



Lent 2018

Daily reflection-action calendar to do Creation Justice

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.

The calendar was adapted by Creation Justice Ministries from the Presbyterian Hunger Program's Environmental Ministries and Enough for Everyone offices, as well as Michigan Interfaith Power and Light.

February

February 14 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 15

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.

February 16

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 congregation to order "Eco-Palms" before the order deadline of March 4, 2018: ecopalms.org

February 17

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.

February 18 (Sunday)

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 19

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. Call one or two companies to unsubscribe from their mailings or catalogs.

February 20

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

February 21

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

February 22

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

February 23

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

February 24

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

February 25 (Sunday)

The average person spends 87% of their time indoors, and another 6% of their time inside a vehicle. Consider adopting a new spiritual practice that makes you more attuned to God’s creation. Find ideas at www.centerforspiritualityinnature.org/practices

February 26

Carve out time for some garden-planning. Is it possible to cut back on or eliminate pesticide use this year? What role could native and pollinator-friendly plants play in your landscape? Write down one planned action you will take to honor God’s creation with your garden in the spring. Find ideas from the US Forest Service at www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/Native_Plant_Materials & www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/

February 27

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

March**March 1**

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

March 2 (World Day of Prayer)

Alone, with a prayer group, or with your church, consider observing the ecumenical World Day of Prayer today. The 2018 materials were created by women of Suriname and focus on Genesis 1. Download at: www.wdp-usa.org/download-free-materials

March 3

Nearly half of all food in the United States never gets eaten, while one in eight people in the U.S. suffer hunger. Spend some time problem-solving on reducing food waste at home and at church. Get ideas at www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food

March 4 (Sunday)

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.

March 5

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

March 6

Do you know what watershed you live in? Find out, explore, and consider connecting with a local watershed stewardship organization: www.epa.gov/surf

March 7

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 8 (International Women’s Day)

Women are disproportionately impacted by ecological devastation. Take local action on women’s concerns, as we help to make a better world for all:
www.internationalwomensday.com

March 9

Learn where your food comes from. Calculate your food footprint at eatlowcarbon.org.

March 10

Say a prayer for God's 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.

Mar 11 (Sunday)

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 and yourself! Relish simple pleasures.

March 12

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 13

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. Find information at www.vote411.org

March 14

Lower the temperature of your water heater to 120 degrees.

March 15

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 16

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 17

We can see through the biodiversity of all God's creation that God loves diversity. Yet, it is easy to only associate with people most like ourselves. Go out of your way to make contact with a person who differs from you by gender, race, nationality, creed, faith, economic resources, or life-style. Read Ephesians 2:11-22.

March 18 (Sunday)

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.

March 19

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 20

Try 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.

March 21

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

March 22 World Water Day

Observed annually, today is a day to recognize how people around the world are affected by water issues: www.un.org/en/events/waterday

March 23

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

March 24

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 25 (Sunday)

Read Psalm 31. As we think about Christ's journey this Holy Week, may we recognize the lament, grief, and despair of the world around us. Climate injustice, poverty, hunger, and human suffering seem insurmountable. May we pray and cry out to God, as Jesus taught us, trusting that God hears us.

March 26

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.

March 27

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 28

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 29 Holy Thursday

John 13:1-17, 31b-35. How does creation participate alongside humanity as Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper and washes the disciples' feet? How can we love one another—and God's whole world—as Christ has loved us? Write down your commitment to show love to a person or a part of God's creation today.

March 30 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.

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**April 1 Easter Sunday: Rejoice in the Bounty of Creation!**

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.