

6. CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS ANYONE CAN TAKE

Below are suggestions for actions you and your congregation can do, right now, to further your journey into Climate Change.



From the Presbyterian Church (USA) Website:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/eco-journey/climate-change-resources/>

Actions:

- **Become a Climate Ambassador!** Take the free on-demand training on how to inspire others to take action on climate change that makes a difference. Go to: <https://ecoamerica.litmos.com/self-signup/>, enter in the code PCUSABTAmbassador21 to register, then check your e-mail for the invitation to set up your profile and get started!
- View and share the above “Jesus Calls Us” video at <https://vimeo.com/370339034>.
- Accept the [PC\(USA\) Climate Care Challenge](#) by committing to personal and outward engagement on climate concerns.
- Help your church become **carbon-neutral/climate-positive** through the [Greening Congregations guide](#) and by becoming an [Earth Care Congregation](#), using the EPA [Energy Star for Congregations](#) program with its [congregational workbook](#) and the free online tool [Portfolio Manager](#), and by offsetting your building use through [Blessed Tomorrow carbon offset program with Cool Effect](#).
- Urge your members of Congress to **support legislation which embodies Carbon Pricing** as adopted by the 223 General Assembly. Read more background at our [carbon pricing page](#). The bipartisan [Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act](#) is one current piece of legislation that needs support. Learn more with an informative 45-minute recorded presentation at: <https://youtu.be/x9iySAJn99A>.
- **Embrace your power as a Shareholder.** Do you or your congregation hold investments in companies through stocks? This resource will help you leverage your power as an investor: [Activating your Power as a Shareholder](#). MRTI (Mission Responsibility Through Investment) makes recommendations for Presbyterian shareholders based on the mission goals and policies of the General Assembly. Contact mrti@pcusa.org for more information.
- Learn about other congregations’ projects to **install solar panels**.
- **Invest in Environmental Investments** with the Presbyterian Foundation.

- Consider a loan for **energy efficiency upgrades** with the [Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program's Restoring Creation loan](#).
- **Learn** from international mission partners how [Climate Change Exacerbates the Impacts of Extractive Industries in Peru](#).
- **Connect** with the Presbyterian Hunger Program's [environmental work](#).

From the Presbytery EarthCare Team's Suggested Actions:



Presbytery of Santa Fe
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

A Community Collaborating in Worship, Education, and Mission

- **(These first ones are really BIG.)**
- Don't just do it; talk about so others do it, too.
- Write, call, or e-mail your representatives in Santa Fe and Washington. More below.
- In a flight to Dallas, round-trip emissions per passenger generate 1.5 metric tons CO2 equivalent. Avoiding this trip is as climate friendly as being vegetarian for 2.8 years. Avoiding this trip is as climate friendly as carpooling for 1.5 years. The number of people in the world who emit fewer greenhouse gases in one year: 802 million.
- Drive a fuel efficient car – smallest you can get by with and preferably a hybrid.
- A long car trip produces a lot, too.
- Eat less meat.
- Get to BMI “normal” weight. (Airlines would save billions of gallons if people did this.)
- Add solar or wind on your roof.
- Don't wash dishes, but let a professional (dishwasher) do it.
- No rinsing either, just scrape the worst off.
- Cook more meals at home.
- Live in fewer square feet, i.e. stay married and/or rent out a room.
- Consider carbon offsets.
- Visit some place closer to home.
- Hire someone to seal your house.
- Work from home.
- Use cruise control and proper tire inflation.
- Lower temperature and insulate water heater.
- Use energy efficient laptop computer.
- Use it – (clothes, etc.) then reuse it!
- Eat all the food you buy.

- Recycle aluminum, plastic and paper.
- Drink tap water (bottled water has contaminants, anyway).
- Producing the bottles for American consumption required the equivalent of more than 17 million barrels of oil, not including the energy for transportation.
- Bottling water produced more than 2.5 million tons of carbon dioxide and huge amounts of landfill material which will take 450 years to break down.
- It takes 3 liters of water to produce 1 liter of bottled water.
- Drink water, not pop, energy drinks, etc.
- These drinks use the same resources and energy for making, bottling and shipping as bottled water does, and they provide no essential nutrition.
- Take the bus, or carpool, walk, or bicycle for errands.
- Plan multiple things with one trip.
- Make right turns.
- No drive-through windows – unless you have a car that turns off.
- Brakes are the enemy of fuel efficiency.
- When you see a stop sign/light turn ahead, let off the gas and be in the right lane for turning. (Drivers get impatient to speed up to the light and hit the brakes hard.)
- When going a short distance on a street, don't speed up to the speed limit.
- Would leaving for church or other commitment in town one minute earlier be that much of a problem?
- Shower, don't bathe. Take five-minute showers!
- Install water-saving showerheads & toilets, or "fool your toilet" with a brick.
- Aerate your water.
- Flush with recycled graywater.
- Use hemp or cotton shower curtain.
- Install a cool roof.
- Cover that cooking pot.
- Xeriscape, and use organic fertilizers and composts.
- Insulate, insulate, insulate.
- Opt for a tankless hot water heater.
- Choose energy-efficient appliances, and get a new fridge.
- Pay attention to daylight; install countertops near windows.
- Be awake during daylight.
- Dry clothes outside on a clothesline when possible.
- Use cloth grocery bags.
- If using paper or plastic, reuse.
- Buy bulk or large packages; this saves packing material.
- Cook from scratch.
- In the kitchen, think small, and choose the smallest oven, cooking pot, flame, etc.

- Use your microwave when possible.
- Say no to vinyl, one of the most toxic building materials.
- Use barrels to collect rainwater.
- Live in a smaller house.
- Turn the water off when brushing your teeth.
- Turn lights/TV etc. off when leaving a room.
- Wash your clothes in cold water whenever possible.
- When using hot water to wash, rinse in cold water.
- Set your thermostat to a comfortable temperature with heavy sweaters in winter, and stay comfortable with light clothes in summer.
- Use a programmable thermostat, unless you can do better manually.
- Use a broom. No need to hose down your driveway or walk.
- Eat more “vegetarian” and less meat. It takes seven calories of grain to produce one calorie of meat.
- Use the old instead of buying new.
- Don’t ship gifts.
- Minimize printing. Print 2-sided.
- Buy in bulk and thus minimize packaging.
- Add a wood or pellet stove.
- Use more wood! It is the most energy efficient, renewable.
- Steel takes six – eight times as much energy as wood, aluminum 16 times.
- Dry clothes outside, use dryer to “fluff”.
- Washing laundry in cold water saves \$.36 per load.
- Lower the thermostat; use flannel sheets, comforters, wear long underwear & sweaters (each degree saves 3% – 5%).
- Lower water heater temperature.
- Unplug what isn’t being used. This includes printers and chargers.
- Use LED lights only.
- Turn out lights when not in the room.
- Seal ducts and add insulation.
- Replace old windows and doors.
- Turn your dishwasher off before the drying cycle, and open the dishwasher door.
- Open oven door after baking. Turn the oven off 10 minutes before baking is finished.
- Set ceiling fans to push warm air down in winter.
- Lighten the car; no roof racks not being used, etc.
- Keep your car tuned, your oil changed, and the tires inflated.
- Grow some veggies.
- Plan a week’s worth of food, in order to avoid grocery trips.
- Eliminate waste by using food before it spoils.

- Add oatmeal to hamburger to make the meat go farther.
- Don't shop as entertainment or when hungry.
- Go to www.dmachoice.org to have catalogs stopped.
- Use washable instead of throwaway items.
- Use rain barrels.
- Compost, and add shredded white paper.
- For wrapping paper, look at your kids' artwork or coloring books (use re-useable bags).
- Use the public library.

More Resources

- www.joingoodside.com
- www.goodsidefoods.com
- Website for more on your personal contribution: [Carbon Footprint Reduction: The Ultimate Guide | Goodside \(joingoodside.com\)](#)
- IPPC (International Plant Protection Convention) Summary for Policy Makers: <https://www.ippc.int/en/>
- [Summary for Policymakers — Special Report on Climate Change and Land \(ipcc.ch\)](#)
- Search Dave Attenborough documentaries, Netflix etc.
- Follow the weekly Earth Week: www.earthweek.com – A Diary of the Planet: News in Science, Health, Weather, Environment and Nature.
- Book by Leidy Klotz, *Subtract: The Untapped Science of Less*

From the Alliance of World Scientists

The Alliance of World Scientists (AWS) provides the collective international voice of thousands of scientists regarding the global climate crisis and environmental trends, with the intent to turn accumulated knowledge into action. From a November 2022 release:

Take Action Globally With the Six Steps

As a starting point, Scientists Warning Foundation and the Alliance of World Scientists provides **Six Steps** that governments, organizations, policy makers and others can take to lessen the worst effects of climate change and mitigate the [worst outcomes](#). These steps are intended to advise our leaders and to mobilize our entire society to act on this crisis at a high level on a global scale. However, what you do as an individual also matters. Changing the way you consume, becoming a [citizen scientist](#), and speaking out are discussed further below.

Take the Science Oath for Climate

Scientists, by definition, have a moral obligation to warn societies of catastrophic threats, as well as to do all that can be done to mitigate the risks, taking the necessary actions whenever and wherever possible. In fact, this is an ethical requirement for doctors of medicine and science. Scientists' Warning is encouraging academics, researchers, and scientists to take the [Science Oath for Climate](#). In the [letter of intent posted in the Guardian](#), the undersigned academics write that they will pledge to stand in solidarity with the children going on school climate strikes, and with all those taking a stand for the future of the planet. It is **a pledge of scrutiny, integrity and engagement**, and fellow scientists and researchers are invited to [join](#).

Become a Citizen Scientist

Even if you are not a scientist, Scientists' Warning encourages everyone to [become a citizen scientist](#). "You don't need a doctorate or the backing of a federal agency to ask a novel, worthwhile scientific question. You just need curiosity and confidence," says [Kiona Smith-Strickland](#). **Becoming a citizen scientist in the battle for climate justice will [help save the planet](#).**

What You Do Matters

Being green, sustainable, and [eco-friendly](#) or just ecologically aware and responsible, is now more important than ever. We know that what individuals do is unlikely to stop or reverse climate change at this point. Eminent climate scientist [Michael Mann](#) stresses that individual actions – eating less meat or avoiding air travel – are important in the battle against global warming. However, they should be seen as additional ways to combat global warming rather than as a substitute for policy reform. That said, doing what you can do is as important as ever.

Do you feel it's a waste of time trying to prevent climate change? That reducing your carbon footprint is pointless when someone else is happy to increase theirs? That changing lightbulbs is a futile gesture? Well don't, says Michael Pollan, in today's G2, because even small changes in your lifestyle – and your thinking – can help save the world. — [The Guardian](#)

We look to world leaders to stop climate change. However, world leaders cannot make us stop shopping, consuming, using plastics, and chemically polluting the entire planet with our constant demand for stuff. In fact, they are relying on that demand to make our current economic system work. This is called [supply chain](#) economics and in a [limitless growth](#) based capitalist system, it is a deadly addiction.

Being green, and learning about [voluntary simplicity](#) and sustainable lifestyles is a win-win option. There are a number of action areas an individual can consider taking that will impact global consumption patterns. Visit [Green Shortz](#) (video), a fun and humorous resource where anyone can learn how to lead a more sustainable lifestyle. We must also learn to avoid [green washing](#) in everything from the products we buy to the leaders we follow.

Mass Consumerism: The Story of Stuff

We have entered a time of mass consumerism and the [story of stuff](#) (video) and never enough. Insatiable greed is putting our species at risk in many ways. In order to avoid death, human beings seek happiness in all the wrong places. They succumb to addiction and get lost. Ernest Becker said, “The idea of death, and the fear of it, haunts the human animal like nothing else.” These concepts are introduced in this profound video, [“I Shop, Therefore I Am”](#).

For a culture to avoid self-destruction as it progresses, writes Henry George in his classic 1883 work, *Social Problems*, it must develop “a higher conscience, a keener sense of justice, a warmer brotherhood, a wider, loftier, truer public spirit,” while ensuring responsible and visionary leaders who embrace “the mental and moral universe.” By stark contrast, modern consumer culture barrels in the opposite direction, breeding an increasingly trivialized and disengaged strain of personhood, devoid of the “loftier” qualities needed to sustain a viable society and healthy life supports. — [John F. Schumaker](#)

What is Sustainability?

According to Global Footprints, “There is no universally agreed definition on what sustainability means. There are many different views on what it is and how it can be achieved. The idea of sustainability stems from the concept of sustainable development, which became common language at the world’s first Earth Summit in Rio in 1992.”

The World Commission on Environment and Development describes sustainable development as “a process in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations.”

What is Permaculture?

According to [Wikipedia](#), “Permaculture is a set of design principles centered around whole systems’ thinking, simulating, or directly utilizing the patterns and resilient features observed in natural ecosystems.” Today there are numerous permaculture resources allowing those living almost anywhere to get started with some aspects of this lifestyle.

Retrosuburbia is encouraging permaculture and sustainable lifestyles for urban dwellers, rural communities and beyond. From [tiny homes](#), to [composting](#), to [fermenting your own foods](#), there are lots of fun ways to get started living in harmony with nature.

What is Rewilding and Climate Restoration?

Rewilding is a form of [ecological restoration](#) in which the emphasis is on humans stepping back and leaving an area to nature, as opposed to more active forms of natural

resource management. Rewilding efforts can aim to create ecosystems requiring passive management. More information at [Rewilding.org](https://rewilding.org).

Speaking Out: Activism and Civil Disobedience

Now, more than ever, citizens of the world must take action regarding the [climate crisis](#). Activism is an [essential](#) part of being a good citizen of any county or nation state.

Civil disobedience is an idea that a majority of educated people agree with when the fate of the world lies in balance. This [video](#) on [Henry David Thoreau](#) introduces the concept further. There are numerous ways to get involved and participate in activism for the climate crisis, as well as other related social justice issues, which you can become part of today. Scientists' Warning supports [nonviolent direct action](#).

“We can’t save the world by playing by the rules, because the rules have to change.”
Greta Thunberg

Join The School Strike for Climate

Greta Thunberg is a 15-year-old Swedish activist, who has called for a global [climate strike](#). The day of action is set for Friday at “your school” or “anywhere you feel called.” Thunberg, who [made](#) headlines for her now-weekly school strikes undertaken to urge her home country to take bold climate action, has been likened to “[Joan of Arc](#)” for her stance on this issue. In the following video, Greta Thunberg describes the **School Strike for Climate**, which students of all ages can take part in. Students of all ages around the globe are encouraged to participate. Every Friday of the week there is a school strike somewhere. More at schoolstrike4climate.com.

Political Activism: Voting

For those who are eligible voting citizens of a democratic nation, now, more than ever, it’s important to be well informed regarding the policies being enacted by one’s government and to express your opinions and understanding in the most fundamental way possible by voting in elections for the candidates whom you believe best represent your views. Staying well informed is an ongoing challenge and finding news and analysis sources that you believe are credible can help with this. This is a life skill that needs to be built up over time, and it requires patience and persistence.

Political activism means being an active participant in the political process. By voting, lobbying, working for a campaign, volunteering, or protesting, citizens exercise their right to civic involvement. In this [Political Activism Web Guide](#), you can learn about the voting process and voter registration, or find a campaign, political party, or cause where you can volunteer.

Nature-Based Intervention

Anyone can do this. Just get out in nature. If you cannot actually get outside, or if you

live in an urban setting, there are interactive virtual programs that would welcome your participation. [Guy Lane](#), Environmental Scientist and Climate Writer, says, “The Plankton Meditation is a guided and musical practice that helps youth and adults come to terms with fundamental ecological truths that are often overlooked.” [Nature-based intervention](#) is powerful paradigm to deal with [climate grief](#) and reconnect with nature.

Learn and Act:

- [Become a Citizen Scientist](#)
- [Citizens Climate Lobby](#)
- [Do Your Own Climate Research](#)
- [350.org](#)
- [Earth Vision Institute](#)
- [Environmental Activism Opportunities](#)
- [How to become a Climate Change Activist](#)
- [Youth Activism](#)
- [The Footprint Calculator](#)
- [CoolClimate Maps | BERKELEY.EDU](#)
- [FridaysforFuture](#)
- [Climate One | Michael Mann](#)
- [Project Drawdown](#)
- [Rewilding](#)
- [Sunrise Movement](#)
- [This Changes Everything | Naomi Klein](#)
- [Urban Farming](#)
- [Yale Climate Connections](#)
- [Zooniverse](#)