



LENT 2021

In Lent, we reflect on Christ's ministry, death, and resurrection. We slow down, and examine our internal spiritual lives as well as the way we live out our Christian faith in the world. Our faith teaches us that humans were put on this earth with the responsibility to be stewards. We also know our individual as well as collective U.S. lifestyles have led to serious harm to God's good creation. This Lenten reflection and action guide will help individuals take time to learn, reflect, repent, ask God for forgiveness, and take concrete steps to change course.

Week 1

February 17: Ash Wednesday

Read Matthew 6: 16-21. Spend some time praying, meditating, or journaling about your decision to adopt Lenten practices that draw you closer to God, neighbor, and creation.

February 18

Grab a copy of your home energy bill, and calculate your carbon footprint at www3.epa.gov/carbon-footprint-calculator. Take note of the activities that are the most carbon-intensive. Resolve to change them.

February 19

Laborers who harvest palms for Palm Sunday are often not paid a fair price, nor are they able to harvest sustainably. Learn more and encourage your faith community to order "Eco-Palms" before the order deadline: www.ecopalms.org

February 20

If the world reduced meat consumption by 15% it would save the same greenhouse gas emissions as taking 240 million cars off the road each year. Consider planning for meatless Mondays during Lent. Learn more and get recipe ideas at meatlessmonday.com.

Week 2

February 21

Stay cozy and conserve energy by checking your windows and doors for air leakage. Make a plan to caulk and weather-strip as needed. (These do need maintenance over time!)

February 22

The average adult receives 41 pounds of junk mail annually. This requires 53 million trees and 56 billion gallons of water to produce. Visit www.dmachoice.org to help stop unwanted junk mail.

February 23

Save energy and add some beneficial humidity to your house by air-drying your laundry.

February 24

Watch the “oldie but goodie” 14-minute video “God’s Creation and Global Warming” at www.creationjustice.org/videos

February 25

Consider making a plan with others at church for an Earth Day Sunday celebration, on April 18. (Earth Day is April 22). Resources available at www.creationjustice.org/earth-day-Sunday

February 26

Write a note to a child in your life who inspires you to sustain God’s creation for future generations.

February 27

Watch a nature documentary. Planet Earth and Earth’s Natural Wonders are good options. Marvel at the miracle of God’s creation.

Week 3

February 28

The average person spends 87% of their time indoors. Consider adopting a new spiritual practice that makes you more attuned to God's creation. Find ideas at www.centerforspiritualityinnature.org/practices

March 1

Write down one planned action you will take to honor God's creation with your landscape or garden plans in the spring. Find ideas from the US Forest Service at www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/Native_Plant_Materials

March 2

Watch the "Story of Stuff" online video at www.storyofstuff.org

March 3

Decide not to add any items to the landfill today. Use real cups, cloth napkins, reusable bags for groceries, and reusable water bottles.

March 4

If you don't already have one, consider ordering a copy of The Green Bible. All passages related to care and justice for God's creation are in green print. It is available online.

March 5

Are there "energy vampires" in your home which you can unplug to make a difference? Check www.smartenergy.com/energy-vampire for ideas. Then, try out a practice of observing the Sabbath by unplugging your electronics!

March 6

Take note of how your church's coffee hour is run. Look for opportunities to become more sustainable, such as eliminating Styrofoam, using china instead of paper cups, or buying from local vendors.

Week 4

March 7

Labor exploitation is often tied up in sustaining our current levels of consumption. Take the Human Slavery Footprints survey at (slaveryfootprint.org). Consider ways to decrease your participation in modern-day slavery.

March 8

Do you know what watershed you live in? Find out, explore, and consider connecting with a local watershed stewardship organization:
<https://watersgeo.epa.gov/mywaterway/rlist.html>

March 9

For Easter baskets, consider buying Fair Trade chocolate, dried fruit, tea and coffee or small gifts made by fair trade cooperatives.
www.equalexchange.coop

March 10

Refugee displacement and hunger relate to damage to God's creation. Spend some time reflecting on how issues of care for God's creation relate to your faith community's anti-hunger, peacemaking, and refugee resettlement ministries.

March 11

Learn where your food comes from. Explore the Christian food movement to learn how Christians across the country are making a difference through food:
www.christianfoodmovement.org

March 12

Say a prayer for God's threatened and endangered creatures. Consider sharing an Endangered Species coloring book for children to color during worship or Sunday School:
fws.gov/nativeamerican/pdf/endangered-species-coloring-book.pdf.

March 13

Do a "water fast" by turning off water while brushing your teeth, and flushing your toilet half as often. Around the world, many people have access only to the amount of water each day that Americans use in one toilet flush.

Week 5

March 14

Give up two degrees: for every degree the thermostat is below 68 in the winter or above 78 in the summer there's a 3-5% savings in energy use and cost.

March 15

Many of the actions necessary to care for God's creation require coordinated, collective action. Often, government is the best instrument for such action. Check to make sure your voter registration is current, and prepare to vote in every election.

March 16

Lower the temperature of your water heater to 120 degrees.

March 17

Check the light bulbs in your house. Are they the most efficient possible? Energy savings from LED light bulbs pay off quickly for God's creation and your energy bill.

March 18

Begin the process of thinking through how to give away unneeded clothes, bakeware, and other goods to people who could use them, and rethink, reuse, and recycle other items. Learn more at www.earth911.com

March 19

We can see through the biodiversity of all God's creation that God loves diversity. God loves diversity among people, too. Virtually connect with someone who differs from your usual social bubble. Read Ephesians 2:11-22.

March 20

Schedule a tune-up to set your car tire pressure to the recommended level for optimal gas mileage. Practice driving mindfully. Higher speeds (55 mph+) reduce fuel economy.

Week 6

March 21

Remember your baptism today. What does it mean to you to be baptized? Spend some time praying or journaling about what happens to this sacrament when the world's waters become polluted and inaccessible?

March 22

It's World Water Day. Observed annually, today we recognize how people around the world are affected by water issues:

www.un.org/en/events/waterday

March 23

Visit waterfootprint.org to learn more about water footprint. Say a prayer of gratitude every time you sip water today.

March 24

Nearly half of all food in the United States never gets eaten, while one in eight people in the U.S. suffer hunger. Check out local resources for reducing food waste, and how to help encourage local stores to give to those in need.

March 25

Choose a reusable water bottle and commit to using it instead of purchasing individual, disposable water bottles.

March 26

Plan or plant seeds for a garden, even a window garden, to support a local food system, and to remember hope and new life in Christ:

almanac.com/content/beginners-vegetable-garden

March 27

To show love for our Creator, we respect and protect all of creation. Take a moment today to pick up trash off the street, or from a local stream or storm drain.

Week 7

March 28

Read Psalm 31. As we think about Christ's journey during Holy Week, may we recognize the lament, grief, and despair of the world around us. Climate injustice, poverty, hunger, and human suffering seem insurmountable. Trust that God hears us.

March 29

Read Duane Elgin's essay Choosing a New Lifeway: Voluntary Simplicity.
www.duaneelgin.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/choosing_a_new_lifeway.pdf

March 30

Burial rituals can help, rather than harm, God's creation. Learn about how to leave a sustainable legacy at www.GreenBurialCouncil.org. Schedule a time to talk with a loved one regarding your feelings about this subject.

March 31

Choose one of the practices from this Lent that may be meaningful to you to adopt for the year ahead. Write down your choice and share your commitment with a family member or friend.

April 1 - Holy Thursday

Read John 13:1-17, 31b-35. How does creation participate alongside humanity as Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper? How can we love God's creations as Christ has loved us? Write down your commitment to show love to God's creation today.

April 2 - Good Friday

Read Hebrews 4:14-16. In confidence of God's presence and attention, may we confess all that we have done and failed to do, willing to be made new in Christ for a reconciled and reconciling world.

April 3

Support Creation Justice Ministries (CJM), the eco-ministry arm of the National Council of Churches, dedicated to combining the truth of Christ with ecological justice. Visit www.creationjustice.org/donate

Easter Sunday - April 4



Matthew 28:1-10

***Do not be afraid! Go out into
God's good world, holding onto
God's steadfast love and
joyfully answering the call to
be Christ's disciple.***

Creator of the universe, you made the world in beauty, and restore all things in glory through the victory of Jesus Christ. We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war and greed, the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love, and peace, to the glory of your name. Amen.

(from the Revised Common Lectionary Prayers)

A note from the Creation Justice Ministries Team:

We hope you found great use in this year's Lent resource and wish our Creation Justice Ministries community a wonderful Easter celebration. As we look ahead to our busiest month of the year, we hope you'll take a moment to ensure that you're following us on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram @CreationJustice.

April has a special place in our community as the month we celebrate the Earth and all of God's beautiful creation. April 22nd is Earth Day, and if you have not yet we encourage you to check out our annual Earth Day resource at www.earthdaysunday.org.

Would you like to see more resources like this? We can do that with your help! To all that are able, we are grateful for any gifts at www.creationjustice.org/donate.

