



Creation Care Toolkit



Connectional Ministries

California-Pacific Conference

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Creation Care

Welcome to the Justice and Compassion Essential Ministries Teams Creation Care Toolkit. This toolkit is designed to give you and your church resources for a campaign on creation care which will help you live out a life committed to creating new practices which help everyone understand and become involved in looking after our amazing and wonderful planet gifted to our care by God.

In this packet you will find our theological task, worship resources, activities for a variety of ages, and links to other resources which will be helpful to you. In addition, there are details on how your church may reduce its own carbon footprint, and by doing so help others understand ways in which they are able to do the same in their homes.

Our theological task

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” - Matthew 13:31-32

The land which we inhabit, including those places where our church buildings are located, is holy land. All that we do on that land is sacred and as such should reflect our commitment to stewardship, hospitality, and loving care. We are simply holding space for those who will come after us, and the things we sow in these places now are those which we hope will flourish and grow in diverse ways long after we have left them behind.

Climate care is in a state of crisis today. Floods, fires, earthquakes, hurricanes, and a host of other problems are changing the ecology of our planet reminding us (and all living things) of our very dependency on the land.

Genesis chapter 2 tells us how we are created from this very land and were placed in the Garden to take care of it. Our breaking of this covenant of trust through our misuse of the land and the waste which we produce results in far more than simply global warming. Global migration, food scarcity, poverty, and pollution are just a few of the by-products of our capitalist society.

Our social principles (§160) state that “All creation is the Lord’s and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life, and space are to be valued and conserved because they are God’s creation and not solely because they are useful to human beings.”

The 2016 Book of Resolutions (#1035) calls us to commit to living out the following: “As we continue to call for bold leadership and advocate for policies rooted in justice and sustainability, we understand that God is calling each of us to respond and that as a denomination we cannot hope to transform the world until we change our way of being in it.”

Worship Resources

(Adapted from "Church and Climate Justice", Vinod Wesley)

Invocation:

Call to Worship

P: The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims God's handiwork.

C: **Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet our heavenly parent feeds them.**

P: Day to day pours forth speech, and night declares knowledge.

C: **Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.**

P: But strive first for the reign of God, and God's righteousness, and all of these things will be given to you as well.

C: **Amen**

Opening Prayer

Jesus Christ, attune us to the deep mysteries of Creation. Make our spirits sensitive to the forces of nature at work beneath us and the suffering of those who experience these forces when they erupt. Jesus Christ, make our hearts sensitive to the songs of our kin, songs of celebration from the sea, the land, and the smoking mountain. Christ, teach us to care. **Amen**

Prayer of Confession:

Creator God, the whole earth is yours and everything in it. We acknowledge the incredible gift of our great rivers, which provide a critical source of fresh water. The lakes are home to hundreds of native species of fish, mammals, reptiles, birds, insects, amphibians, and plants.

Creator God, we confess the harm we have done to our waters by pollution, invasive species, climate change, habitat destructions and algae blooms.

Millions of people live in places where the air is not safe to breathe. We cry out with all the people, many of them children, who have breathing-related sickness. But it is not only humans who are harmed when the air is toxic. Air pollution harms crops, forests, animals, soil, and waterways.

Creator God, we confess and lament the damage done to our skies by haze, acid rain, ozone depletion, and greenhouse gas emissions.

We need the soil, the seeds, the bees, the worms, the birds, and the fungi and bacteria to make our food grow. Our countries have beautiful farmland, wetlands, forests, woodlands, and urban landscapes, which need to be treated with respect and care.

Creator God, we confess the destruction we have wrought on land by mining, unsustainable farming, excessive waste, deforestation, and erosion.

For the water, the air, and the land – all of which you have called good – we pray to you, Lord. We are interconnected with all of your creation, and we grieve when any part of your creation suffers.

Creator God, transform us; awaken us to action. Heal the hurts of our world and bring our hearts to peace. Amen

Creed:

We believe that God became flesh and blood,
Became a piece of Earth,
A human being called Jesus Christ,
Who lived and breathed and spoke among us,
Suffered and died on a cross,
For all human beings and for all creation.

We believe that the risen Jesus
Is the Christ at the core of creation
Reconciling all things to God,
Renewing all creation and filling the cosmos.

We believe the Spirit renews life in creation
Groans in empathy with a suffering creation
And waits with us for the rebirth of creation,
We believe that with Christ we will rise
And with Christ we will celebrate a new creation.

Intercessory Prayers

P: For the well being of creation that, while human action causes seas to rise and storms to strengthen, God might lead the tides of climate change to be turned and a healthy climate restored. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer

P: Storms rage and the oceans rise as all of your creation cries out to you. Care for your children in the face of nature's destructive power, especially those affected by floods and cyclones; comfort those who fear. Inspire those who work to conserve and protect your world. Lord in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer

P: Fishes and honeybees sing the goodness of the earth. Glaciers and deserts declare your greatness. Make us good stewards of our home for the generations to come. Lord in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer

P: Raise up governments to protect the widow and orphan. Bless citizens with wisdom and discernment as they choose leaders. Inspire leaders to always seek the common good. Lord in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer

P: We pray for all human beings that we will be filled with a spirit of concern for the future of the environment; bring an end to the exploitation of the earth's scarce resources; and live as responsible stewards protecting and respecting this gift of creation God has placed in our hands. Lord in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer

P: We pray for the organizations working hard to protect the climate vulnerable communities. Those who are engaged in raising awareness and building lives in disaster-prone areas and for those climate prophets who challenge the exploitative socio-economic system. Let your grace and strength prevail over them. Lord in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer

P: We pray for those who have lost their lives due to climate disasters. Let their memories continue to haunt us so that as we remember them, we will also commit to save the lives of innocent people in the future. Lord in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer

Amen

Commissioning

Go out in creation

Experience creation in its vast beauty and diversity

Stand in awe of the work in God's hands

Have courage to stand in they way of destruction

Go out to be faithful servants of the earth

Love the Lord your God

With all your heart

With all your soul

With all you mind

And serve the creation God has given us,

Amen

Blessing

You were made for this earth, and this earth was made for you.

Go forth to love and serve it, knowing in your deepest heart that you are blessed from the beginning of time. In the name of the One who called all things good.

Amen.

Hymn Suggestions:

UMC HYMNAL

62, "All Creatures of Our God and King"

75, "All People That on Earth Do Dwell"

92, "For the Beauty of the Earth"

122, "God of the Sparrow, God of the Whale"

145, "Morning Has Broken"

147, "All Things Bright and Beautiful"

149, "Cantemos al Señor" ("Let's Sing unto the Lord")

150, "God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens"

151, "God Created Heaven and Earth"

THE FAITH WE SING

2004, "Praise the Source of Faith and Learning"

2008, "Let All Things Now Living"

2010, "Praise Ye the Lord"

2048, "God Weeps"

2059, "I Am Your Mother" (Earth Prayer)

2060, "God the Sculptor of the Mountains"

2061, "Praise Our God Above" (Harvest Song)

2074, "Shout to the Lord"

Carbon Footprint

General Board of Church & Society, www.umcjustice.org

A number of resources around creation care! One resource is Faith & Facts providing information on what the UMC says and resources provided by the church around creation care.

California Interfaith Power & Light, www.interfaithpower.org

They provide free information on a number of energy related topics, such as:

- Free energy assessment provided by the Dept. of Water and Power
- Resiliency Hubs: what are they and can our sanctuaries become one?
- Water efficiency
- Solar energy

Bottom Line Ministries, National Council of Churches, USA, nccecojustice.org

Bottom Line Ministries that Matter: Congregational Stewardship with Clean Energy, a provocative article presenting an analysis of fossil fuel costs, health affects and how churches can help to create a more beneficial environment for our communities

Grove Collaborative – www.grove.co - Through our marketplace of 200+ vetted brands, we're committed to reducing and offsetting plastic waste, establishing strict ingredients standards, and crafting our own planet-first products to lead the way.

Intergenerational Activities

[**Youth for Monarchs**](#) - The Youth for Monarchs project is a scripturally grounded service-learning project, for congregations of all denominations, developed to engage youth ministries in the nationwide effort to save one of God's most amazing creations, the monarch butterfly. This website is a toolkit and its pages include everything youth leaders need to inform youth, engage the community, take action, teach the importance of creation care, and collectively make a measurable difference in the survival of a species.

[**God's World in Community**](#): a Creation Care resource from GenOn Ministries gives people in your church hands-on ways to apply their faith to the stewardship of God's creation. This seven-session resource brings people of all ages together and can be used indoors, outside, in small or large groups, at church or at home.

Using Psalms and Genesis 1, explore Creation, Light, Sky, Land, Stars, Sea, and People – through Scripture, a Creation care or enjoyment activity, and a sung or spoken prayer. Each session can be 20 minutes or longer, depending on time allotted for the Response section.

Children and Youth Activities

Youth: Craft suggestion is on the link, and they can also help in the Adults service project: <https://youtu.be/wq6FymI8HwQ>

Children - coloring:



Activities – Adults and Senior

Young People : Take a survey of your church and see how you can work at reducing the carbon footprint: [Taking an Eco-Survey of Your Home Church for Earth... | UMC YoungPeople](#)

Adults: Lead your church in an Earth Day service project planting trees and flowers around your church. Produce funding and purchase the trees and flowers and help organize all ages in a planting party.

Seniors: Elevate the Voices of Impacted Communities: Once you've educated yourself more on the needs of the community and get to know the social justice advocates in your community, support them however you can. This support can take on several forms. If it is feasible for you, you can donate directly to organizations advocating for environmental justice or lend your help as a volunteer. Support the kids, youth and adult projects helping with this important cause.

Creation Justice Ministries – plastic Jesus resource guide:

<https://www.creationjustice.org/plasticjesus.html>

Activities –All Ages

Introduction: How much do you know about birds, wildlife and plants in our area? How sustainable do you live? Did you know that God invites us to be good stewards of our Earth? While there are 490 references to heaven and 530 about love, there are over 1,000 references to the earth (1).

Come to the United Methodist Church to learn more about local birds and other wildlife, eco-friendly vegetable and native plant gardens and sustainable living in harmony with others. Crafts, art, and game challenges will be available for any and all ages!

Activities.

1. Green Sunday/Earth Day Poster - [Level 1 \(easy\)](#) [Level 2 \(intermediate\)](#)
2. How sustainable do you live? Take a survey: [Calculate your Carbon Footprint](#)
3. Prayer Walk - [How to do prayer walks](#) [Other ideas](#) [Earth Day/Green Sunday Scriptures](#)

[More scriptures](#)

Psalm 104:10-18 - celebrate the interconnectedness of living things (1)

4. Recycled bottle flowers - [Link1](#) [Link2](#) [Link3](#) [Link4](#)
5. Build a recycled bird feeder - [Link1](#) [Link2](#) [Link3](#)
6. Do you know your birds? [Online game \(level 1\)](#) [Level2](#) [Level3](#)

– note: these are Kahoot games which are subscription to edit (not play) and currently available publicly through Mar 18 (limited feature). If you'd like them reopened, email: dikaiosunen16@gmail.com

7. Origami cranes with recycled paper: [Link1](#)

(how to make your own recycled paper: [Link2](#))

8. Six session Study Group - God's Renewed Creation: Call to Hope and Action (2)

Information ideas. These can be provided in posters and flyers on recycled paper with QR codes for scanning, posted to the church social media or webpage, and/or set up for a Green Sunday event near Earth Day (April 22).

9. Invest in Climate Aware funds: [Link1](#) [Link2](#)

10. Acknowledge people who came before us - Native Americans who felt a strong connection with and care towards earth. The Diné (Navajo) people [Walking in Beauty blessings](#) prayer: [Link](#)

11. Sustainable gardening Ideas: [Link1](#)

12. Rewilding Your Garden/Yard/Patio: [Link1](#)

13. Ideas for how to become a more Green Church:

a. Reduce, reuse, recycle, rejoice! by Rebekah Simon-Peter (1)

“The heavens are telling the glory of God;/and the firmament [earth] proclaims His handiwork” (Psalm 19:1)

14. Eco-justice: [UMC Creation Justice](#) [CalPac Eco-Justice](#)

[Global Ministeries Earthkeepers](#)

References:

(1) Green Church by Rebekah Simon-Peter (2010)

<https://www.abingdonpress.com/product/9781426726330>

(2) God’s Renewed Creation - A Call of the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church to Hope and Action for God’s Good Creation (2010).

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/gods-renewed-creation-a-call-to-hope-and-action>

Resources

Eco-Justice Strategy Group – led by Kenny Funk – kfunk@calpacumc.org

Loving Formation: Teaching, preaching, worship and formation resources

Seasons of Creation 2022: Renewing, repairing and restoring our commitments to God, to one another and to all of creation. Guide to participate in this global Season, from September 1 through October 4, 2021.

Season of Creation Guide 2022 Download www.actalliance.org

Creation Care and Story Sharing: Learn to share your story of love for God's creation and to listen for the stories of others.

https://www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/01/creation_storysharing_handout.pdf

Global Ministries' environmental sustainability web page:

<https://umcmmission.org/environmental-sustainability/>

Tell Congress to Act Now on Climate Justice

Join the United Methodist Creation Justice Movement in advocating for creation justice in federal policy discussions. We are witnessing daily the devastating consequences of climate inaction. As people of faith, called to care for God's good creation and stand in solidarity with our neighbors, we must raise our voices and demand action by our elected representatives.

Right now, the United States Congress is considering which priorities to include in an infrastructure package and as part of the budget. These two tracks of legislation are key to climate action in this Congress. We invite you to contact your elected representatives today and urge them to include provisions that would reduce greenhouse gas emissions, support climate-vulnerable communities, and promote racial justice. Both Church and Society and United Methodist Women have action alerts available to easily connect with your elected representatives. We urge you to go to these links and contact your Members of Congress and Senators today. The time to act is now!! Thank you!

SunRun Offer

Are you inspired to take personal action in caring for our earth? We've established a special partnership with Sunrun to bring solar energy to our community. For every church member who signs up, Sunrun will generously donate up to \$1,000 to our conference's Creation Care Fund, supporting ongoing sustainability projects for Cal-Pac. Join us in taking a personal step towards making a positive impact on our environment and community.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1rnMO2RP2qA5cYN2KjfAn5IT8IT8kivGwvT2aqrml0Hw/viewform?edit_requested=true

**Creation
Care
+
Solar**

**Qualify for no
up front cost
solar + up to
\$1k donated to
the church.**

SCAN TO
QUALIFY