



Personal Covenant with God's Creation

Every action has consequences on other humans and on the earth. Become aware of the outcome of your actions, reduce your impact on others, and walk lightly on Earth. Consider these practices to be a spiritual discipline. Have others in your household sign as well and decorate and post this record of your goals to catch your attention - keep it sacred!

I pledge to work toward the following environmentally safe practices:

1. Education

- Learn about the environmental crisis and ecological justice.
- Read about or join a study group fostering voluntary simplicity.

2. Green your living space

Energy Use

- Alternative energy: solar/ geothermal/ purchase wind from your energy company.
- Purchase Energy Star appliances (refrigerator, dishwasher, washer/dryer, water heater, dehumidifier) and high efficiency furnace, air conditioner, and windows.
- Get programmable thermostat. Lower thermostat in winter; raise it in summer. Change settings when away. Use ceiling fans.
- Clean/ replace filters for all appliances/furnace with filters.
- Replace all incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs.
- When not in use, turn off lights, TV, computer, appliances. Prefer natural light.
- Turn off TV, computer, microwave, etc. at the strip/ plug.
- Run full loads in dish washer, washer, and dryer. Use short cycles/ clothes line.
- Use microwave/ toaster oven/ slow cooker rather than oven/range.
- Set refrigerator at 36F to 42F, freezer at -5F to +6F, and water heater at 120F.
- Use cold or warm water when washing clothes; rinse in cold water.
- Insulate walls/ attic. Repair leaks around windows/doors. Lock windows to seal.
- Repair hot water leaks. Insulate water heater ("blanket") + hot water pipes (wrap).

Water Use

- Do not let water run while doing tasks.
- Install low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators.
- Repair faucet leaks and toilet runs immediately.
- Take a short shower rather than a bath, and shower less often.
- Wash dishes and laundry on full load.

Food

- Buy fair-trade +/or organic products.
- Buy local produce and products.
- Buy only what you will consume, and then use all you buy.
- Put on your plate only what you will eat, and then eat all on your plate.
- Know where your food comes from and appreciate all who made it: <http://www.nourishlife.org>

Paper Use

- Use recycled, post-consumer paper products for kitchen, bathroom, and cleaning.
- Avoid paper towels; use cloth napkins and handkerchiefs.
- Use electronic media rather than paper.
- Use recycled, post-consumer, acid-free note/office paper or tree-free paper.
- Use the paper completely on both sides.

Reduce/ Recycle/ Reuse

- Buy less stuff you have to throw away (tips at www.goingzerowaste.com)
- Find out exactly what your town recycles and whatever is left look up here: www.realsimple.com/home-organizing/organizing/organizing-tips-techniques/recycle-anything
- Use non-toxic products whenever possible: check <https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice>
- Make your own consumables/toiletries: http://eartheasy.com/live_nontoxic_solutions.htm
- Do not put grease or strong chemicals down drains.
- Buy products with no/less packaging.
- Compost: create rich soil and prevent methane exhaust landfills eartheasy.com/grow_compost.html
- Use canvas bags for shopping or reuse paper/plastic when shopping.
- Find out if there are community sharing options nearby (Tool Libraries, www.freecycle.org)

3. Transportation

- Purchase a car with good fuel economy. Maintain engine/tire pressure. Change oil/air filter.
- Over 55 miles per hour is least efficient: drive more slowly. Easy stops and starts. Do not idle.
- Where feasible walk, bicycle, carpool or take public transportation.
- Flying is the “dirtiest” way to travel. Offset your carbon use: www.cooleffect.org/content/travel-offset
- Consider alternatives: combine trips, web conference meetings, etc.

4. Work

- Green the work space and work practices: office, shop, factory, classroom, farm
- Advocate with employers to green your company, agency, or institution.
- Promote greening among fellow workers and clients/customers/students.

5. Nature

- Enjoy as kin the plants and pets in your living space.
- Take ten minutes a day to enjoy/love nature (sit outside, pet an animal, garden).
- Use devotional materials that enhance your love of nature and your care for it.

6. Public Commitments

- Advocate for environmentally friendly legislation and policies.
<http://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Publicly-Engaged-Church/Advocacy>
- Restore a local habitat; protest a local environmental violation.
- Contribute to social justice organizations and environmental organizations.
- Invest in socially responsible stocks and bonds that foster eco-justice.

SIGNED _____ DATE _____