power and Light's 2021 theme is Sacred Ground: Cultivating Connections between Food, Faith and Climate." faithclimateactionweek.org |

April 4: Take some time today to reflect on all of the activities that you have performed during these 40 days, and how they have brought you into greater harmony with the earth and with all life. Conclude your 40-day Creation Care practice by making a personal pledge to serve God and serve others by pursuing a more sustainable way of life.