Let us engage Lent by treading lightly on God’s creation!

When we care for God’s good earth, we do so through both action and reflection. We are called to engage in intentional and thoughtful “doing” as well as “being.” As we anticipate the lengthening of daylight during Lent, we are invited to long, deep reflection. This reflection will shape our action. Likewise, our actions shape how we reflect—on ourselves, our world and our Creator.

In what spirit might we enter a season of reflection and action? I propose that we enter Lent in a spirit of fasting and feasting. We fast, refraining from things that do not foster life. Yet we also feast, remembering God’s grace and power in the world. Echoing Sabbath and Jubilee themes in the Torah and other parts of Holy Scripture, we feast on God’s liberating goodness even as we fast from the harmful things we do to the earth.

So I invite you, then, to reflect and to act, to fast and to feast. This simple calendar will serve as a daily Lenten reminder of this invitation. Most reflections and actions can be done in less than 10 minutes, or they can take as long as you like. Guiding themes for the weeks in this calendar are: creation, water, land, air, people, diverse species, and lifestyle commitment.

To share about your journey while “Treading Lightly for Lent,” visit the Presbyterian Environmental Ministries Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pcusa.environment.


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<td>26</td>
<td>First Sunday of Lent</td>
<td>Celebrate God’s creation by taking a walk outdoors, spending time with a favorite pet or telling stories with friends or family about your favorite “sacred spaces” in creation.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Ash Wednesday</td>
<td>Reflect on the idea that you are made of dust and to dust you shall return. What feelings and thoughts arise for you? How might this shape your relationship to God’s creation?</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Say a prayer of gratitude every time you sip water today.</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>Do a “water fast” by 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.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Remember your baptism today. What does it mean to you to be baptized? What happens to this sacrament when the world’s waters become polluted and inaccessible?</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>Get your hands dirty today! Touch the soil of a potted plant or place your palm on frozen ground outdoors. Say a prayer of thanksgiving for the life in that earth.</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Reflect on images of the land in the Bible, including the creation stories and ancestral narratives in the Torah. What does it mean for God’s people to be connected to the earth?</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Learn about, and donate to, an organization that is working to plant trees, such as the United Nations Environment Programme’s Billion Tree Campaign: <a href="http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign">www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign</a>.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Chart plans for springtime plantings for your yard, fields, community garden or even indoor potted plant arrangements: <a href="http://www.almanac.com/content/beginners-vegetable-garden">www.almanac.com/content/beginners-vegetable-garden</a>.</td>
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| 11 Third Sunday of Lent  
Feast on the goodness of the land! Consume good food, walk or run, use your senses to appreciate the land in this particular season in your part of the world. | 12 Spend time in centering prayer to connect your spirit to the Holy Spirit. Breathe in, focusing on God’s goodness around you; breathe out, focusing on your participation in God’s world. | 13 Reflect on the idea of the air around us as God’s breath or God’s Spirit. How might we honor God by working to stop air pollution and curb global warming? | 14 Replace incandescent lightbulbs with compact fluorescent lightbulbs and insulate your home in order to save energy and reduce carbon emissions. | 15 Read Psalm 104 and reflect on God’s use of wind, air, breath and spirit. | 16 Advocate for clean air laws, which benefit the environment and all people, especially those with heart and respiratory problems (including asthma). | 17 This week air-dry (outside or indoors) some of the freshly washed clothes that you would normally put in the dryer. |
| 18 Fourth Sunday of Lent  
Celebrate the Spirit of God within you, and the gift of breath and air, by taking a breather from electronics! Enjoy this “energy Sabbath” and consider expanding Sabbath spaces in your life. | 19 Set aside a quiet time for prayer in order to remember all of the people and communities that have been gifts of God for you. Give thanks for them and for people all around the world. | 20 Purchase fair-trade coffee for your church and your home. Fairly traded products help both human and ecological communities to thrive: www.pcusa.org/coffee. | 21 Consider movements around the world and throughout history that have fought for social and economic justice along with ecological wholeness. Journal, draw or act out a prayer of thanksgiving to God for these good gifts. | 21 Learn more about a group currently struggling for eco-justice, such as those advocating for reduced lead, arsenic and cadmium emissions from the Doe Run smelter in La Oroya, Peru: www.pcusa.org/ministries/joininghands/peru. | 23 Reflect on where your waste products go and who lives closest to those disposal areas. Learn more about populations who face the greatest environmental burdens. One resource is www.nccej.org/resources/index.php#environmentaljusticeresources. | 24 Volunteer time, donate money or otherwise assist those working around the world to alleviate the harsh conditions following natural disasters. See opportunities at www.pcusa.org/pda. |
| 25 Fifth Sunday of Lent  
Party! Invite the people you love into your home and feast on their company. Consider them one of the good gifts of God’s great earth. | 26 Read Genesis 9:8–10 and reflect on God’s covenant “with every living creature.” How do we live as part of this covenant? Offer prayers of joy and concern to God. | 27 Find out about threatened or endangered species in your state or this country and share the information with someone else: www.fws.gov/endangered. | 28 Feast on fun and intergenerational connection by finding a child in your life (or the child within) and doing some art work, such as coloring endangered species: www.epa.gov/espp/coloring. | 29 Create a wildlife-friendly backyard habitat at church or home. Learn how at www.nwf.org/Get-Outside/Outdoor-Activities/Garden-for-Wildlife/Certify-Your-Wildlife-Garden.aspx. | 30 Fast from foods produced by industrial or factory-farming methods. Choose foods that are lower on the food chain and support humane livestock standards. | 31 Feast on foods that are grown locally using sustainable, organic farming methods. |
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<td>Pay attention to the way God's creation participates in the ritual and liturgy of this day, be it palms waving or a donkey walking, a cock crowing or a tree cut down.</td>
<td>Reflect on your Lenten journey. Have you noticed any changes in your actions stemming from your reflections? Any changes in your reflections because of your action?</td>
<td>Give away unneeded clothes, bakeware and other items that could represent new life to a new owner; fast from purchasing new unnecessary things for yourself.</td>
<td>Fast from some (or all) food today, reflecting on the gift of “daily bread” and its relationship to communion. Explore good food resources like <a href="http://www.localharvest.org">www.localharvest.org</a> and <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/food">www.pcusa.org/food</a>.</td>
<td>Maundy Thursday</td>
<td>Be aware of the relationships of wheat, grape, people and God as you celebrate communion. How does the earth help you, and all those gathered, to relate to and worship God?</td>
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**For further learning and action**

- Sign up for the Eco-Notes e-newsletter from Environmental Ministries at www.pcusa.org/eco-notes.
- Lead your church in a study on the biblical and theological basis for eco-justice using resources from www.pcusa.org/environment.
- Find a more complete list of ideas for congregational earth-care activities in the Earth Care Congregations guide: www.pcusa.org/earth-care-congregations.
- Look into serving fair-trade coffee through the Presbyterian Coffee Project: www.pcusa.org/coffee.
- Learn about the environmental impacts of your food choices: www.pcusa.org/blogs/foodfaith.
- Incorporate environmental issues into worship: www.webofcreation.org.
- Become a member of the grassroots organization Presbyterians for Earth Care: www.presbyearthcare.org.
- Connect to ecumenical programs: www.ncecojustice.org.
- Stay up-to-date on public policy concerns through the Presbyterian Washington Office: www.pcusa.org/washington.