

# Lenten Carbon Fast 2010

As Christians we have a responsibility to be wise stewards of God's Creation and each of us must decide how we can improve our stewardship to safeguard God's Creation now and for future generations. The Commission on the Environment suggests the following list of 40 carbon fasting actions everyone can consider as a part of your Lenten preparation for the Easter season. Each of these actions will reduce our production of climate change pollution and help to preserve God's great gift of Creation.



## COMMISSION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Adapted from Tearfund and other sources with help from California Interfaith Power & Light [interfaithpower.org](http://interfaithpower.org)

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><i>"So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you ... so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."</i> —Matthew 6:2-4</p> <p><b>Ash Wednesday</b> reminds us to be faithful in action even when no one is paying attention. If we are all living in harmony with the rest of God's Creation, especially when no one is looking, our households, our churches, and our society will also be transformed.</p> <p><b>Remove one light bulb</b> from your home and live without its light for the next 40 days. This will decrease your energy use, and act as a reminder of your Lenten Carbon Fast.</p>				<p><b>Turn down</b> your thermostat by at least one degree. Aim for 68 degrees during the day and 60 degrees at night. Program your thermostat if you can. Always turn the heat off when you leave home.</p>	<p>Go meat-free today. Christians have been eating less meat during Lent for generations. Choosing meat-free meals is one of the most powerful things you can do to reduce your carbon footprint.</p>	<p>Make one of your journeys more environmentally friendly today. Could you combine two trips? Carpool rather than driving solo? Bike or walk, or take bus or BART, instead of driving?</p>
<p>Remember your baptism today, and the power of water. Try to <b>conserve</b>: Leave a bucket in the shower or kitchen sink, and collect "grey water" to water the plants. Have a lawn? Consider a rain barrel so you can water the lawn with rain.</p>	<p>Check windows and doors for drafts with a ribbon or feather. If it flutters, make or buy a draft dodger, or <b>seal leaks</b> with caulk and weatherstripping.</p>	<p>If you're going to be away from an appliance for over an hour, <b>turn it off</b>. Even on an "energy-saver" setting, a computer, game console, or TV wastes more energy when it's on than if you turn it off.</p>	<p>Be aware of your hot water use today. <b>Turn off</b> the water while scrubbing dishes. Take a shower instead of a bath, and try to take a shower that lasts half as long as usual.</p>	<p><b>Let your dishwasher breathe</b>. Run the dishwasher only with a full load, and skip the energy-intensive drying cycle by choosing the "air-dry" option; or just open the door overnight.</p>	<p>Look to purchase <b>locally-grown food</b> today. Plan to walk to a farmers' market this weekend, or consider joining a community-supported agriculture (CSA) group that delivers local produce (<a href="http://localharvest.org">localharvest.org</a>).</p>	<p>Plan ahead to <b>bring reusable bags</b> with you to get groceries today. If you already use reusable grocery bags, purchase a set of reusable produce bags for fruits and veggies. (<a href="http://ecobags.com">ecobags.com</a>)</p>
<p>Run your washing machine with cold water and only with full loads. Washing your clothes in cold water gets them just as clean as washing in hot water, but uses half the energy.</p>	<p><b>Speak out!</b> Ask our leaders to take action on climate change today. (<a href="http://daysix.org">daysix.org</a>, <a href="http://1sky.org">1sky.org</a>, <a href="http://interfaithpower.org">interfaithpower.org</a>)</p>	<p><b>Turn off lights</b> you're not using. Shut off lights as you leave a room. You can put reminders on your switchplates (<a href="http://interfaithpower.org">interfaithpower.org</a>), or install motion sensors (~ \$20 each) that turn lights off automatically (<a href="http://ShopIPL.org">ShopIPL.org</a>).</p>	<p>Be aware of how much food you discard this week. Look for opportunities to <b>avoid wasting food</b> by planning well, and eating leftovers.</p>	<p><b>Consider composting</b> your food waste. Put the nutrients from food waste back into the soil, not into a landfill. Learn more about composter options for indoors and outdoors.</p>	<p><b>Pick up</b> at least one piece of litter on the ground when you are out walking today, and dispose of it properly.</p>	<p>Making travel plans? Consider going without flying. If you have to fly, balance out the carbon impact by buying offsets. Fund a project that prevents one ton of greenhouse gases for each ton that your trip will cause.</p>

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Give the dryer a rest. <b>Hang your clothes</b> to dry on a rack or clothesline. Many households spend more than \$100 a year on the energy used by their dryer, while the air can dry your clothes for free. <b>7</b>	Many electronics draw power even when off. Today, <b>unplug</b> your appliances that are off; place computers, radios, and TVs on a power strip, and turn it off between uses. Also, unplug your phone charger when it's not charging. <b>8</b>	<b>End junk mail</b> that wastes resources. Stop unwanted catalogs (CatalogChoice.org), credit card offers (1-888-5-OPTOUT), and other junk mail (DMAchoice.org). Or hire a service to cancel it for you (41pounds.org). <b>9</b>	<b>Check the tire pressure</b> of your car today, or take it to a gas station or any My Organic Market (where a trained "Pit Crew" can check your tire pressure, and fill as needed). Cars with low tire pressure get lower mileage. <b>10</b>	Save paper today: print double-sided, or wrap your next present in color comics, or a reusable gift bag. To reduce paper towel use in public restrooms, make "These Come From Trees" signs. <b>11</b>	Minimize disposables today. Bring a coffee mug. Use cloth napkins at a meal. Wipe up with a rag instead of paper towels. Stick a fork in your purse or briefcase for the next time you eat out during the workday. <b>12</b>	Begin spring gardening by going organic. <b>Grow</b> your lawn and garden without toxic chemicals, and order a "Pesticide-Free" lawn sign! (PesticideFreeLawns.org) <b>13</b>
<i>The crisis of climate change presents an unprecedented challenge to the goodness, interconnectedness, and sanctity of the world God created and loves.</i> -The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop <b>14</b>	Many caring people are working to protect Creation. <b>Find a green organization</b> today, and sign up for their e-newsletter. (interfaithpower.org, GreenAmericaToday.org, SierraClub.org) <b>15</b>	Are you <b>recycling</b> everything you can? Refresh your memory today on what items your city or county allows for curbside recycling. Place an item that can be recycled, but that you usually don't recycle, into your bin. <b>16</b>	<b>Support clean energy</b> by purchasing "Renewable Energy Credits." It may be an option through your utility, by switching energy suppliers, or by purchasing RECs online. (green-e.org) <b>17</b>	When heating water on the stove, <b>use a pot with a lid</b> to conserve energy. <b>18</b>	It's hard to open ourselves up to the realities of the climate crisis. Today, <b>learn something new</b> about climate change. (interfaithpower.org) <b>19</b>	<b>Celebrate Spring!</b> Plant a native tree (CaseyTrees.org), or support tree-planting in other countries (CO2covenant.org) <b>20</b>
Have an <b>"embrace the silence"</b> Sunday. Turn off everything, and unplug it if you can. No TV, no radio, no ring tones. Stay home after church. It'll be good for the soul. <b>21</b>	<b>Purchase more mindfully</b> today. Print, cut out, and tape together a "Wallet Buddy" where your credit card can remind you of questions to ask yourself before buying: (NewDream.org/walletbuddy2.pdf) <b>22</b>	Own stock? Find out if shareholder resolutions have been filed to "green" the company's practices. (ProxyDemocracy.org) Stay informed and vote your proxy on behalf of greener business practices. (ICCR.org) <b>23</b>	<b>Help people</b> on the "front lines" of climate change. Carbon Covenant links US churches with carbon-reducing projects in developing countries: (CO2covenant.org). Others bring clean energy to villages: (SELF.org, EnergyCures.org) <b>24</b>	Subscribe to any magazines? If so, <b>write an email</b> to the publishers today, asking them to switch to environmentally responsible paper and printing practices (BetterPaper.org). <b>25</b>	Learn about <b>mountain-top removal mining</b> : Appalachian mountains are blown apart, poisoning streams. How much of this coal is for your electricity? (iLoveMountains.org/myconnection) <b>26</b>	Help your fridge function efficiently by placing water jugs inside (water retains cold better than air), & by pulling the fridge out to scrub down the coils. Second fridge or freezer in the basement? Try to make do with one. <b>27</b>
Think today about the role of our church in its local environment. Could our community better care for Creation? Get involved with our green work, and get inspired by other "green souls" (interfaithpower.org). <b>28</b>	Show reverence for life and for the Earth today by <b>obeying the speed limit</b> when driving. Every 10 mph in speed reduces fuel economy by 4 mph, and increases the risk of getting into an accident. <b>29</b>	Place an insulating cover over your hot water heater. (If you have an electric water heater, it's an easy job to do yourself. If you have an oil or gas heater, you may need a plumbing professional.) <b>30</b>	<b>Replace</b> the incandescent light bulbs in your house, even if they haven't burned out yet, with CFLs. Replacing 1 incandescent light bulb saves 150 lbs of CO2 a year. Don't forget to save 1 CFL for Maundy Thursday. (ShopIPL.org) <b>31</b>	<b>Maundy Thursday 1</b> Replace the light bulb you removed on Ash Wednesday with an energy-saving CFL lightbulb.	<b>Good Friday 2</b> <i>For the Church of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, good ecology is not an optional extra but a matter of justice. It is therefore central to what it means to be a Christian.</i> -The Most Rev. and Rt. Hon. Dr. Rowan Williams	<b>Holy Saturday 3</b> It can be difficult to contemplate our own end. Think today about greening your "final arrangements," when the time comes.

**4** **Easter** *Take some time today to reflect* on all of the activities that you have performed during Lent, and how they have brought you into greater harmony with the Earth and all life. Conclude your Carbon Fast by making a personal pledge to serve God and serve others by pursuing a more sustainable way of life.