

The Lent Eco Challenge – Turn Over a New Leaf

This Lent we're giving everyone the chance to do something different. Rather than giving something up for 6 weeks we're going to come together to do something different – for at least the period of Lent, and hopefully beyond.



We're really excited as this is a chance to do something together as a church family whilst, at the same time, taking positive action towards helping the environment and slowing climate change.

Here's how to 'Turn over a new leaf'.....

At the beginning of Lent:

- 🌍 In church there will be a tree with card or paper leaves.
- 🌍 Take a leaf from the tree and write your name and your personal eco-challenge on one side of the leaf.
- 🌍 Hang the leaf back on the tree - it will remain there throughout Lent.

At the end of Lent:

- 🌍 Take your leaf from the tree and write on the blank side of it how well (or not!) your eco- challenge went.
- 🌍 Say how it has affected your lifestyle or your attitude to protecting the planet in the future.



The Eco Church team will take all the leaves and summarise the overall effect we at St. George's have had on the environment and climate during Lent. We hope it will provide a blueprint for us to care for God's precious gift. The team will feed back the results in church, in the Link magazine and on the church website.



If you are unsure where to start with your eco-challenge, here are some ideas:

Cut down on meat

A switch to diets that rely much less on meat and far more on vegetables, fruits, and other plant foods could reduce food-related greenhouse gas emissions by two-thirds.



Reduce plastic waste

In the UK, almost half of all plastic packaging is food packaging. To help reduce the 30kg of plastic that every one of us throws away each year, cutting the amount of food packaging we use is a great place to start.



Reduce food waste

In the UK, a quarter of the food we buy ends up as food waste. Some good ideas that will help you to reduce food waste can be found on the [Food Cycle](#) website.



Try the 100mile diet

During Lent, eat only food and ingredients that come from within a 100mile radius of your home. This will dramatically reduce the carbon footprint of the food you eat.



Avoid wasting water

The water we drink, the food we eat, and the whole eco-system will be in danger if our reserves of water are threatened. Save water, for instance by stopping dripping taps, turning off water while brushing your teeth, running washing machines and dishwashers on full loads (even better, washing dishes by hand). Also, avoid bottled water as it has a much higher carbon footprint than tap water.



Protect wildlife in and beyond your garden.

For example, put up a birdbox or bird feeder, build a hedgehog home, create a 'highway' for hedgehogs in to and out of your garden, create a 'wild area', build an insect hotel, dig a pond, make a compost heap and/or grow insect-friendly flowers.



Pray

Say a prayer for the care of the environment each day. Use your own words or find a prayer you like, for instance:

Lord, grant us the wisdom to care for the earth and till it.

Help us to act now for the good of future generations and all your creatures.

*Help us to become instruments of a new creation,
Founded on the covenant of your love.*



Learn something new

Read an article, watch a TV programme, look at a website or listen to a radio item about climate change and/or the environment at least once a week throughout Lent.

