

**CLIMATE
WITNESS
PROJECT**

LENT CHALLENGE - NET ZERO



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Thanks for participating! We'd love to continue to journey together on tackling climate change. Consider joining us as a partner.



INTRODUCTION

The 40 days leading up to Easter is a significant time for the church. We are preparing to celebrate the suffering Servant, the risen Savior. "...the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:28)

As we meditate on Christ's example during the Lenten season, we should take to heart that He came to serve, not to be served. Because we recognize that the poor and vulnerable are most directly affected by climate change, we seek to follow in His example by reducing our own carbon footprint. But as we enter this journey together, don't let climate action be separated from worship. May all that you do this Lent be done as unto Him, our great and glorious God.

Through this challenge, we want to explore how to practically reduce our personal carbon emissions. Each week, we'll look at different ways to make significant progress in reaching Net Zero living, so as to be faithful stewards and secure a healthy world for future generations.

Transitioning your life to Net Zero won't happen in 40 days! Instead, use this time to make small changes that come easily and to lay the groundwork or research for those actions that take a bit more time, energy and investment to bring about.

The actions are divided into categories of your life, and each has multiple stages. Choose one or multiple challenges depending on where you are in your climate journey.

- Level 1 refers to actions that are simple, have little upfront cost, and can be done immediately by almost anyone.
- Level 2 refers to actions that take a bit more planning or may require a bit of savings to be able to do.
- Level 3 refers to the biggest actions you can do - larger scale investments that will have a good return but take more time, energy and resources to accomplish.

Approach this challenge with a community - inviting your friends, neighbors, church, block, etc. to do it with you - and you'll find that your efforts and impact can grow significantly through the shared experience.

WEEK 1 - REFLECTION



Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?

Isaiah 58:6

Reflection

Koki Rokhum, Director for Training and Mobilization for the Evangelical Fellowship of India Commission on Relief (EFICOR), a longtime partner of World Renew, says, “We live in a world where anything that you do locally has a global impact, and so we cannot deny what is happening to the rest of our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world who are suffering the impact of climate change right now. As Christians, we believe that God created everything, he created the whole universe and we have the mandate to care for God’s creation. And therefore, we have to be at the forefront speaking out and saying, ‘Yes, this matters to us as Christians because this matters to God.’”

We’re reminded this Lenten season of one of the fundamental laws of ecology: everything is connected. Despite our desire to mechanize and optimize the efficiencies and output of our world, to separate ourselves from the dirt under our feet, the bees buzzing in the air, and the rain that nourishes us, we ultimately are people intimately connected to and a part of God’s creation. Therefore, using resources without regard for others and living in excess at the expense of this world simply isn’t an option. We are called by God to love the creation and our neighbors through what we eat, how we use energy, how we’re mobile, and which policies we support. This Lenten season, we embark on a journey to draw us closer to suffering felt by our neighbors because of climate change and to seek a transformation of our practices and allegiances in order that we might see home energy efficiency, home waste, reducing plastic, transportation, advocating for systemic change, and electricity as issues vital to our discipleship!

Contemplation

Reflect on what it might look like if you awoke each day looking for opportunities to reduce your environmental impact and amplify your love of creation. What might you do differently? Who would you invite to participate in that work?

Imagine yourself at the beginning of the 2023 Lenten season. What do you hope your life looks like a year from now? What might you change and what practices will you adopt? What needs to be cut out of your life?

Prayer

God of transformation, we pray during this Lenten season for your Holy Spirit to move in and through these reflections and activities to be the kind of people who loose the chains of injustice, untie the cords of the yoke, and set the oppressed free. We acknowledge that all too often, God, we choose what is convenient, even at the expense of harming our environment. And all too often, Lord, we cower from speaking truth to those in power who can change systems. Convict us, O Lord, during these 40 days to develop practices, habits, and prayers that transform our lives and transform our communities so that our planet and our neighbors may thrive.

WEEK 1 - CHALLENGE

Ready to start the journey into Net Zero living? This week's challenge is learn and to connect. You're going to lay the groundwork for upcoming weeks. Potential actions this week include discovering how big your personal carbon footprint actually is, digging into the Biblical reasons for creation care, and connecting with others in your circle of influence build a team.

LEVEL 1

- Research your carbon footprint to see which areas you will want to particularly focus on through Lent
- Tell one person that you're doing this challenge

"Whether we change our light bulbs or do lobbying, talk about it! Whether it is asking our university to put in charging stations for electric cars or putting our money in a bank that has climate friendly policies, talk about it! Remember, we're a body! We are interdependent beings that depend on each other and on this planet that we all share." - Professor Katherine Hayhoe

LEVEL 2

- Go to our YouTube channel and watch a video on creation care that interests you.
 - <https://linktr.ee/climatewitnessproject>
- Share one of our worship materials with a leader at your church
 - <https://www.crcna.org/climate-witness-project/worship>

LEVEL 3

- CWP has regional organizers to help churches and individuals start creation care initiatives in their communities. Connect with your regional organizer to learn more: <https://www.crcna.org/climate-witness-project/regions>
- Share our guide to creating a creation care team at your church with a trusted partner and discuss how you can take the next steps: <https://network.crcna.org/biblical-justice/starting-creation-care-team>



WEEK 2 - HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY



The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.
Genesis 2:15

Reflection

In an open letter to President George W. Bush, 39 U.S. based religious leaders wrote, "'The Earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof' (Ps 24:1). In light and wind, in land and water, energy resources are abundant gifts for human well-being from our creator God. Because we are called to 'work and keep [the garden]' (Gen 2:15), we have a moral obligation to choose the safest, cleanest and most sustainable sources of energy to protect and preserve God's creation. Energy conservation is faithful stewardship." These faith leaders recognized that to love the creation is to responsibly use energy and to ensure that our neighbors have enough for their needs, in addition to ensuring the needs of future generations are also met.

Improving energy efficiency in our homes and apartments, believe it or not, is one of the most tangible, immediate carbon reductions one can make! If it's saving a few bucks that motivates you, energy efficiency is the way to go. And you can choose a big challenge, like replacing appliances, or something much simpler, like unplugging them when not in use. But this challenge is about much more than just saving money or getting shiny new energy efficient appliances. At its heart, the work of reducing our energy usage is about acknowledging that for far too long many of us have used energy at an unsustainable rate. While we don't have to abandon our way of life, it is time to take steps that lead us towards a lower-energy future.

Contemplation

While improving energy efficiency in and of itself won't solve the climate crisis, the daily commitment to practicing a consciousness reflective upon how we can be less intrusive on the planet's precious resources can and should be done with Christ at the center. Imagine and reflect on how the small, ordinary practices of energy efficiency might be transformative.

Whether you choose to conduct an energy audit, install energy efficient appliances, adopt LED light bulbs, or unplug idle appliances, each of these small practices is a small part of the big picture. Reflect on where you might be able to become more energy efficient.

Prayer

Lord, remind us that our homes, apartments, and dwellings are the places we often have the most control of and what we do in the place we call home can be the first step we take towards protecting your creation. Help us make connections with organizations, businesses, and government agencies that provide the tips and tools we need to reduce our energy and resource use, adopt clean energy and circular economy practices when possible, and in the process, save our financial resources. Nudge us, Lord, gently or with some force to go out of our comfort zone for the sake of your planet and people: may we cultivate homes of ecological connectedness and live in deep love of the world we call home.

WEEK 2 - CHALLENGE: INCREASE HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The cleanest energy is the energy you don't use! This week's challenge is to look for ways to make our homes more energy efficient. Whether we lower our thermostat, start a compost pile or research new appliances, by reducing energy waste in our home, we'll cut down our environmental footprint and most likely save money in the long-term!

LEVEL 1

- Get an Energy Audit - Schedule one to be done professionally or use this home energy audit DIY guide from the EPA: <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/do-it-yourself-home-energy-assessments>
- Change Your Behaviors - There are many easy ways to decrease your energy usage, including the following:
 - Turn off lights consistently when you leave the room
 - Lower your thermostat below 70° (22° C) in winter and above 72° (23°C) in summer. Dress accordingly.
 - Use your windows: pull down shades in the summer to keep it cooler, open your shades in the winter to keep it warmer
 - Lower your water heater temperature from 140 (60°C) to 120° (49°C)
 - Wash clothes in cold water and then line dry for half the year
 - Reduce your shower length or take showers every other day
 - Don't leave your faucet running when you're not using it

LEVEL 2

- Compost - Composting is a big deal because it enables all your organic waste to be decomposed in open air by aerobic bacteria, producing CO₂, rather than going to a landfill where it is buried and must be decomposed by anaerobic bacteria, which produces methane.
 - Methane is 84X more potent as a greenhouse gas than CO₂ over 20 years, so think about how significant your climate impact could be over that time period by keeping all of your organic waste out of the landfill. Also, compost bins don't smell, and they produce rich soil that you can use in your garden.

LEVEL 3

- Get Energy Star Appliances - Refrigerators, AC units, dishwashers, washing machines and dryers are some of your most high-energy appliances. Replacing these with Energy Star rated appliances can save a lot of energy.
- Get Weatherization Work Done On Your Home - Bigger projects like insulating walls and attics, replacing windows and doors, etc. can cost more up front but create significant long term savings.
 - In the United States, the government offers home weatherization grants to qualifying households.



WEEK 3 - REDUCE HOUSEHOLD WASTE



Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. - 2 Corinthians 5:17

Reflection

If you're like me, the garbage bin that I keep in the kitchen seems to be filling up much too quickly these days. I never find myself throwing anything too big in there, but rather it's the addition of small little bits of trash day after day after day. One way that I'm trying to address this is by avoiding any and all unnecessary clutter - whether by bringing my own reusable bags to the store, avoiding picking up 12 flyers at an event only to later toss out, or composting all my food scraps.

What draws so many to the compost pile and all of its messiness is the profound and joyful truth it is proclaiming in all its eggshell, coffee grounds, broccoli-stem goodness: the things thrown in the compost pile are not an end but a new beginning. As journalist Jeff Chu writes, "A robust theology of compost reminds us that death and the things of death – our sin, our suffering, the endless ways we hurt each other, the numerous ways we harm ourselves – are never the end of the story." The wonder of compost is in its many parts – microbes, carbon, nitrogen, worms, minerals and nutrients – working together to transform into something truly remarkable. Compost invites each of us to 'practice resurrection' by facilitating the new life brought about by kitchen and garden scraps.

Contemplation

Consider for a moment what you toss into the trash on a weekly basis. You don't necessarily need to pop off the trash lid to do an inventory (unless you'd like to), but rather think about each and every piece of non-recyclable, non-compostable bit that will end up in the landfill. Ask yourself: how can I change this? What can I do to reduce non-recyclable trash, even if it is just a small change?

Have you ever considered composting? While you may be averse to the smell (I know I don't love the smell of decomposing food scraps!), there are many ways to avoid that problem, whether by putting them in your freezer or using a smell-free bin available for purchase. Backyard composting or utilizing a local pick-up service are great options to get started.

Prayer

God of all creation, you have endowed us with the capacity to construct tools, grow food, play games, and create a life for ourselves that is meaningful and vibrant. We pray now, that as each of us move through the weeks of Lent, we're reminded that it is both right and just in your eyes to use our resources responsibly, to reduce waste, to reuse, to share, to participate in mutual aid with our neighbors, and to reject the ideals of perfection and excess that push us to use more, want more, and consume more. Instill in us, God, a spirit of abundance that consumes our being. Teach us to repair our household items, compost or repurpose food, and divest from ventures that harm people and planet.

WEEK 3 - CHALLENGE: REDUCE HOUSEHOLD WASTE

Everything we own has a carbon footprint, meaning that carbon was released into the atmosphere in order to produce it. When we waste food or throw away perfectly good household items, we're letting that "carbon expenditure" be squandered. By reducing waste, we're reducing the amount of carbon needed to keep our households running.

LEVEL 1

- Reuse, repair, and repurpose items - Only throw items away when you have to! Many items that are presented as single use can actually be used many times.
 - If something breaks, fix it if you can. Repairing items saves you a ton of money and it means you're not contributing to all the carbon emissions needed to build a new product.
 - Repurposing is a good way to take something that no longer fits its original use and instead use it effectively for something else. Old t-shirts make great cleaning rags. Plastic shopping bags make great small garbage can liners. Plastic Chinese food containers make good food storage containers.
 - What is one thing you could fix or repurpose this week?

LEVEL 2

- Organize your fridge - The average US household wastes 1/3 of all the food they buy. The simple act of intentionally organizing your fridge so leftovers don't get overlooked can save money on your grocery bill.
 - Share a picture of your newly organized fridge or pantry!
- Reduce or eliminate red meat from your diet - Red meat has a very high carbon footprint in its production and distribution. Significantly reducing red meat on your menu plans means you are contributing less to the carbon emissions involved in making it. To reduce your carbon footprint even more, go entirely vegetarian.
 - Discovered a new favorite recipe? Share it with us.

LEVEL 3

- Divest from fossil fuels and reinvest in renewables and ESG funds:
 - Divesting is one of the most powerful ways we can participate in shifting our nation into the renewable energy future we desperately need. What is your retirement invested in - do you know? If a portion of your retirement is invested in the fossil fuel industry, you are quite literally participating in the destruction of the world you and future generations are retiring into. That doesn't make sense. Switch your retirement into renewable energy and ESG funds (funds that have good environmental, social, and governmental policies). Do the same with your investment portfolio if you have one. Not only will you be helping fuel the transition to renewables - you are also very likely to get a much better return, since fossil fuels are dying and renewables are growing at a remarkable rate. Here are some resources on what to do with your money:
 - Clearview investing (ESG investing): <https://clearviewinvesting.com/sustainable>
 - Fossil Free Funds (ESG investing search engine): <https://fossilfreefunds.org/>
 - Raise Green (Investing in community green projects): <https://www.raisegreen.com/>



WEEK 4 - REDUCE PLASTIC

So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31

Reflection

Fast-food wrappers, single-use packaging, and convenience have muffled out the call to simple, mindful living, and the result is an increase of greenhouse gases, an ocean brimming with waste and overflowing dumps filled with products that will never break down. When considering the magnitude of our call to love God's creation, making changes to our daily lives are small sacrifices, and that's even if they take more time or a bit more money - as most good things in life do! As people of faith, we're not called to take the easy way out, to embrace convenience, to choose comfort at the expense of others. In all that we do, we are called to live to God's glory. Reducing our plastic consumption is one way to take care of that which has been given to us. So it matters what we buy and how it's packaged - it all matters. As we seek to glorify God, let's ask Him to lead in ways we can set aside convenience for the sake of service.

A plastic-free world is a world worth pursuing, and each of us has the responsibility to, as much as possible, use our dollars to create the kind of world we want for future generations - one free of plastic-filled oceans and landfills.

Contemplation

Reflect on the world we live in - a world that is full of plastic. You and I both sometimes look at an item and think, "did that really need to be wrapped in plastic?" How did we get here? What values do we hold or what choices were made that led to a world littered with plastic?

Imagine, if you will, a world without plastic. Trips to the grocery store, making online purchases, getting take out from your favorite restaurant - all plastic free. What would that look like? What materials would be used? How might your life be different?

Prayer

Lord, we want to glorify you in all that we do. Yet in a world of abundance where it is easy to buy and then throw away, we pray for wisdom in reducing our use of harmful plastics. The harm they cause to our waterways, landscapes, and bodies is lamentable. We pray for governing bodies to make a definitive move towards ending the use of these products, for companies to recognize their responsibility for the 'end of life' of their packaging, and for individuals to have a world of easier decisions to make. Until the day comes when refined oil products don't hold our food, goods, and products, may we this Lent develop practices that seek Your glory above our convenience. Give us grace to be willing to "set aside" things that are harmful to the world You've made. Make us vocal advocates for your creation, Lord.

WEEK 4 - CHALLENGE: REDUCE PLASTIC

Limited-use plastics are extremely wasteful and are filling our world with garbage and poison - particularly marine ecosystems, human coastal communities, and low-income communities where plastics are manufactured or incinerated. Cutting out plastics whenever possible is a key step in reducing our carbon footprint.

LEVEL 1

- Replace limited-use plastics with reusable goods
 - Take reusable bags along on your shopping trips and don't accept plastic bags.
 - Use bar soap, rather than single-use hand soap dispensers.
 - Never buy bottled water (except for legitimate health reasons such as unsafe tap water).
 - Get a travel pack of utensils and a reusable straw so you never have to use disposable utensils or straws if you eat out.
 - Exchange plastic lunch baggies for reusable lunch boxes or beeswax wraps.
 - Change out your plastic toothbrushes for bamboo alternatives

LEVEL 2

- Ask Amazon to send your purchases without plastic:
 - Access the Amazon Website Click Menu (3 lines in upper left corner) Scroll to/Select Customer Service Hover over Need More Help; Click Contact Us Click Start Chatting Now Type Other to connect with a human being Request Plastic-Free shipping (Amazon refers to this as Frustration-Free Packaging)
- Invest in glass or metal containers and get rid of plastic jugs:
 - Make your own cleaning supplies with environmentally friendly ingredients. Here's a list of recipes: <https://www.thepioneerwoman.com/home-lifestyle/g35638349/best-homemade-cleaners/>
 - Use Cellulose Sponges, change to powder or strips laundry detergent, or order concentrate cleaning agents

LEVEL 3

- Shop at a grocery store with good environmental policies - See how some of the most popular grocery stores rate in their sustainability practices: <https://www.greenmatters.com/p/which-supermarkets-most-sustainable>
- Encourage your local grocery store to adapt sustainable practices. Here's some ideas: <https://kings.com/ourinsight/sustainable-grocery-stores-7-priorities/>
- Buy rescued produce
 - 30-40% of the US food supply is wasted. It is thrown away without being eaten, and usually ends up in the landfill. This is a horrific waste of nutrition in a world where many are struggling with food insecurity, as well as a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions.
 - What to do? Well, there are a growing number of companies that sell food which would otherwise be dumped. Here are two great companies that rescue misshapen fresh organic produce and deliver it to your doorstep on a regular basis:
 - Misfits Market - www.misfitsmarket.com
 - Imperfect Foods - www.imperfectfoods.com



WEEK 5 - TRANSPORTATION



**“To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it.”
Deuteronomy 10:14**

Reflection

To God belongs the earth and everything in it. As believers, we say this. Yet do we live out its truth? The late Billy Graham pointed out, “We know that God created the world, and it belongs to Him, not us. Because of this, we are only stewards or trustees of God’s creation, and we aren’t to abuse or neglect it.” Unfortunately, much of the transportation sector is causing harm to God's world. This sector generates the largest share of greenhouse gas emissions, primarily from burning fossil fuel for our cars, trucks, ships, trains, and planes.

Over 90 percent of the fuel used for transportation is petroleum based, which includes gasoline and diesel. In essence, the way we get to work or school, and the ways our goods are transported from around the globe to eventually reach our home occupies the largest chunk of emissions that is throwing our Earth system into chaos. Believe it or not, it doesn’t have to be this way. Cities around the world are waking up to the fact that the prevalence of the fossil fuel guzzling car, and the corresponding network of new roads and freeways is causing a great deal of harm to our environment. In recent years, as perhaps you’ve seen, the prevalence of bike sharing networks, the improvement of sidewalks for traveling by foot, and large investments in public transportation have all played a role in giving you more options when you’re going from place to place.

For our health, safety and happiness, people around the globe are taking small and large steps towards getting out of the car and utilizing low-to-no carbon emitting transportation methods. For those of us for whom this isn’t an option, electric vehicles are exploding onto the scene and becoming more affordable by the day. We have a myriad of options to reduce our resource consumption, improve our health, get to know our communities, and love God all through our mobility practices.

Contemplation

Spend a few minutes reflecting on your transportation habits. How many trips do you make per week, whether to work, school, running errands, going out for fun, or any number of other activities? How many of those are done in a car? Are there opportunities to turn 1 or more of these trips into a carpooling, walking, biking, or public transport trip?

Prayer

God, we pray for a world in which mobility isn't the leading source of greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, we pray for mobility without any greenhouse gas emissions. For bike lines, walkable streets, electric buses and cars, light rail transit and buses, we pray. May we not only move between home, work, the store, and entertainment sustainably, but may we also do so safely, healthily, and with deep joy as we traverse the places we call home. May each of us begin to carpool, walk, bike, take the bus, or skip that flight - just one small step in the expectation of encouraging another, and in turn, transforming how we're mobile. Help us be advocates, Lord, for the world we want.

WEEK 5 - CHALLENGE: TRANSPORTATION

Transportation accounts for 29% of total US emissions each year! How we get around has a big impact on our household carbon emissions. Here are some ways you can reduce your footprint.

LEVEL 1

Carpool:

- If you have to drive to work, consider carpooling. Two people in one car means that one less car is driving back and forth to work, reducing emissions. It's also more fun to drive with a friend.

Take public transit to work:

- Train, trolley, and bus travel emits much less carbon per person than driving, and it decreases overall traffic on the road. Depending on how the transit network intersects with your home and your job, public transit can be faster or slower than driving. Either way, public transit gives you time each day to read, rest, or catch up on work when you would otherwise have been stuck in rush hour traffic.

LEVEL 2

Bike to work:

- Biking is a zero emission form of transportation, as well as excellent exercise. Regular cardiovascular exercise improves your overall well-being. In urban environments with a great deal of rush hour traffic, biking is often as fast as or faster than driving to work. If you get into the habit of biking to work, you will reduce emissions, save money on gas or public transit fare, and improve your overall health. It's a triple win.

LEVEL 3

Make your next vehicle purchase (and all future ones) electric vehicles:

- Research electric cars for your next purchase. Auto makers have begun the process of transitioning towards electric vehicles. More and more companies are putting out new electric models and the options are getting less and less expensive. In addition to this, battery ranges are becoming longer and charging infrastructure is growing.
- When you're ready to buy, make your next vehicle an EV. It will save you significant money both on gas (none needed!) and maintenance (fewer repairs as compared to gas vehicles). Driving an EV will reduce the collective emissions and toxins in the air of your community. There is also a federal tax credit of up to \$7,500 for a new EV in the United States. Learn more here:

<https://www.irs.gov/businesses/irc-30d-new-qualified-plug-in-electric-drive-motor-vehicle-credit>



WEEK 6 - ADVOCATE FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE



But you must return to your God; maintain love and justice, and wait for your God always.

Hosea 12:6

Reflection

In 2016, the Louisiana Office of Community Development (OCD) won a grant with \$48 million reserved for the resettlement of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw tribe due to sea-level rise. Many years ago, the tribe was forcibly relocated to Isle de Jean Charles - a sliver of island 80 miles southwest of New Orleans - by the Indian Removal Act. Now more than 175 years later, this tribe has become Louisiana's first climate refugees. Once an island with nearly 300 families, Isle de Jean Charles has lost 98% of its land due to sea level rise. Can you imagine with me the costs of relocating millions in Miami or Bangladesh?

It doesn't have to be this way, but changing the tide of our climate trajectory can't happen with individual actions alone. Rather it requires each and every one of us to advocate, sign letters, attend meetings, march, and tell everyone we know that the climate crisis requires an all-hands-on-deck approach. That means that government bodies and businesses - the institutions with the most power in North America - must be at the forefront of pushing climate-friendly policies and practices. They won't get there alone, as we've seen. We've got to push them every step of the way, and it'll take all of us. As Bill McKibben says, "The best thing an individual can do right now is not be such an individual!"

Contemplation

Does the climate crisis ever make you feel overwhelmed? So often it's the case that we're overwhelmed because we feel as though "solving the problem" is our responsibility and ours alone. Reflect a bit about your relationship to the environmental harm you see in our world and the role you could potentially play in fixing it.

Take a moment and think about all the organizations, government agencies, businesses, and community groups working on climate issues in the place you call home. What are they doing that excites you? How can you faithfully participate?

Prayer

To follow you is to pursue justice, Lord. Whether in transportation, plastics, species habitats, or energy, our changes are important but ultimately limited without systemic change both within governments and businesses. Help us find our voice, Lord, and help us build the habits this Lenten season to speak up on behalf of the places and people we love. We cannot do this alone, Lord. We need the resources, finances, and power of mayors, senators, CEOs, and lobbyists to make bold decisions that drive down emissions and avoid climate disasters. Send your spirit that we might be a thorn in the side to those who seek business as usual. It's time for change, Lord, bold change and we pray you would be by our side as we support big plans and get into good trouble.

WEEK 6 - CHALLENGE: ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE

Total global greenhouse gas emissions need to decrease by at least 50% by the year 2030. Reducing our household carbon footprint is important, but it's not enough on its own. We also need strong environmental policies enacted. For this reason, one of the most powerful things we can do is advocate for legislation that will drive a just transition to a renewable energy economy. This week, take time to reach out to your governmental leaders on the need for climate action.

LEVEL 1

Visit Our Advocacy Center

- Not sure what environmental policies to support? We're here to help! Through our advocacy center, we provide policy briefs on legislation under consideration in the US and Canada. Sign up to receive updates and learn more about our current legislative priorities at the Advocacy Action Center: <https://p2a.co/C76tWCM>

LEVEL 2

Write a letter

Find out who your local, state, and national representatives are, then write to your representatives and tell them what matters to you, or what particular bills you want them to support and vote into law. Your representatives are there to listen to you and their other constituents and represent your collective will in government. They do listen - so make your voice known.

- In the United States, you can find your elected leaders here: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>
- In Canada, you can find your elected leaders here: <https://www.ourcommons.ca/members/en>

LEVEL 3

Learn how to become a better advocate:

- Contacting elected officials may be daunting, but sharing your well-informed opinion can make a real difference on the justice issues that you care about, and can bring about long-term changes to unjust systems. The CRCNA regularly hosts Faith in Action workshops to help you learn how to craft your message and navigate the political system in order to share more effectively. Register for a Faith in Action workshop by emailing us at cwp@crcna.org.



WEEK 7 - ELECTRICITY



“Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. ” (1 Chronicles 29:11)

Reflection

The energy created from the combustion of fossil fuels is used to produce electricity, among other things, for our homes, offices, and places of worship. A century ago, the generation and distribution of electricity was a wonderful development that has allowed us the ability to manufacture goods, communicate in new ways, and adopt an entirely new way of life. Electricity allows us to power hospitals, is the basis for many technological advancement through computers, and has reached the farthest stretches of the globe to bring communities out of poverty. Despite this, power generation via burning fossil fuels has come at tremendous cost to the planet, especially in the form of climate change. We are long overdue for newer and cleaner technology to generate power, and fortunately, that power exists in the form of solar, wind, hydro, biomass and geothermal power. With new clean energy projects being constructed each and every day around the globe, it's clear that the clean energy revolution - and the reduced carbon emissions, as well as jobs that come with it - is here to stay. Yet we can't rest on the promise of a cleaner energy future implemented by others. Rather we can play a part by encouraging our churches to take the lead and even adopt solar ourselves when possible. Each of us has a role to play to ensure we're minimizing our impact on the world and ensuring others - both around the globe and future generations - can thrive.

Contemplation

Maybe solar isn't an option for you right now - or perhaps it is, in which case, go boldly into the world of solar energy - but one thing that each of us can do is reduce our use of electricity significantly. Using natural light, unplugging chargers and electronics, using a power strip, install new lightbulbs - the list is endless! Choose a few options and consider implementing them in your everyday life.

Reflect on the people in your life who might not want to install solar panels or buy carbon offsets, but might be willing to try some of the more approachable energy savings ideas. Who are those people? Can you reach out to them about these opportunities?

Prayer

God, recent decades have shown that while not perfect, geothermal, solar and wind energy sources are beginning to scale and provide us the power to operate our day to day lives. These gifts from you - freely given - that can give us all we need to thrive at a much lower cost to our environment than continuing to burn fossil fuels. We pray for all those changing their electricity sources over to clean energy, and for each business, government, and community leaning into the clean energy future that's not only possible but necessary.

WEEK 7 - CHALLENGE: ELECTRICITY

Electricity is only as clean as its source. Electricity generated by fossil fuels is dirty energy. That's why investing in making the switch to renewable energy is so important! This is a big challenge, so use this week to research and discover what options are available in your area.

LEVEL 1

Change your Electricity Provider to a Clean Energy Source

- To switch your electricity provider to clean energy is usually just a simple phone call, and then the cost of your electricity will be very comparable to what you were paying before. As a first step, contact your local power provider to find out what types of clean energy programs are available. If your local utility doesn't have any good options, here are some other resources to check into:
 - <https://www.cleanchoiceenergy.com/>
 - <https://www.energystar.gov/productfinder/product/green-power/>
 - <https://network.crcna.org/biblical-justice/living-green-regional-resource-lists>
 - Canada: <https://bullfrogpower.com/>

LEVEL 2

Energy Saving Replacements:

- Here's an easy replacement - lightbulbs! Change out incandescent and fluorescent light bulbs with energy-efficient LEDs. Look for ones with a light output of 100 lumens/watt or higher.
- Another way to save energy is by installing motion sensors to turn lights off when no one is in the room.
- Switch your hot water heater to a tankless electric: It's time to research! Tank water heaters have to constantly keep a large tank of water hot. A tankless water heater only heats the water when you use it and thus is less wasteful. Look at prices and options to decide what type of water heater might be a good fit for your house.

LEVEL 3

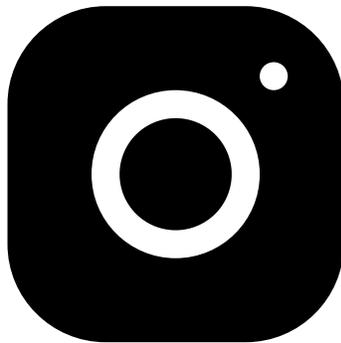
Get Rooftop Solar

- Rooftop solar is an excellent long term investment. When you combine the long-term savings, tax credit opportunity and increase in home value, your initial investment should return somewhere between 3X and 4X what you put in over the course of 25 years. Have practical questions about rooftop solar actually works? Here's a great FAQ to learn more: <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/go-solar/faqs/>
- The main challenge to installing rooftop solar is the upfront cost, though there are resources to help make the installation more affordable. If you're ready to start on the next step, check out the following:
 - In the United States, the Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency shows what resources are available in your state and community: <https://www.dsireusa.org/>
 - In Canada, check out: <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/energy-efficiency/homes/canada-greener-homes-grant/start-your-energy-efficient-retrofits/plan-document-and-complete-your-home-retrofits/eligible-grants-for-my-home-retrofit/23504>

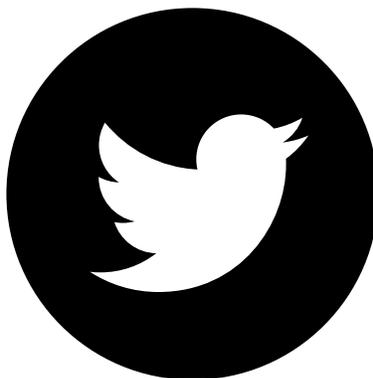




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WE LOVE HEARING FROM YOU! LET US KNOW HOW YOUR CHALLENGE IS GOING ON SOCIAL MEDIA OR SEND US AN EMAIL CWP@CRCNA.ORG

The inspiration for this Net Zero Lent challenge comes from Allan Drew, the CWP Regional Organizer in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Allan's work and research into practical ways to achieve Net Zero living provided much of the content for this guide. We're thankful for his faithful work in encouraging the church to participate in the work of Creation Stewardship.



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