



Foothills Presbytery Area Highlights:

By Rebecca Barnes, Coordinator, Presbyterian Hunger Program

“If we say we are without sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” For many of us, this line of confession has been part of the liturgy of our worship and our lives for a long time. As Christians, we articulate a belief that we are created in the image of God and are beloved, *and also* that we are human, we make mistakes, and we are flawed. We get caught in personal and corporate brokenness. We do not do what we ought. We do what we ought not. This is part of our conundrum and our identity, and a reason we confess before neighbor and God.

Also critical to our tradition is our conviction that God meets our confession of sin with love and grace and mercy. We believe that the Holy Spirit can enliven and empower us to transform our lives, to turn from sin and to embrace new life offered in Christ. This grace is not cheap. It does not say that sin doesn’t matter. It doesn’t mean that we can go back in time and undo our offense. It means that we are loved in a way that allows us to start again, to begin again, this moment, to do better to open ourselves to God and allow the Spirit to work in our lives for God’s desires for a beloved community.

So why is it so hard for people of my racial background—white people—to be real about racism, white privilege, and white supremacy? Why is it really hard—and harsh to our ears—to admit that we have lived, breathed, and been taught racism and absorbed it through our bodies and brains from a very early age? Why do we have the impulse to start sentences with “I’m not racist...”? I have never heard someone proclaim “I’m not a sinner...” I can just imagine what church people would think if someone threw that claim into conversations.

Instead of proclaiming that we couldn’t possibly be associated with something hurtful, we say in church settings: I have sin, I participate (sometimes unknowingly) in sin, and I confess sin in myself and in the world around me. I am aware of the power of sin even as I believe God’s love and grace are more powerful.

What if similarly we said, I have racism inside me, I participate (sometimes unknowingly) in racism, and I confess race-based privileges for myself (a white person) and a standard/supremacy our culture has long maintained for people in my racial category (white people). I need God’s help, I invite the Spirit in, I feel Christ’s companionship as I confess the sin of racism in myself and the world around me so that I can be empowered by the Holy Spirit to undo racism and white supremacy culture?

There is so much to learn from the book *White Fragility**. This is just one of many learnings. Our inability to say, “I’m white, I’m privileged, I’ve been raised in a racist culture and so have we all”—should sound hollow. It should be hollow to feel so unable or uncomfortable to admit complicity, as Christians who regularly confess that we are flawed, that we have sin. It doesn’t mean that we are “bad,” on a good/bad binary, as the author talks about. There is no such thing as a sinless person, more beloved by God than the sinner. We don’t have to bend over backwards to try to prove we are a good white person as opposed to a bad white person. Instead, we need to get over ourselves, admit our complicity, and move to action for racial justice so we can get closer to

becoming the kin-dom that God calls us to be. We trust our belovedness, and we trust that we can and have gotten it wrong. We ask God's help, and we learn, and we do better.

PHP understands that ending hunger and poverty can only happen by creating just economic policies and healthy, equitable food and farming systems. We believe that dismantling systemic racism is a central component of this work.

For Racial Justice Resources visit <https://www.pcusa.org/racial-justice-resources/>

Tips for what allies can do from 'Black Lives (Still) Matter'?

*Sustainable Living and Earth Care Concerns purposes to accompany Presbyterians reflecting on decisions as an extension of their faith and values. As a staff we remember our own need for faithful discipleship through continuous education, questioning and discovery. Most recently we have done that by reading the book [White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People To Talk About Racism](#). The *New York Times* best-selling book explores the reactions of white people when challenged around race and how these reactions maintain systems of racial inequality. See other staff reflections [here](#) and [here](#).

“... God's work in creation is too wonderful, too ancient, too beautiful, too good to be desecrated ... Restoring creation is God's own work in our time, in which God comes both to judge and to restore ...” —PC(USA) Environmental Policy

2020 marks the 50th year anniversary of Earth Day!

Celebrate Earth Day Every Day! Our lives depend on it!

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/>

Is your church interested in becoming more involved as stewards of God's earth?

Join with the other churches in South Carolina who have formalized the commitment and become an Earth Care Congregations!

Dorchester Presbyterian Church / *Summerville, SC*

First Presbyterian Church Spartanburg / *Spartanburg, SC 1st Year, Congratulations!*

Forest Lake Presbyterian Church / *Columbia, SC*

Lowcountry Presbyterian Church / *Bluffton, SC*

North Anderson Community Church Presbyterian / *Anderson, SC Multiple year!*

Shandon Presbyterian Church / *Columbia, SC*

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church / *Charleston, SC*

Use [“Earth Care Congregations: A Guide to Greening Presbyterian Churches”](#) to find ideas for earth care projects.

To become certified as Earth Care Congregations churches take the [“Earth Care Pledge”](#) and complete activities and projects in the fields of worship, education, facilities and outreach. Submit your application (see below “getting started”) January 1-February 15 of the calendar year in which you’d like to be certified.

[Download an Earth Care Congregations bulletin insert.](#)

Getting started: Earth Care Congregations applications

Get started on the path to becoming an Earth Care Congregation or find re-certification materials by downloading [“Earth Care Congregations: A Guide to Greening Presbyterian Churches.”](#)

With the Covid – 19 Virus, Easter Celebrations and Earth Day remembrances are a bit different this year. Important to Celebrate and Remember every day!

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/earth-day-sunday/>

[www.creationjustice.org/urgency](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/Earth Day is celebrated on April 22 each year, and Presbyterian churches are urged to celebrate Earth Day Sunday near this date or to use the resource for any other worship with a theme of Environmental Justice. 2020 marks the 50th year anniversary of Earth Day. The resource is written to be useful year-round. Some dates to consider include: Earth Day Sunday on April 22, World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation on September 1, or October 8, the Sunday before Columbus Day / Indigenous Peoples’ Day. Creation Justice Ministries (formerly the National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Program) produces Earth Day Sunday resources each year. The 2020 theme focuses on “The Fierce Urgency of Now.” It features stories of congregations taking climate action, liturgical resources, and faith-rooted interpretation of recently released dire Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports. The resource and accompanying web-based materials are available for free download at <a href=).



<https://presbyearthcare.org/>



"Who can argue that materialism, militarism and racism--and now COVID-19--are not infectious diseases of our time that must be addressed if there is any hope of healing for the land?" PEC Moderator, Dennis Testerman

<https://buff.ly/3g6gour>

National Council of Churches of Christ - Eco-Justice Program Office



JUSTICE FOR GOD'S PLANET
AND GOD'S PEOPLE

<http://www.creationjustice.org/>

2020 Theme: The Fierce Urgency of Now.

In 2020, Creation Justice Ministries' theme is *The Fierce Urgency of Now*. We know we have ten years to take action to avert the most catastrophic damage to the life-sustaining climate God blessed us with, and entrusted to our care. Every action we take now matters.

Together, we foster eco-justice transformations, respond to Christ's call to right relationship with creation, and equip our communities to protect, restore, and more rightly share God's creation.

"FIERCE URGENCY OF NOW" TOOLKIT

"We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there 'is' such a thing as being too late. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action."

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Why We Take Action for God's Creation

Living out our faith goes beyond individual actions, our own households, or our own churches. We are called to follow the example of Jesus and the prophets --- to be courageous in proactively shaping our communities and our world to better align with our faith values.

In the United States, we have a democratic system that requires active input from people of faith and good conscience. A healthy democracy requires people to be educated, organized, and engaged at every level. Creation Justice Ministries specializes in helping Christian communities to engage at the federal level of US government.

MONTHLY ACTION CENTER

[JULY 2020 ACTION](#)

The Creation Justice Ministries team posts timely new actions on a monthly basis. Click on the red button to go to this month's actions, and come back every month for new ways to take action.

<http://www.interfaithpowerandlight.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/SouthCarolinaIPL>

<http://www.scipl.org/>

Earth Care Covenant

We believe that caring for the Earth is an important moral responsibility. Many faith communities have long utilized public declarations of faith, which can solidify common values, a strong sense of community, and a shared commitment toward living morally.

A moral commitment to caring for the Earth is something we should all share, but we have to make it known publicly if we want others to embody it. That is why we ask congregations and individuals in our network to consider filling out SCIPL's Earth Care Covenant. Please join us today in making our voices heard as people of faith who are committed to Earth Care.

Is your congregation, group or committee ready to take Earth Care seriously? Check out the SCIPL's [Earth Care Covenant for Congregations](#). Whether you are part of a faith community or not, we invite you to sign our [Earth Care Covenant for Individuals](#) and consider getting involved in our work for environmental justice.

South Carolina Christian Action Council - <https://www.sccouncil.net/>

This day and beyond ...

A Silent Witness for Justice (worshippers may sit, stand, or kneel).

This Silent Witness for Justice is not for one but thousands of injustices. It is a silent witness to the suffering inflicted by the false ideology of white supremacy. A silent witness to the many who have justly raised their voices pleading for justice in law enforcement. A silent witness to the hundreds of thousands of many races who have and are marching for justice. A silent witness to more than 400 years of racial and cultural injustice in the story of the fully promised yet un-lived American truth of freedom and justice for all.

A Prayer

O God our hope in ages past, our hope for years to come. Help us learn from the past, work for social justice in the present, and hope for the beloved community to take place.

Be our guardian and stay O God. Help us to explore our own complicity in causing social injustice, prejudice, and racism.

We talk about systematic racism and the structures that propagate it. May we examine our own racism and our own accountability. O God forgive us we pray.

May we examine ourselves before judging others. May we honestly attempt to know one another by sharing our

stories and dialogue to understand the other. Help us to look honest the structures that propagate it. May we examine our own racism and our own accountability. O God forgive us we pray.

May we examine ourselves before judging others. May we honestly attempt to know one another by sharing our stories and dialogue to understand the other. Help us to look honestly at all the factors that perpetuate racism in our society as we do what we can to combat it.

Let us reason together. Amen.

— by the Rev. Chuck Clary, Pastor, First Christian Church, Columbia

June 14, 2020 selected Scripture Commentary and Reflection

—by Dr. Adrian Bird

SC PR and SC ETV

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote, South Carolina Public Radio and South Carolina ETV are broadcasting the series "Sisterhood: South Carolina Suffragists." The series looks at how local women played roles in a national movement that eventually guaranteed more than 26 million women across the country the right to vote. Listen below to learn more about the Rollin Sisters and their work outside of the Statehouse to help end gender discrimination at the ballot box.

[LISTEN NOW](#)

A close look at our Earth! <https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/>

The latest from NASA's Earth Observatory (30 June 2020)

Latest Images:

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/topic/image-of-the-day>

* A Dust Plume to Remember

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/146913/a-dust-plume-to-remember/?src=eoaiotd>

* Johns Hopkins Glacier

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/146910/johns-hopkins-glacier/?src=eoaiotd>

* Channeling a Bloom

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/146897/channeling-a-bloom/?src=eoaiotd>

* Ankara at Night

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/146903/ankara-at-night/?src=eoaiotd>

* Space Station Sails Across the Sun

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/146906/space-station-sails-across-the-sun/?src=eoaiotd>

* Signs of Drought in European Groundwater

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/146888/signs-of-drought-in-european-groundwater/?src=eoaiotd>

* Contrasting Landscape in Namibia

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/146892/contrasting-landscape-in-namibia/?src=eoaiotd>

Recent Blog Posts:

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/blogs>

Earth Matters

* NASA, ESA, and JAXA Provide Global Observations of COVID-19 Impacts

The web platform combines the collective scientific power of the agencies' Earth-observing satellites to document changes in the environment and society during the pandemic.

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/blogs/earthmatters/2020/06/29/nasa-esa-and-jaxa-provide-global-observations-of-covid-19-impacts/?src=eoaiotd>

Notes from the Field

* Into the Ice

MOSAIC expedition scientists returned to the Arctic sea-ice pack, greeted by a surprisingly distinct boundary between the open ocean and pack ice.

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/blogs/fromthefield/2020/06/29/into-the-ice/?src=eoaiotd>

* Farewells

Leg 4 scientists and crew with the MOSAIC expedition have finally headed for the Arctic ice pack.

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/blogs/fromthefield/2020/06/25/farewells/?src=eoaiotd>

NASA Earth Observatory

Where every day is Earth day.

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/>



<https://www.nature.org>



You Can Trust the Conservancy!

<https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/south-carolina/>

https://blog.nature.org/science/?src=e.cgs.eg.x.loc_h&lu=4273527&autologin=true

“The Need to Dream and A Chance to Heal”

July 1, 2020

[Racial Justice](#) by [Andrew Foster Connors](#)

On a chilly day in February of this year, I was enjoying a delightful time with one of my daughters, replacing the radiator on her hand-me-down, 240,000 mile vehicle. Changing the radiator in the middle of my southwest Baltimore street made for some unexpectedly wonderful encounters. There was our mail carrier who reintroduced himself after he and I had met at a neighborhood party. An older woman, impressed by my daughter’s dirty hands, said to me, “You need to come and get my son off the couch. He won’t do nothing.” There was the neighbor who used to do his own car work and offered to loan tools should we need any, another neighbor who I learned refurbishes motorcycles (“I’ve been riding them since before I had a driver’s license!”) and the random stranger who drew out an 8” knife blade to help us remove a stuck hose. “Don’t worry,” he said somewhat reassuringly, “I won’t stick you.” I was reminded how, in the midst of so many challenges in our public life, most people in most places in Baltimore City are very good people – friendly, helpful, neighborly.

As visitors from General Assembly come pouring into my city, I want to start here, somewhat defensive of my city and its culture. I love my racially and economically diverse neighborhood. I love the fact that I can walk 2 blocks, fumbling with my broken Spanish to obtain delicious Peruvian chicken and fried plantains at a reasonable price, just across the street from the clinic where people come for their methadone treatments. I love my local pub, owned by a young, entrepreneurial African-American woman from DC who told me that unlike Washington there is opportunity for someone like her here. I love that in “Smaltimore,” as Baltimore is affectionately known, I can go just about anywhere and run into someone that I know.

The culture of Baltimore is unlike any I’ve ever known – non-pretentious, gritty, real. As a blue state, we’re liberal, yes, but not in the snooty, privileged way that I’ve come to resent among elites. Our rough streets will rip apart the undercarriage of your fancy car, but you can fix it on the side of the road with help from random bystanders. Our benches proudly proclaim “Baltimore: The Greatest City in America” and we refuse to choose between laughing at this irony and accepting it as true. Both the waitress at the local diner and the Catholic priest at the church down the street call me “hon,” and Baltimoreans accept this politically incorrect address as evidence of our non-compliance with anything too formal or controlled.

It’s been said that Baltimore is a southern city that thinks it’s a northern city. Historically there are good reasons for this. Early in the history of the US, Baltimore boasted a thriving Black community. Thousands of freed Blacks found their way to Baltimore where they found opportunities for meaningful work and relief from the oppression of the deep south. Yet while their white neighbors were building their savings, passing generational wealth down to the next generations, many Black Americans were using their accumulated wealth to literally purchase their family members out of slavery. These wealth disparities have never been acknowledged much less corrected.

The Mason Dixon line is only 35 miles north at the Pennsylvania border. Because of Baltimore’s proximity to Washington, Abraham Lincoln sent troops here early to prevent Maryland from seceding from the union during the Civil War. As a result, Maryland was exempt from the federal requirements imposed on southern states

through Reconstruction. Hence many Confederate sympathizers moved to Baltimore following the war with their white supremacist ideologies intact. Those ideologies put Baltimore on the map again, this time as an innovator in segregationist policies.

When de jure segregation was struck down by the courts, Baltimore employed restrictive “covenants,” where white homeowners took over deeds that included prohibitions against selling to Blacks in neighborhoods where agents refused to sell to Jews (initially a 3-layer structure of prejudice). The effects of restrictive covenants were amplified by the federal government’s redlining – maps disclosed only to banks, guiding them in which sorts of loans would be low risk and which would be high. Racially homogenous neighborhoods were considered the safest investments, mixed race neighborhoods the riskiest. In many ways, our nation has never recovered from those maps which have become a part not only of our policies but of our psychic geography.

The church has been on both sides of those maps. Many of the white Presbyterian Churches in our Presbytery followed the white (and later Black middle class) flight out of the city beginning in the 1950s. They sold their church buildings to Black congregations and built new facilities across the city line, feeding and following Baltimore’s decline from city of over a million to one of 600,000 today. My own congregation, Brown Memorial, split the difference, opening up a “second location” in the county, trying to adapt to changing realities and loss of members without losing our full commitment to the city. Ten years later when folks in the then well-resourced county church started scratching their heads as to why they should keep open a declining city congregation, an amicable separation occurred. The split forced that gritty, “throw it against the wall and see if sticks” kind of church culture that I’ve come to appreciate. In Baltimore, we’re never too proud to fail. We can, at times, be quite proud of it.

Back on the street that February day, at about 1:30 pm my father-daughter auto repair delight was shattered by the not so unfamiliar “pop, pop, pop” of gunfire just a few blocks away. Round after round lit up the air. “I think someone just died,” I said to my daughter. We paused with an unrehearsed moment of silence which was quickly displaced by sirens, the whirring police helicopter, the screeching of police tires. Three people had been shot, including a 15 year-old boy. Our work continued, this time on edge.

This is the Baltimore that most out-of-towners imagine. It is, unfortunately, also part of our reality. The shootings do seem to come daily now and the drugs are unstoppable. Three blocks from where I live, a new heroin market is so active that somebody put it on Google Maps so that out of towners could find it easily off I-95. My next door neighbor was shot one night as he came home from work. Foolishly, he did refuse to give the gun toting youths what they wanted, but still. The week I wrote this piece a parishioner shared with me how two of her friends had died in overdoses in the same week. A recovering heroin addict herself, I asked her how it is that she survived. “I was given the chance to heal,” she told me.

Baltimore, it seems, has yet to be given a chance to heal. The police department has been the most corrupt in the US, yet unlike some of the activists who flooded Baltimore during the uprising, most neighbors do want police in their neighborhoods – they just want them to get out of their cars, learn how to engage people, and be held accountable to constitutional policing. Unemployment is rampant, yet most Baltimoreans are hungry for living wage work – jobs to replace the Bethlehem Steel manufacturing jobs – a disappearance at the real root of our decades long crime problems, and the boarded up homes that litter our landscape. Too many to count have gone to prison, yet the transition out of prison still makes it difficult to earn an honest living in a city where the drug economy is the most effective corporate recruiter program around. Baltimore needs a chance to heal.

A lot of churches have tried to be a part of that healing through the years. Our soup kitchens, afterschool programs, tutoring initiatives, housing upstarts – they are all important ways the church is living the Gospel in the city. But direct service isn’t enough and it won’t finally change our city. What will change it is disrupting business as usual with Pauline inspired, Christologically disruptive activities that we read about in the New

Testament, practices adopted from those prophets in the Hebrew Scriptures who put on sackcloth, marched around city gates, hung around with prostitutes and sinners before they ever passed resolutions about any of them. We have to learn how to put our bodies into action not only our words. There is a reason that the Spirit is connected to the breath – the life force – of our bodies.

That's impossible to do in a week, of course. Presbyterians have to learn how to organize power across those lines that someone else put on the maps, lines that we continue to observe as if we didn't have the freedom to cross them. Having organized now for 15 years with BUILD,* I've learned that before we do anything together we have to listen to each other. And when we listen, we begin to gain the greatest gift that God is dying to give us – the belief that we can change with our city. In fact, the inability to dream what is possible may be the greatest threat to faith in our time. In a city with over 300 murders a year, and where more than 700 people a year die from overdoses, it's hard to know sometimes which is the greater tragedy – that some of us have given up on the idea that we can deal with pain in any way other than ending life, or that others of us have given up on the idea that we can tackle our biggest public problems together.

We have to dream a little. Of course, when we dream like that, the church has to change along with the community. We have to imagine church differently than we've imagined it in the past. I was reminded of this recently at my local bar. So frequently have I visited this establishment that the owner of the bar recently asked me to "hold church" there on Sunday afternoons. When I asked her what she had in mind she said, "You know, you would basically talk to people about their problems and offer them spiritual guidance."

"How is that any different from any other time I come in here?" I joked. I was only partially kidding.

Only weeks before, I had overheard the young woman next to me talking about troubles with her girlfriend, surviving the murder of her brother, struggling to get a job that matched her sense of calling – some painful and important human stuff – Baltimore's problems on display in a single, precious life. Through it all, she kept talking about God. I couldn't let it lie.

"You sound like someone formed in the faith," I said, inserting myself into the conversation.

"O, I hate churches," she said, without so much as a pause. "They're all judgmental and hypocritical. They don't accept me and who I love. They say one thing, do another."

"That's true," I said, "but there's also grace and forgiveness and compassion there at least some of the time."

"Yeah," she said, "I did get Jesus there. I guess that's why I hate the church so much. We just can't ever love like he does." She took a breath. "Why do you care? Are you religious or something?"

"Not at all," I said, "I'm a Presbyterian pastor."

"Jesus," she said, downing a shot of something.

"Most of the time, honestly," I told her, "I'm just as hungry for what you're talking about as everybody else."

I told her about our community, about the rainbow flag hanging over the door, about the work in the city to get to the root of our crime which is really about attacking the legacy of white supremacy with purpose and grit. I told her about the Kirwan Commission** that BUILD was fighting for – a \$2 to \$3 billion educational initiative to reverse the legacy of unequal education. I told her about the 700+ unemployed Baltimoreans, 65% of whom have been in prison, who have living wage work because of Turnaround Tuesday, BUILD's jobs movement. I

told her about the grace I had personally received in church where most people understand that God loves us not because we are perfect, but because God's love is perfect.

"Yeah we've got our hypocrisy," I confessed. "I've got my own. I know I'm not perfect. Neither is the church I serve. But I've met God there."

She told me she was going to come visit one day. My first reflection was I was so glad to have a place welcoming and humble enough to invite her to. My second reflection was that all this talk about the death of churches is misplaced. The truth is that we've never been more hungry for the Gospel. The church needs to remember this truth and let go of anything that distracts us from it, meeting God on the streets, in the bars, and seated on those famous Baltimore stoops where all storytellers find their start.

Yet even with all of our problems in the PC-USA, as I walked home that night through the streets of southwest Baltimore, past the scarred row homes that sometimes tell the story of our past, other times point us toward possibility, I realized I was even more grateful that I have church to go to. A community struggling to hear Jesus' radical words, a place to remind me of the fact that the power of God is always sneaking up on us, always working us over in the ways that we need together, in the ways that our city needs together, in the way that our nation needs together. This place where we get a chance to heal and be healed, to receive justice, and mercy and grace, together. The faith to believe that we can change and will be changed by God.

*Andrew Foster Connors and the Brown Memorial Park Avenue congregation are active in the community organization, BUILD (Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development).

**In late 2019, the Kirwan Commission brought recommendations for improving education in Maryland in five policy areas. The state General Assembly is considering funding options as this is written in early 2020. See Recommendation 10 at the beginning of Epistles from Baltimore.

*The entire Epistles from Baltimore document can be found [here](#).

Rev. Andrew Foster Connors is the senior pastor of Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church in Baltimore.

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National Audubon Society (<http://www.audubon.org/>)

<https://www.audubon.org/native-plants> (by zipcode)

Audubon Society of South Carolina (<http://sc.audubon.org/>)



If you are stuck indoors and need a birdy-distraction, [For the Love of Birds](#) is a beautiful page filled with Audubon South Carolina’s favorite bird photos, videos, and stories!

<https://www.audubon.org/get-outside/activities/audubon-for-kids?site=sc&nid=4141>

In many ways every child is born a scientist—exploring their world, leading small experiments, asking questions, searching for answers. That innate curiosity and drive to inquiry is what Rachel Carson, the groundbreaking conservationist and author, called a sense of wonder. “A child’s world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement,” she wrote. “It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood.”

This page aims to bring together activities from across Audubon’s national network of environmental educators, including the classroom curriculum *Audubon Adventures*, plus related DIY activities and content from Audubon’s editors. These activities can be done at home or in a yard or park, sometimes with the help of a computer. The goal isn’t to teach a child how to name and identify bird species, but rather to give them space to explore and feel connected to the natural world. If you’re a parent or caretaker, that means you don’t need to worry about your own knowledge of birds or plants. All you need to be is a companion to your child’s curiosity.

“If a child is to keep their inborn sense of wonder, they need the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with them the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in,” Rachel Carson wrote in 1956. We hope these lessons, which we’ll refresh each week with a new theme, will help you find awe and inspiration in nature together. *Disponible en Español: [¡Audubon para niños!](#)*

Just for fun and learning from different points of view!

<https://flyinglessons.us/2020/06/24/birding-by-ear-takes-plenty-of-work-but-the-rewards-last-a-lifetime/>

This website is about what we can learn from the birds around us. Some of the lessons are obvious, such as the way birds can be a barometer of environmental changes. Others are subtle, like the way you, as an observer, have to adapt to navigate the world in which birds operate. We ourselves still have much to learn about birding, a late-in-life pursuit that has captivated us in retirement. But we decided to start writing about the lessons and teachings as we’re finding our way, in hopes that our storytelling and photography will help to celebrate a captivating element of nature.

Upstate South Carolina is known for its scenic blueways and award-winning drinking water. However, as [population pressure](#) increases in the Upstate, an unprecedented number of individual and industry users are now competing for our valuable water resources. Upstate Forever is working to protect water quality and quantity, ensuring that our streams, rivers, and lakes remain healthy.

Our Clean Water team partners with utility providers, municipalities, and landowners to preserve critical watershed lands and promote best practices for clean water. We also support river recreation through our blueway mapping projects and citizen-led water monitoring through Adopt a Stream.

The value of water

We are partnering with local utilities and stakeholders to educate and generate public support for source water protection.

PROTECTING DRINKING WATER

We partner with water utilities and landowners to improve the health of our rivers by reducing sources of bacteria and nutrients.

Blueway Mapping

View our maps of regional rivers, which offer paddlers of all skill levels an easy way to plan a waterway adventure.

Adopt a Stream

Join the team of volunteers who help keep our streams healthy by monitoring water quality.

Saving Lake Greenwood

Our ongoing campaign to remove and reverse the effects of upstream development on Lake Greenwood.

Stormwater Management Solutions

From working to reduce impervious surfaces to promoting low-impact development, we look for ways to mitigate the effects of stormwater runoff.

Twelve Mile River Restoration

Upstate Forever successfully worked to clean up PCBs and enhance and recreation access in the Twelve Mile River.

The *National Wildlife Federation*

<https://www.nwf.org/Our-Work>

<https://www.nwf.org/en/Kids-and-Family/Connecting-Kids-and-Nature>

Green Hour Program

The National Wildlife Federation's Green Hour program is designed to encourage, parents, schools, childcare centers, park agencies, camps, grandparents, and others to adopt a goal of an hour per day of time for children to play and learn outdoors in nature.

The idea of a "green" hour comes from research on creative play and health by the Centers for Disease Control and the Academy of America Pediatrics. Research also shows the best way to connect young people to a lifelong concern for nature, wildlife, and the outdoors is through regular positive experiences.

Green Hour program resources:

- Parent and caregiver support—[Green Hour Tips and Resources](#)
- Greener childcare centers—[ECHO program](#) and [Nature Play Space Guidelines](#)
- Park agencies—[National Recreation Park Association partnership](#)
- Nature time with Ranger Rick—[Ranger Rick's Kids Support](#)
- Kids Hook on Fishing—[Guide to a Great Fishing Experiences](#)
- [Educator tools](#) and [programs](#)

Resources and Opportunities

Online accessibility to locate trails, parks, recreational facilities, farmers markets:

[//letsgosc.org](http://letsgosc.org)

Want to find local produce and free range beef and chicken products, check out the website:

<http://www.certifiedscgown.com/>.

<http://www.certifiedscgown.com/where-to-buy-local/certified-markets/>

This website allows a search by SC county and type of products, other options as well. The Certified South Carolina program is an exciting cooperative effort among producers, processors, wholesalers, retailers and the South Carolina Department of Agriculture (SCDA) to brand and promote South Carolina products. Our goal is for consumers to be able to easily identify, find and buy South Carolina products.

Join in on Facebook:

God has provided us with a vibrant world in which to live. He wants us to appreciate and take care of His Creation, which includes each of us as well!

<https://www.facebook.com/Stewardship-of-Creation-Foothills-Presbytery-SC-138564229544090/>



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For more information, email Manella Calhoun and/or other Board of Directors at

crittersandmore8@gmail.com.

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