**Stewards of Creation**

**Monthly Congregational Challenges 2020**

January

Reassess To Use Less Energy

Make a household plan to turn off un-needed lights

Turn down the thermostat & wash some laundry in cold water

February

Offer a ride - Show Christian love to a neighbor and the planet

March

Conduct a Home Energy Audit

Some things you can do: Use LED light bulbs, dimmer switches, lower temp for hot water, turn off computers at night, use energy-efficient appliances, have adequate insulation, a programmable thermostat and change your air filters regularly

April /May

Plant to support birds, bees & butterflies

As spring approaches and you plan, purchase and grow plants, remember our precious pollinators. How can we help provide for them?

June

Protect and Support Birds

1. Make windows non-reflective (use decals)

2. Keep cats indoors

3. Plant native plants – reduce lawn space

4. Avoid pesticides

5. Purchase shade-grown coffee (Look for bird-friendly certified coffee)

6. Avoid single use plastics

7. Join a bird watch project and provide data

July

Buy Local Food at your:

* Grocery Store
* Farmer’s Market and Farm Stands
* Local Food Businesses

August

“Use Less Electricity for Lighting”

* Switch to LED light bulbs indoors and outside
* Install dimmer switches
* Turn out lights when leaving a room
* Only use one light per person in the room
* Using no more than two lights per room occupied

September

“Conserve Water”

 Saving water also saves energy as water is cleaned, transported, heated and processed.

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August

Spend time out in the world enjoying creation.

September

Recycling

Let’s improve our recycling efforts. Whatever you already do, try to do a little more.

Use a reusable bag instead of accepting plastic bags at the grocery store.

October

Use Less Plastic

Do as many of these as possible.

• Refuse plastic straws. Bring a reusable or paper straw or go without.

• Use reusable containers instead of single-use plastic storage bags.

• Use a reusable bottle and stop purchasing bottled water

• When available, choose paper milk/orange juice cartons instead of plastic containers.

November

Less Food Waste

1. Only buy what you need.

2. Use all fresh fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy purchased.

3. Be sure to eat leftovers from homemade meals and restaurants.

4. Donate extra food (contact Churches United or Riverbend Food Bank)

Explore “on line”: 34 Ways to Waste Less Food and The Food Rescue Partnership

December

Find alternatives to wrapping paper

Consider each purchase carefully

**Examples of activities in 2019**

Scott Area Recycling Center Tours – August and September

Movie/Speaker Event – September

Introductory clip - Katherine Hayhoe, an Evangelical Scientist

“Everything Connects” documentary film

Guest speakers – Kurt Liske - Scott Area Recycling Center and Karen Nader with Terracycle

Terracycle Collection (located in west church coat closet)–Started in November

* Plastic cereal bag liners from inside cereal boxes
* Chip/Snack bags - family or individual size, any brand (No candy bags please)

Green Church initiatives – Added recycling bins, goal to omit Styrofoam products for kitchen use. Energy efficient LED lightbulbs added including new outdoor lighting fixtures.

Response cards – Opportunity to tell our story as we respond to the challenge to care for Creation.