SCE Connections

PCUSA Environmental Ministries

October – November 2026 Issue

Manella Calhoun - mhc.clemson@gmail.com

Stewardship of Creation Enabler - Foothills Presbytery

Foothills Presbytery Area Highlights:

CAC Daily Meditations ***Center for Action and Contemplation***

https://cac.org/

"There is a deep relationship between the inner revolution of prayer and the transformation of social structures and social consciousness. Our hope lies in the fact that meditation is going to change the society that we live in, just as it has changed us." —RICHARD ROHR, CAC FOUNDER

What Do We Do with Our Tears?
What can our tears teach us about how to live with sorrow without turning away from it? Explore how contemplative wisdom can help us meet grief and sadness on November 13 with James Finley and Rabbi Tirzah Firestone.
LEARN MORE



A Bigger and More Beautiful Neighborhood
In CAC's virtual gathering, "How Can We Reclaim Jesus from Empire?" Brian McLaren shares how his faith has changed since he embraced the historical Jesus of the…
Learn More

Reformed & Always Being Reformed **- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)** **https://pcusa.org/**

https://pcusa.org/daily/devotion

What does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?
Author Micah 6:8 (NRSV)

https://pcusa.org/worship-with-us/yearbook

"…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

Presbyterians for Earth Care (PEC)
https://presbyearthcare.org/



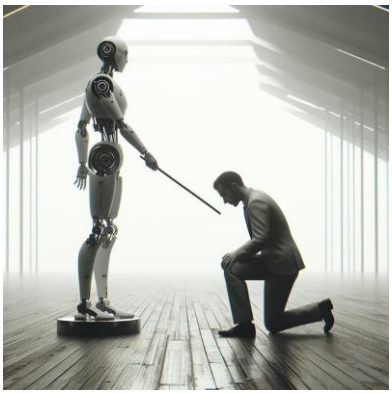
Registration is Open for this Special Program!
You're Invited: Climate Ambassador Training
Join us for free! We will host **one-hour, virtual PC(USA) Climate Ambassador training sessions** (over 5 total dates). Learn to talk about climate change with confidence, explore real solutions, and take action in your community. Please plan to attend all 5 of the sessions if possible; however, recordings will be available for any sessions you miss.

Dates: Sept. 27, Oct. 11, Oct. 25, Nov. 8, Nov. 15
Time: 7:00-8:00 pm Eastern (4:00-5:00 pm Pacific)
Facilitator: Jane Laping, PEC Member & Climate Ambassador

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER

EARTH:

Earth Action, Reflection, Theology, and Hope



The Nature of AI

"AI is neither artificial nor intelligent. "[There is an] enormous environmental footprint – the minerals, the energy, the water – that drives AI. This is the opposite of artificiality. It's profound materiality." - Kate Crawford, author and scholar

When petroleum products first became widespread in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there was no moral debate about their benefits versus their harms. Oil was a miracle lying under our feet that would revolutionize civilization for everyone's good.

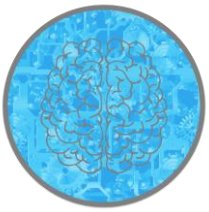
Today, we can't claim the same naivete about AI. It has already permeated our lives. (The quote above was offered to me by Google AI.) We see its benefits, but also its inherent harms, especially to the environment.

Unless our technology-based civilization collapses, AI won't go away. That's why it's important for people of faith who care about Mother Earth to become educated and demand accountability and action before we reach

the point a greater enviromental crises than we already face.

The articles, prayers, and discussion in this newsletter offer few answers, but they ask important questions, and that is the first step toward changing our present course.

Eric Diekhans
Editor



Science and Faith

As artificial intelligence races ahead of our ability to control it, could the 20th-century philosopher and Jesuit priest Teilhard de Chardin offer wisdom for our technological age? Nancy Corson Carter explores his vision of an interconnected humanity united by love—and challenges Christians to put faith into action to protect our shared future and the Earth we call home.

Read More



The Hidden Environmental Cost of AII

Artificial intelligence may seem to exist in an invisible cloud, but its real-world footprint reaches deep into the Earth—from mineral mining and energy-hungry data centers to the water resources communities depend on. Mark Douglas calls for an ecosystem approach to AI that acknowledges these costs, pursues environmental justice, and harnesses technology to help protect the natural world.

Read More



AI: Climate Solution or Environment Threat

Artificial intelligence offers powerful new ways to predict climate disasters, protect forests, and advance clean energy—but its enormous appetite for electricity, water, and land comes at a steep environmental cost.

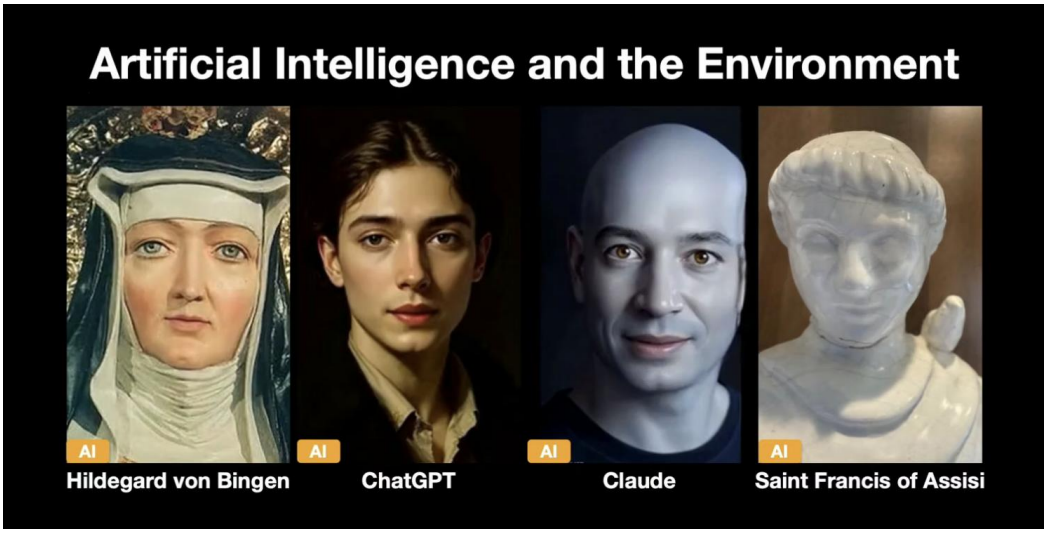
Read More

Talking AI and Faith

Video by David Barstow

A panel discussion with Rev. Mary Beene, Hildegard von Bingen, ChatGPT, Claude, and Saint Francis of Assisi with a focus on the environmental effects of AI. An episode in a series in which live human beings, ancient theologians, and AI chatbots talk about topics that are important to people of faith, and to the future of the world.

Click below to watch the discussion



A Prayer in the Anthropocene

Living God, Creator Spirit, present with us now:
in Christ, we pray, please put us in our place—
our place as one more primate among hundreds,
one more vertebrate among tens of thousands,
one more species among many millions,
humans within the community of your creation.
Put us in our place as disciples of Jesus,
near to the world's wounds,
seeking new ways to love and care for our neighbors

in a time of climate change—
struggling as a church to respond
to the demands of justice in an atmosphere
of hate and violence and inequality—
trying to speak the truth of the Word
in a culture of lies.
Put us in our place, which is to say,
hold us in your grace
and guide us as a community, a movement, a church
to seek justice,
love kindness,
and walk humbly with you.
Amen.

Sam Hamilton-Poore
with gratitude for the life and work of Holmes Rolston III

Sam Hamilton-Poore is vice moderator of Presbyterians for Earth Care.

PCUSA Resources

Find more videos and written resources about AI here:

Click Here

MCE
Missouri Coalition for the Environment
EFFECTIVE CITIZEN ACTION SINCE 1969

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF DATA CENTERS

WATER

Data centers are incredibly water intensive. Water is used directly to cool onsite equipment and indirectly through energy consumption.

- Large data centers can consume over **5 million gallons of water per day.**[1]
- Water used by data centers is mostly evaporated, which means they will concentrate existing pollutants, such as PFAS, nitrates, and heavy metals, in the water they discharge back into our watershed. [2]

ENERGY

Massive amounts of energy are needed to power data centers. Ameren intends to build gas and nuclear generation to meet data center demand, which will increase data center water needs. Increased use of fossil fuels, like natural gas, will continue to accelerate droughts, floods, and severe storms across the state.

- **One large data center can use** over 100 MW of electricity, or **the equivalent of 16,400 homes.**[3]
- Electricity rates skyrocket for homes near data centers, rising up to 20%.[4]
- Homes near data centers are at higher risk for electricity outages: In 2022, Texas data centers caused 112 MW of outages. [5]

HEAT + HEALTH

Data centers are hot, noisy nuisances. They run 24/7, creating non-stop heat, noise, and light pollution, which disrupts human health.

- Internal noise levels in data centers reach up to **96 decibels,** which can cause permanent hearing loss after just 30 minutes of exposure.[6]
  - Constant noise exposure affects sleep, increases stress, and damages cardiovascular health.[7]
- Light pollution from constant security lighting can disrupt sleep and is linked to breast cancer and negative effects on mental and cardiovascular health.[8]
- Data centers generate so much heat that their excess is being used to warm thousands of homes in Finland, Sweden, and the UK.[9]
  - **Heat is already deadliest weather event in the country,** claiming over 1,200 lives each summer.[10]
- Nationwide, data centers are expected to **increase healthcare costs by $5.6 billion.**[11]

ELECTRONIC WASTE HAZARDS

Like any digital technology, data center equipment has a limited lifespan. E-waste from data centers is expected to reach **5 million tons by 2030**, which will need to be safely reused or recycled.[12]

- Missourians have already suffered from improper e-waste recycling of lithium ion batteries, which caused an explosion resulting in evacuations, a fish kill, and respiratory problems. [13]
- Improperly handled e-waste can release up to 1,000 different chemical substances, causing stillbirth, damaging neurodevelopment, and exacerbating respiratory illness. [14]

MCE
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MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD ABOUT DATA CENTERS!

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

HEALTH + ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTIONS

- Require publicly disclosed environmental impact assessment + mitigation plan, including water use, electricity use, noise levels, heat island study, e-waste recycling
- Require most water efficient tech available and WUE of at least .4 L/kWh
- Require water discharge quality to meet or exceed water intake quality
- Electricity supplied with 100% renewables
- Strict limits, especially on low air quality days, and mandatory phase out of fossil fuel-fired backup generators

TRANSPARENCY + COMMUNITY BUY-IN

- Require advance community approval for all data center building + expansion projects
- No by right zoning approval for data centers
- Ban use of NDAs
- Public disclosure of data centers' purpose

BIG TECH PAYS FULL UTILITY BURDEN

- No rate increases for residential customers
- Renewable energy paid for upfront to match or exceed needed additional grid capacity
- Data centers first to have water and electricity service shut off during emergencies and last to have service restored

NO TAX INCENTIVES FOR DATA CENTERS

- Reject proposals that have applied for state and/or local tax abatements
- Repeal state and local tax abatements

SHARED PROSPERITY FROM TECH INNOVATIONS

- Upfront payment to a green infrastructure fund
- Community impact funding guided by impacted residents
- Require payouts for unrealized tax benefits

www.moenvironment.org (314) 727-0600 moenviron@moenvironment.org

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

http://www.creationjustice.org/

JUSTICE FOR GOD'S PLANET
AND GOD'S PEOPLE

Together, we're protecting, restoring, and rightly sharing God's creation.

https://www.creationjustice.org/action.html
https://www.creationjustice.org/52ways2026.html



Faith + Climate Film Series
Inspiring Action. Deepening Faith. Coming Together in Hope.
Faith communities across the country are on the front lines of climate action, leading with hope, compassion, and courage. The Faith + Climate Film Series brings together powerful voices representing many faith traditions to explore how our spiritual traditions call us to care for creation and each other. Each 20-minute film is paired with a Discussion Guide and Sermon + Worship Kit designed for faith groups of all ages and sizes seeking deeper engagement. You will also have access to easy-to-follow facilitation materials that empower you to confidently guide your group, complete with ready-to-use promotional resources and step-by-step support for organizing an in-person viewing and discussion of the film series. When you sign up, you'll gain full access to the film series along with these tools to lead a successful session, spark meaningful theological conversations, and integrate the film themes into your religious services. No prior experience in creation care is needed!

CLICK HERE FOR INFO

Frontera de Cristo

https://fronteradecristo.org/



Join the 2026 Border-to-Border Delegation to Chiapas

REGISTER NOW!

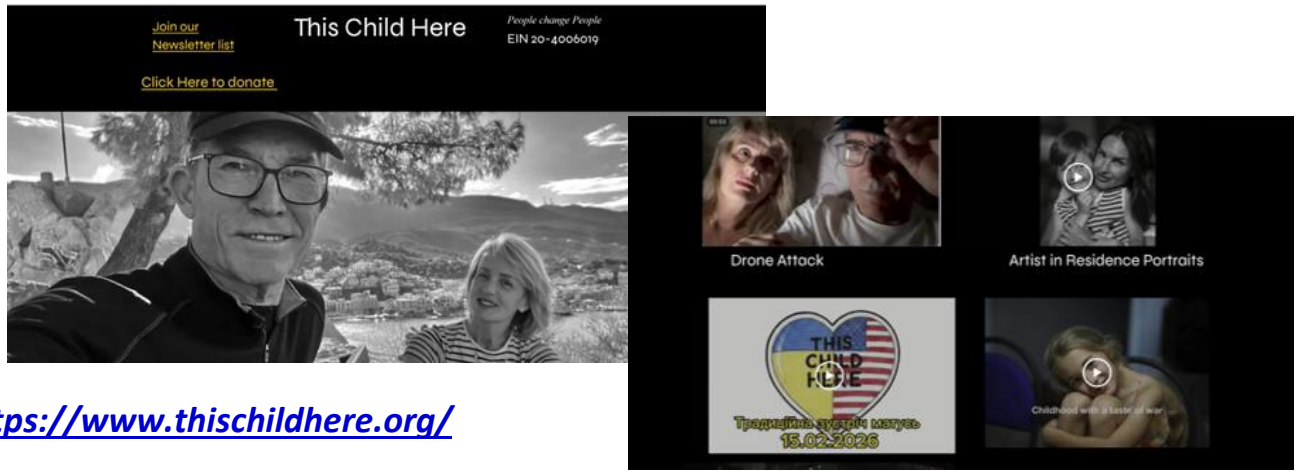
TRAVEL WITH US to the Mexico-Guatemala border, **November 6-14,** to learn about the coffee growing process, meet the coffee farmers and their families, and explore the connections between coffee, migration, and faith.

Download the flyer in English
Descarga el folleto en español

Register online in English
Regístrate en linea en español

Download the individual registration form in English
Descargue el formulario de inscripción individual en español



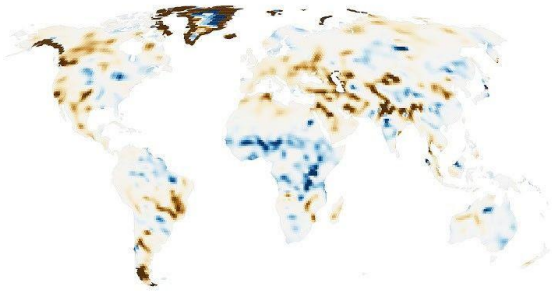


https://www.thischildhere.org/

We work with families displaced by the war. Thousands of people have fled cities in the east and arrived in Izmail, Ukraine in the west. As many fathers are in the military or still residing in places now dangerous, these families often consist of mothers and children. We provide products from grocery stores, and centres for youth and children's activities, including sports, music, art, and programs led by psychologists. Through these activities, summer camps, and the supportive

community we have built, we offer therapy for the trauma and shock suffered by these families. This Child Here, Inc. is a Validated Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

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



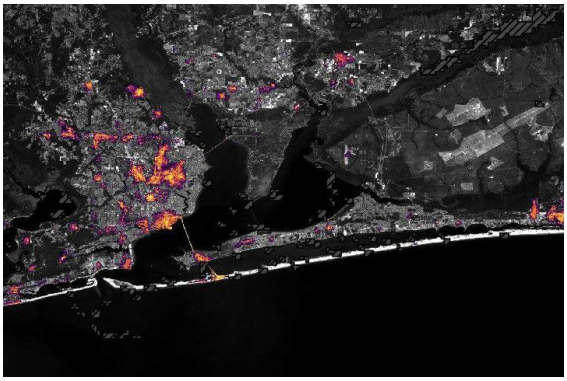
The Human Fingerprint on Earth's Water Cycle

Human activities have become intertwined with how water is distributed across the continents. A new study brings their effects into sharper focus.



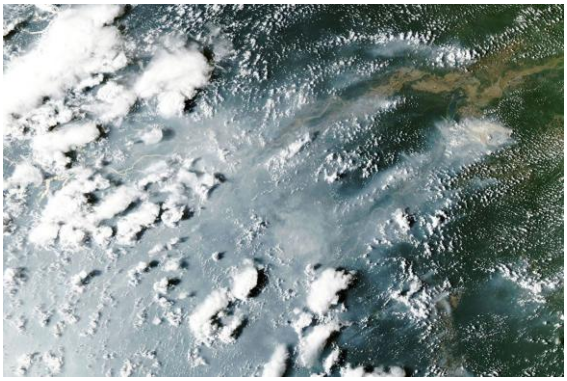
Autumn Paints Poland's Bieszczady Mountains

Fall color covers the forested slopes of Bieszczady National Park, while patches of polonina, a type of high-mountain meadow, have turned tan.



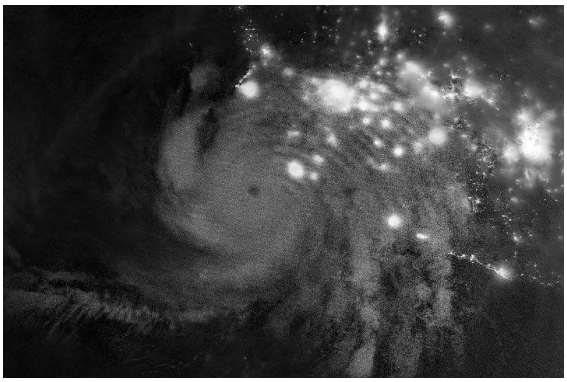
Isaias Dims the Gulf Coast

High-definition images of nighttime lights show where the hurricane knocked out power along the Florida Panhandle and how quickly the lights came back.



Fires Arrive in the Amazon Rainforest

During El Niño, a cascade of fires across the tropics begins in equatorial Asia and continues in the central and eastern Amazon.



Hurricane Simon Lurks Off the Mexican Coast

Though it remained offshore, the storm lashed coastal areas with high winds and flooding—and produced remarkable rippling patterns in the upper atmosphere.

More from NASA Earth Science

- **NASA Satellites Observe Historic 2026 El Niño**

A phenomenon rarer than a solar eclipse and more powerful than any single storm system is unfolding this fall, and NASA is tracking it closely.

- **Re-Connecting on the North Slope: NASA FORTE's Summer 2025 Pre-Field Visit**

In July 2025, NASA's Earth Venture Suborbital Mission FORTE (Frontlines of Rapidly Transforming Ecosystems) went into action on the North Slope of Alaska.

NASA Earth Observatory

Where every day is Earth day

Visit science.nasa.gov/earth/earth-observatory

UNBOUND

http://justiceunbound.org/

The Intersections of Faith and Justice



About Us

Unbound: An Interactive Journal of Christian Social Justice is an online journal and community that examines, expresses, and encourages commitments to social justice as inspired by the prophetic gospel of Jesus Christ. As both a journal and a forum for conversation, action and community building. Unbound seeks to be an inclusive and welcoming platform, no matter one's gender, sexuality, race, religion, age, ability or creed. We seek to experience and express different perspectives that further the Kin-dom of God and move us toward the arc of justice.

MORE LIGHT PRESBYTERIANS

https://mlp.org/

Find a church - https://mlp.org/churches-ministries/

Job Listings - https://mlp.org/job-listings/

Upcoming Events - https://mlp.org/calendar/

Newsletters - https://mlp.org/newsletters/

COVENANT NETWORK OF PRESBYTERIANS

https://covnetpres.org/ Office Address: Kansas City, MO 64109 Contact: 816-605-1031

https://covnetpres.org/find-a-church/ info@covnetpres.org

Engaging. Educating. Equipping.



The National Conference will be back!

Thirty years after its founding, CNP returns to Chicago for the Covenant Conference, September 21-23, 2027, featuring keynote speakers, worship and workshops centered on the church's continuing call to LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

Read more →

Where Faith Meets Fellowship... Explore - Connect – Grow

Engaging our community in experiences for better living, stronger communities, and spiritual growth and development.

Plan a Church Small Group Retreat! ***https://www.campfellowship.org/***

Upcoming Events



TLC Road Trip: White Creek Alpaca Sanctuary October 22, 2026



Fall Quilting Retreat November 1, 2026 – November 4, 2026



Winter Camp 2026 December 4, 2026 – December 5, 2026



Winter Warm-Up Knitting Retreat Feb 11, 2027 – Feb 14, 2027

The Learning Current is a Lake Campus Program connecting adult learners of all ages with a variety of courses (lectures, conversations, hands-on workshops and field experiences) building on our mission to make connections for better living, stronger communities and personal and spiritual growth and development.
Want more information about a program on the schedule? Have an idea for future programs? Want to partner with us?

https://www.campfellowship.org/tlc
Email: LakeCampus@campfellowship.org

https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home

https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home#:~:text=Join%20Us%20at,Video

What's Up? BirdCast Can Tell You!

BirdCast is helping unravel the mysteries of bird migration using weather radar stations across the U.S. Check out our how-to guide to BirdCast's latest bird migration prediction and tracking tools to help you better enjoy and understand birds this fall.

Bird News and Resources

Thinking About Buying Binoculars? We can help you zero in on the types of binoculars that are perfect for your birding style, with comprehensive reviews of more than 60 models in three different sizes.

Attend a Bird Festival: Festivals are a great way to enjoy birds and meet like-minded people. See our bird festival directory.

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



Help Birds With Native Plants

Bird-Friendly Communities
Get to Know Native Plants
Whether you're looking to attract birds to your home or increase your awareness outdoors, let this primer be your guide.

Search our database to find native plants for your ZIP code »

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!

The *National Wildlife Federation - https://www.nwf.org/*

https://www.nwf.org/Magazines/National-Wildlife/2026/Winter/PhotoZone/2025-Photo-Contest

https://www.nwf.org/nativeplantfinder/

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

https://www.scwf.org/ Keep South Carolina *Wild*



"We will be known forever by the tracks we leave."

This Native American saying conveys the importance of making
decisions now to have a long-lasting positive impact for wildlife.

Contact Angi Fuller Wildt at 803-256-0670 or
angi@scwf.org to learn more about smarter ways to give that benefit you now and build a legacy for the future!

Thank you *for ensuring that we can continue our work to restore key habitats and advocate on behalf of wildlife well into the future.*

National Environmental Education Foundation

https://www.neefusa.org

Explore **Climate Change**

Learn more about the factors that can cause the planet to warm or cool and how they affect our health and the environment

https://www.neefusa.org/explore/climate-change

Explore **Environmental Education**

Environmental Education is at the core of our work and can be applied to a diverse set of learning environments

https://www.neefusa.org/explore/environmental-education

Animal Migration Activity Guide

Designed for elementary age kids, this activity guide can be used in a classroom or at home for fun and easy ways to learn about animal migration. Read More

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Resources and Opportunities

This is a free national program that connects families to the outdoors through hands-on exploration. Self-guided Track Trail activities and smartphone e-Adventures turn any outing into a fun-filled, discovery packed advent.

Don't wait to get started! Use this link to find a Track Trail near you:
https://www.kidsinparks.com/map?keys=

Online accessibility to locate trails, parks, recreational facilities, etc:
See links: https://upcountrysc.com/explore/

https://www.traillink.com/?gclid=CjwKCAiAqIKNBhAIEiwAu_ZLDkxoXaDsNKo0_zubejkEHPlZpfmizNy0ZDehbEIC7AIjQwyunrWOpxoCm-oQAvD_BwE

SC Health and Planning Tool Kit
https://www.dph.sc.gov/sites/scdph/files/Library/SCHealthPlanningToolkit.pdf

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

https://certifiedsc.com/

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.

SC PBS Learning Media for Teachers and Students

https://scetv.pbslearningmedia.org/

Unlock the Power of PBS LearningMedia

Create a free account to gain full access to the website

Save & Organize Resources
See State Standards
Manage Classes & Assignments
Sync with Google Classroom
Create Lessons
Customized Dashboard

Join in on our Facebook and other Website

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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Celebrating 9+ years!

…… is environmental education experiences that will travel to your site.

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Website: **https://crittersandmoreonthego.org/**