



Christian Formation  
Episcopal Diocese of Texas

# LET'S CELEBRATE EARTH DAY

2009

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## April 22 - Earth Day

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### Focus

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Everything we do impacts others. How can we take care of our earth?  
As Christians, what are we called to do?

### Scripture

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Gen. 1- 2:3 - Creation Story  
Matthew 22:34-40 - The Great Commandment  
Luke 10:29-37 - The Good Samaritan

### Other Resources

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Please refer to the Bibliography section on page 2

### Prayer

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Please refer to the Prayer section beginning on page 4.

## Bibliography

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*Agatha's Featherbed*, Carmen Agra Deedy  
*The Lorax*, Dr. Seuss  
*Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai*, Claire Nivola  
*Earth Book for Kids: Activities to Help Heal the Environment*, Linda Schwartz  
*Ecoart!: Earth-Friendly Art and Craft Experiences for 3-9 Year Olds*, Laurie Carlson  
*Recycled Crafts Box*, Laura Martin  
*Michael Recycle*, Ellie Bethel  
*Every Day Is Earth Day*, Kathy Ross  
*The Big Book for our Planet*, Ann Durrell  
*Blessings and Prayers Through the Year*, Elizabeth McMahon Jeep  
*The Lion Book of Children's Prayers*  
*Peanut Butter and Jelly Prayers*, Julie Sevig  
*Women's Uncommon Prayers*  
*The Book of Common Prayer*  
*The Creation*, illustrated by Sandro Corsi  
*A Prayer for the Earth*, Sandy Eisenberg Sasso

*These resources are available from the diocesan Resource Center by contacting Janie Stevens at [jstevens@epicenter.org](mailto:jstevens@epicenter.org) or calling 713.520.6444/800.318.4452.*

## Other Resources

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*Build a Better World I, Build a Better World II, and Build a Better World: Africa* are children's magazines that teach about other parts of the world and their struggles for a better life.

([www.churchworldservice.com](http://www.churchworldservice.com))

*Cool Planet for Teachers* - lesson plans [www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/index](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/index).

*Keepers of the Earth: Native American Stories and Environmental Activities for Children* (Fulcrum, Inc. Golden, CO 1988)

*50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth*, The Earth Works Group (Andrews and McMeel, 1990)

<http://ww2.earthday.net/node/75> (Environmental fact sheets and a video clip)

<http://www.earthday.net> - Articles and activities for children and adults.

"Earth" - Disney movie about Earth and ecology (<http://www.comingsoon.net/news/movienews.php?id=44285>)

Life on Earth matching game - Target

Respect the Earth game - Target

Good Citizenship game - Target

"Wall-E" movie now on DVD or from Netflix

## For Families

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In 1970 Gaylord Nelson, a United States senator from Wisconsin, called for the people of the world to celebrate the earth on April 22. Over 20 million people participated that year, and now over 500 million people and governments in over 175 countries celebrate the Earth on April 22.

The event is celebrated in many different ways and it is appropriate for the church to celebrate this day as well. We are reminded in our Eucharistic Prayer C of “this fragile earth, our island home.” Many prayers in our Book of Common Prayer address the concerns for environment and for proper use of the gifts that God has given us.

You are encouraged to choose one or more of the books listed in the Resources section on page 2 to read as a family and discuss. You may wish to watch “Wall-E” or certainly go to the new Disney movie, “Earth”, which will premiere on April 22. The craft books have many suggestions for activities for all ages to do to further enhance your celebration of Earth Day.

One of the Millennium Development Goals calls for environmental sustainability. (curriculum for children can be downloaded from [http://www.epicenter.org/edot/Christian\\_Formation5.asp?SnID=1290734525](http://www.epicenter.org/edot/Christian_Formation5.asp?SnID=1290734525). Click on “Resources for Children” and then on “Millennium Development Goals curriculum”)

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### *Agatha’s Featherbed* by Carmen Deedy

1. Read the story of Agatha.
  - Ask the children to name places where things like linen, cotton, wool, etc. come from. How do we get those things? Who makes these things into items we can use?
  - What did Agatha do when she realized that something she had purchased had implications

upon someone else?

- What would you have done if you had been in Agatha’s position? What if you didn’t have long hair? What could you have done instead?
2. Read or tell the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37). How is this story like Agatha’s Featherbed?

### *The Lorax*, Dr. Seuss

1. Read *The Lorax*.

“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.” (*The Lorax*)

- Everything we do impacts others. Remember Agatha’s featherbed. Everything comes from something. Nothing comes from nothing.
- We need to ask questions — the right kinds of questions — that make us realize that we are destroying our world.
- Do you want a particular thing, or do you need it?
- What happened to the truffula trees? The brown barba-loots?
- If you were the “once-ler” what would you have done differently to protect the environment?
- What can we do today to protect the environment?

2. Read Matthew 22:34-40

- What does Jesus say is the first commandment? How is this related to caring for the environment?
- What does Jesus say is the second commandment? Is there a connection between loving your neighbor and taking care of the environment? Explain.
- How do we fail to keep the commandment to “do unto others as you would have them do unto you” with respect to caring for the environment?

## Prayers from the Book of Common Prayer

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*For Joy in God's Creation, p. 814*

O heavenly Father, who has filled the world with beauty: Open our eyes to behold your gracious hand in all your works; that, rejoicing in your whole creation, we may learn to serve you with gladness; for the sake of him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*For Agriculture, p. 824*

Almighty God, we thank you for making the earth fruitful, so that it might produce what is needed for life: Bless those who work in the fields; give us seasonable weather; and grant that we may all share the fruits of the earth, rejoicing in your goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*For Towns and Rural Areas, p. 825*

Lord Christ, when you came among us, you proclaimed the kingdom of God in villages, towns, and lonely places; Grant that your presence and power may be known throughout this area; and grant that all the people of our nation may give thanks to you for food and drink and all other bodily necessities of life; respect those who labor to produce them, and honor the land and the water from which these good things come. All this we ask in your holy Name. Amen.

*For the Conservation of Natural Resources, p. 827*

Almighty God, in giving us dominion over things on earth, you made us fellow workers in your creation: Give us wisdom and reverence so to use the resources of nature, that no one may suffer from our abuse of them, and that generations yet to come may continue to praise you for your bounty; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*For the Right Use of God's Gifts, p. 827*

Almighty God, whose loving hand has given us all that we possess: Grant us grace that we may honor you with our substance, and, remembering the account which we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*For Knowledge of God's Creation, p. 827*

Almighty and everlasting God, you made the universe with all its marvelous order, its atoms, worlds, and galaxies, and the infinite complexity of living creatures: Grant that, as we probe the mysteries of your creation, we may come to know you more truly, and more surely fulfill our role in your eternal purpose; in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*For the Harvest of Lands and Waters, p. 828*

O gracious Father, who opens your hand and fills all things living with plenteousness: Bless the land and waters, and multiply the harvests of the world; let your Spirit go forth, that it may renew the face of the earth; show your loving-kindness, that our land may give her increase; and save us from selfish use of what you give, that men and women everywhere may give you thanks; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Some excerpts from Thanksgiving for the Nation, p. 838*

Almighty God, giver of all good things: We thank you for the natural majesty and beauty of this land. They restore us, though we often destroy them. Heal us. We thank you for the great resources of this nation. They make us rich, though we often exploit them. Forgive us.

*For the Beauty of the Earth, p. 840*

We give you thanks, most gracious God, for the beauty of earth and sky and sea; for the richness of mountains, plains and rivers; for the songs of birds and the loveliness of flowers. We praise you for these good gifts; and pray that we may safeguard them for our posterity. Grant that we may continue to grow in our grateful enjoyment of your abundant creation, to the honor and glory of your Name, now and for ever. Amen.

*For the Harvest, p. 840*

Most gracious God, by whose knowledge the depths are broken up and the clouds drop down the dew: We yield you hearty thanks and praise for the return of seedtime and harvest, for the increase of the ground and the gathering in of its fruits, and for all the other blessings of your merciful providence bestowed upon this nation and people. And, we beseech you, give us a just sense of these great mercies, such as may appear in our lives by a humble, holy, and obedient walking before you all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit be all glory and honor, world without end. Amen.

*“The Cosmic Order” from A Song of Creation, Canticle 12, Morning Prayer II, p. 88*

Glorify the Lord, you angels and all powers of the Lord,

O heavens and all waters above the heavens.

Sun and moon and stars of the sky, glorify the Lord,

Praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Glorify the Lord, every shower of rain and fall of dew.

All winds and fire and heat.

Winter and summer, glorify the Lord,

Praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O chill and cold,

Drops of dew and flakes of snow.

Frost and cold, ice and sleet, glorify the Lord,

Praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O nights and days,

O shining light and enfolding dark.

Storm clouds and thunderbolts, glorify the Lord,

Praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

*“The Earth and its Creatures” from A Song of Creation, Canticle 12, Morning Prayer II, p. 88*

Let the earth glorify the Lord,

Praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O mountains and hills,

And all that grows upon the earth,

Praise him and highly exalt him forever.

Glorify the Lord, O springs of water, seas, and streams,

O whales and all the move in the waters.

All birds of the air, glorify the Lord,

Praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

Glorify the Lord, O beasts of the wild,

And all you flocks and herds.

O men and women everywhere, glorify the Lord,

Praise him and highly exalt him for ever.

## How will you celebrate Earth Day?

You may wish to set up a recycling station at home. And then use it.

Dig in the garden or plant some flowers in pots for your window sills.

Use canvas or recyclable bags for your groceries.

Get a good water bottle and refill it rather than using small bottled waters.



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