



FAMILY CONNECTIONS

Find time to explore these questions as a family after each session.

Session 1

- In what ways are human beings related to God's creation?
- As followers of Jesus Christ, what responsibility do we have (or not have) for the earth?
- How important or not important is it for us to take care of God's creation? Should this be our highest priority as Christians? Are other things more important?
- As a family, what could we do to be more faithful stewards (caretakers) of God's creation?

Session 2

- If Jesus were to visit us today, how do you think he would react to how we interact with the earth?
- What stories or passages from the Bible can you think of that teach us how we should interact with the earth?
- How would you respond if someone asked you, "What does the Old Testament say about taking care of creation?"
- Where in your life could you do a better job of living out your faith by doing a better job of taking care of creation?

Session 3

- Do you think that your family does a good job of caring for creation?
- What are some important things that you could do better?
- What one thing would be best for your family to do for the environment?

Session 4

- Would God rather that we bring someone to church or convince him or her to care for the earth?
- What does God expect from us in terms of living lives of environmental stewardship? What can be challenging about putting our faith into action in this way?
- How would you respond if someone asked you, "What can I do to be a 'greener' person of faith?"
- As a family, what are you doing to continually place a higher priority on being "greener" people of faith?



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All the Time



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Not So Much



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After God had made all other creatures, God created humankind, male and female . . . endued them with living, reasonable, and immortal souls; made them after God's own image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it, with dominion over the creatures; yet subject to fall.

— *Westminster Larger Catechism* (7.127)

(Endue = to invest in someone or something by giving a gift or quality)





SCORING INSTRUCTIONS FOR EACH ROUND

- If everyone chooses *care for*, each person receives two points.
- If one or two people choose *exploit*, the people who chose *exploit* receive four points, and the other participants will receive only one point.
- If three or four people choose *exploit*, the people who chose *exploit* receive three points, and the other participants will receive half of a point.
- If more than four people choose *exploit*, no one receives any points.



INSTRUCTIONS FOR GROUP 1:

Follow the powdered drink mix directions exactly.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GROUP 2:

Follow the powdered drink mix directions exactly.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GROUP 3:

Add the correct amount of powdered drink mix to the water, but do not add any sugar.



CONSERVATION PLEDGE SHEET



Put a star next to any activities you already do.
Put a smiley face next to any activities that might be easy to make into a habit.
Put a frown next to any activities that would be too hard to do in your life right now.
Circle one activity that you pledge to do this week.

Drink tap water with a reusable water bottle.

Have a recycling station for cans, plastic, and paper at your home.

Walk or ride your bike, rather than using a car, twice a week.

Have a compost bin or compost pile at home to ease the use of landfills.

Turn lights off every time you leave a room.

Completely turn off your computer and computer accessories when you are not using them.

Turn off all power strips in your home when not in use.

Unplug your electronic devices (including cell phone and MP3 player) when they are not actively charging.

Use both sides of paper when printing.

Reuse blank sides of paper for notes.

Use only environmentally friendly lightbulbs in your home.

Use only cold water when doing your laundry.

Hang up clothes to dry instead of using a laundry dryer.





BOTTLED WATER QUIZ

TRUE OR FALSE?

- | | T | F |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Bottled water is healthier than tap water. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Bottled water is safer than tap water. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Bottled water is convenient and portable. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Most plastic water bottles are recycled. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. The market for bottled water is growing. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. The UN is addressing water issues in the developing world. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Some bottled water is more expensive than gasoline. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. My purchase of bottled water is unrelated to safer drinking water for the whole world. ¹ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

1. prcweb.org. Adapted from "How to Overcome the Bottled Water Habit" written by Presbyterians for Restoring Creation; used by permission.





BOTTLED WATER QUIZ ANSWER KEY

- 1. False.** There is often no difference. Little is known about the health risks of water stored in disposable plastic (PET) bottles or the effect of additives over long periods at high temperatures.*
- 2. False.** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sets more stringent standards for tap water than the Food and Drug Administration does for bottled beverages. Roughly 40 percent of bottled water is actually tap water.*
- 3. True.** But using a refillable bottle is just as convenient and less expensive.
- 4. False.** According to the Container Recycling Institute, only 14 percent of PET bottles are recycled. The rest end up in landfills or as litter. Millions of barrels of oil are required each year to produce and transport them.
- 5. True.** The Beverage Marketing Corporation states that Americans spent more than \$9 billion on bottled water in 2004 and that the product's rate of growth was almost 10 percent per year for the previous ten years.
- 6. True.** The UN adopted a resolution in 2003 calling this the "Decade for Water." The Millennium Development Goals also have an objective to halve the number of people who lack reliable and safe drinking water by 2015.
- 7. True.** Often selling for up to \$2.50 a liter (which translates to more than \$9 a gallon), bottled water is more expensive than gasoline.
- 8. False.** The UN estimates that if the world took half of what it now spends on bottled water (\$100 billion per year) and invested it in water infrastructure and treatment, everyone in the world could have access to clean drinking water.

* *In emergency and special health circumstances, bottled water may be the only safe water available.*¹

1. From "How to Overcome the Bottled Water Habit," by Presbyterians for Restoring Creation (prcweb.org); used by permission.



FILL THE BUCKET GAME QUESTIONS

- Whose herders were fighting with Abram's herders? (Lot's)
- What is the Sabbath? (*day of rest*)
- What is the third book of the Bible? (*Leviticus*)
- Name one of the Ten Commandments.
- What is more expensive, bottled water or gasoline? (*bottled water*)
- What is the best kind of bag to use for groceries? (*reusable*)
- Who was Abram's wife? (*Sarai*)
- Who was Abraham's and Sarah's son? (*Isaac*)
- What number commandment is "Remember the Sabbath"? (*fourth*)
- When is it OK to drink bottled water? (*emergencies*)
- How was Abram related to Lot? (*Abram was Lot's uncle—Genesis 11:27, 31*)
- Who was Abraham's first son? (*Ishmael*)
- Who was the mother of Abraham's first son? (*Hagar*)
- How many types of recyclable plastic are there? (*seven*)
- What major U.S. city recycles the most? (*San Francisco*)
- What major U.S. city recycles the least? (*Houston*)¹

If you need more questions for this activity, consider using the questions on "Bottled Water Quiz" (Web Resource 2a); the answers are available on "Bottled Water Quiz Answer Key" (Web Resource 2b). Or create your own questions about your congregation, your community, or current events.

1. "Recycling Rates Vary Widely Among Cities," *New York Times*, July 29, 2008.





CREATING A PRAYER

Use this guide to help you develop an amazing prayer to God . . .

Instructions

1. Insert two words that describe God.
2. Write one or two sentences that praise God.
3. Write one or two sentences of thanksgiving to God.
4. Write one or two sentences that ask God for help.
5. Write a closing sentence.

Example

Holy, amazing

Your love for us is incredible. You love us unconditionally even when we mess up or when we feel completely unlovable.

Thank you, God, for your presence in our lives. Thank you for our friends and families and our friends who feel like family.

Please be with those who are having tough times right now. We pray especially for people who are sick or hurt and for those who are affected by war.

Please be with us as we seek to spread your love in the world.
Amen.

Your Turn

_____ and
_____ God

Tips

- Use appropriate slang to make the prayer real for YOU.
- Create movements for each phrase to make this an active prayer.
- Try to make your sentences as conversational as possible so the prayer sounds like you're having a conversation with God.





CONSERVATION PLEDGE SHEET

Put a star next to any activities you already do.

Put a smiley face next to any activities that might be easy to make into a habit.

Put a frown next to any activities that would be too hard to do in your life right now.

Circle one activity that you pledge to do this week.

Buy and eat organic food instead of conventional food when possible.

Buy and eat locally grown food when possible.

Don't use plastic or paper grocery bags.

Turn on your computer only when you are really going to use it.

Give up eating meat and eat other forms of protein instead.

Take and use no more than one napkin at each meal.

Reduce your use of television and other electronic forms of entertainment.

Refrain from driving anywhere less than half a mile away.

Turn on lights only when you really need them.

Use only reusable cups when drinking.





What have you recycled in the past week?



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**What is one item
that you could have
recycled in the past
week but didn't?**



Are humans more important than other life on earth?



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On a scale of 1 to 10, how important is it for **YOU to recycle?**

[1=not important; 10=very important]



Is it sinful not to recycle everything we possibly can?



**Which is more distressing:
What our waste and abuse of
resources can do to the earth
or what our waste and abuse of
resources can do to the people
who suffer as a result?**

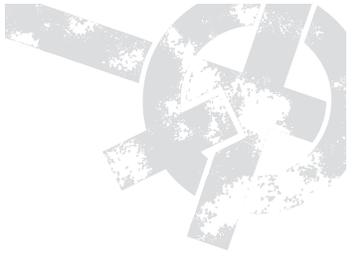


Based on what we know about Jesus Christ, how would he approach recycling and how we use our resources?

















CARBON FOOTPRINT

For a simple estimate of your carbon footprint, use the following formula. Feel free to add to this list:

- Give yourself 5 points for every computer in your home.
- Add 2 points for any computer whose power is left on most of the time.
- Subtract 3 points for each computer that your family turns off at the power strip.
- Add 1 point for any low-emission car or fuel-efficient car in your immediate family.
- Add 3 points for any regular cars in your immediate family.
- Add 5 points for each gas-heavy vehicle (SUVs, big trucks, large cars) in your immediate family.
- Subtract 4 points for anyone whose immediate family regularly rides bikes or walks to church, work, or school.
- Add 1 point for every trip you and anyone in your immediate family took on a plane this year.
- Add 1 point for every time your family drove more than two hours.
- Subtract 1 point for every category you recycle at home: plastic, aluminum, paper, or glass.
- Subtract 1 point if your immediate family uses reusable grocery bags.
- Add 1 point if you eat meat at all or most of your meals.
- Subtract 1 point if your family has eaten organic, local, or free-range food this week.
- Subtract 1 point if you regularly turn off the water when washing your hands or brushing your teeth.
- Subtract 1 point if you use a water-saving shower head.
- Subtract 1 point if your showers take less than five minutes.

Read Psalm 19:1–6 together. As a family, come up with the one best way to reduce your carbon footprint.



ENVIRONMENTAL HYMNS

The following hymns in *The Presbyterian Hymnal* contain references to eco-stewardship:¹

- "Creating God, Your Fingers Trace," no. 134
- "To Bless the Earth," no. 200
- "Praise Is Your Right, O God, in Zion," no. 201
- "Come, Sing with Joy to God," no. 215
- "Let the Whole Creation Cry," no. 256
- "Thank You, God, for Water, Soil, and Air," no. 266
- "All Things Bright and Beautiful," no. 267
- "Many and Great, O God, Are Thy Things," no. 271
- "God of the Sparrow," no. 272
- "O God the Creator," no. 273
- "O God of Earth and Space," no. 274
- "God, You Spin the Whirling Planets," no. 285
- "God Folds the Mountains Out of Rock," no. 287
- "God Created Heaven and Earth," no. 290
- "O God of Earth and Altar," no. 291
- "All Beautiful the March of Days," no. 292
- "This Is My Father's World," no. 293
- "O Lord of Every Shining Constellation," no. 297
- "All Creatures of Our God and King," no. 455
- "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee," no. 464
- "How Great Thou Art," no. 467
- "Morning Has Broken," no. 469
- "For the Beauty of the Earth," no. 473
- "Praise Our God Above," no. 480
- "Out of Deep, Unordered Water," no. 494
- "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come," no. 551
- "For the Fruit of All Creation," no. 553
- "The World Abounds with God's Free Grace," no. 556
- "Come, Sing a Song of Harvest," no. 558
- "We Plow the Fields and Scatter," no. 560

1. Presbyterians for Restoring Creation, "Scriptures and Hymns for Caring for Creation," prcweb.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=resources&fuse=resources.





ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP LIST

Office of the Moderator

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
100 Witherspoon St.
Louisville, KY 40202

Associate for Environmental Issues

PCUSA Washington Office
100 Maryland Ave. NE #410
Washington, DC 20002

Presbyterian Representative to the UN

PCUSA United Nations Office
777 UN Plaza, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10017

Environmental Protection Agency

Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20460
(To contact by e-mail: epa.gov/epahome/comments3.htm)

U.S. Forest Service

1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250
(To contact by e-mail: fs.fed.us/contactus/regions.shtml)

Sierra Club

408 C St. NE
Washington, DC 20002

Your U.S. Representative

Go to house.gov/ and search under *Representatives*.

Your U.S. Senators

Go to senate.gov/ and search under *Senators*.

Check your local listings for:

- Your local recycling office
- Your local school district food office
- Your local water office





LYRICS PRAYER

Step 1: Listen to “I Need You to Survive” while reading a copy of the song’s lyrics.

Step 2: Listen a second time, and circle at least ten words that stand out.

Step 3: Using the circled words, write a prayer.