

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## *Action*

### 1. Pledge to Care for Creation

“Together, we pledge to protect and renew the Earth and all who call it home. Together, we are living the Way of Love and make this commitment to specific actions.”

– Creation Care Pledge, The Episcopal Church

**Recommendation:** Each year we pray and discern how much money we plan to give to the church. We recommend a parallel but not competing practice: an annual pledge to care for creation.

**Background:** Pledging is central to faith. It keeps the lights on. Pledging for Creation Justice should be central to every faith. It keeps existence on. Committing to lowering our individual carbon footprints is important but no longer enough because most carbon

expression is systemic, and the impacts of climate change inflict far greater harm on poor and marginalized communities. Like COVID, climate change harms the “have nots” far more than the “haves.”

We cannot address climate change without addressing our environmental racism and other forms of systemic discrimination. We cannot continue to pretend to be a colorblind society when we have, for four centuries, systemically deprived our people of life, liberty, and property based upon their color.

Per the COP Paris Accords, every country is urged to pledge to reduce carbon expression and assist countries harmed by carbon expression. One reason developed countries and energy companies have not pledged to address their harms is that they are unwilling to face the injustice they have created.

Since pledges by key nations are “empty,” we, as people of faith, can set the moral example by making pledges that are “full.” As our forebears pledged to abolish slavery and later to seek civil rights, we can seek climate justice. We must also take collective action to reduce the carbon footprint of the systems we depend upon.

The Episcopal Church has written creation care pledges and covenants such as the Episcopal Creation Care Pledge and the Episcopal Covenant to Care of Creation to build upon. Each reflects a commitment to care for Creation such as by eliminating the use of single-use plastics, learning to use a carbon tracker, planting trees, and purchasing carbon offsets.

We can pledge to understand and undo injustice to Creation by assisting another congregation significantly harmed by climate change. As congregations we can set an example for what countries should do.

The following pledge is not fixed. Each congregation can adapt it to their needs. It is also optional. One need not commit to every term.

## Proposed Pledge

1. I agree we have a climate emergency. I pledge to determine my carbon footprint (<https://www.sustainislandhome.org/> ) and to reduce it by 50 percent by 2030.
2. I agree to urge my congregation to declare that there is a climate emergency. I pledge to determine the carbon footprint of our buildings and activities and to reduce them by 50 percent by 2030.
3. I pledge to educate myself about climate change so I can educate others about it. As part of my education, I pledge to complete a comprehensive climate change training such as Climate Reality Leadership Training (<https://www.climaterealityproject.org/training> ).
4. To understand climate injustice, I pledge to complete the Episcopal Sacred Ground Program (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/sacred-ground/welcome/> ) this calendar year.
5. I pledge to learn how to write effective letters and op eds through, for example, [thirdact.org](http://thirdact.org) or some other organization.
6. I pledge to support youth and other climate activists.
7. I pledge to urge my congregation to adopt a curriculum that teaches the need for the care of Creation to our children as a central part of our faith.
8. I pledge to stop using banks that provide major funding for fossil fuel extraction.
9. I pledge to reach out to a congregation significantly harmed by climate change here or abroad and seek ways to address their harm.

**Taking Action:** Pledging unites us in reflection and action through which we promise to study, understand, and renew our frayed relations with Creation and join with others to speak out on climate issues.

**Results:** Pledging shows we are serious about our faith and about climate change. As the situation worsens, more and more people will seek congregations that are facing, not fleeing, reality. As we embrace our deeper faith mission to seek Creation Justice, others will wish to join us.

**Resources:**

- <https://www.thirdact.org/> seeks to organize seniors (over 60) to take faith- and secular-based action on climate change.
- <https://www.climaterealityproject.org/> offers trainings that members of the Diocese should attend in groups when possible. They can be assisted by Climate Reality graduates in our Diocese.
- <https://episcopalchurch.org/sacred-ground> offers a good overview of the Sacred Ground Process. This is a ten-week program that is done in a group process with a facilitator. Trainees have reported that it provides a profound introduction to the historical injustices we must address.