

St Peter's Greener Lent Challenge

How can we become better at caring for creation and improving our lives and the lives of others through healthy, eco-friendly and sustainable living?

The Lenten 40-day period before Easter gives us the opportunity to reflect on the practice of fasting and commit to giving up something that brings a real benefit to nature and helps address climate change. Below are some changes you could make that will help the environment. Take time to pray, reflect and consider these options – pick one or two or however many you'd like (you never know the changes might just stick!)

- **Go plastic free.** Even if you can't become totally plastic-free, make it your goal to at least reduce your use of plastic. Take soft plastic to either Tesco, Waitrose or the Co-op in Hagley or place during Lent in the bin at the back of church.
- **Switch off from digital.** Explore technology-free times or areas of the house, switching to 'airplane mode' for the first hour in the morning and the last hour at night, 'switch off Sundays', reaching for your Bible over your device(s) and writing a list of outdoor things that you enjoy.
- **Boycott fast fashion.** Boycott shops where clothes are cheap because they pay those who make their clothes so very little.
- **Buy less or second hand.** Visit a charity shop to buy a new outfit – lots of charity shops in Stourbridge. Look out for the special café that St Peters will put on in Lent to show off your outfit !!
- **Buy local or in bulk.** Try to buy food that is produced locally. Avoid food that has to come from the other side of the World..
- **Become zero waste.** Slowly try to reduce your waste a bit every week. Consider giving a home-made gift instead of buying a present, upcycling items or looking at your food shop and seeing what items you could buy differently, spending a bit more on loose fruit and veg for example. Wrap a present in a scarf or use a paper carrier (back of church – free)
- **Spend more time in nature.** Get outside for Lent – obtain from Church the theme for the week
- **Invite wildlife into your garden or church green space** Buy native plants from a local garden centre or supermarket and start replacing some of the lawn with flowers. Keep bird feeders fully stocked. This is now the time to put up nest boxes.
- **Try a plant-based recipe or diet.** Cook yourself a vegan or plant-based meal once a week. All supermarkets now stock plant base ready meals too and. maybe try to reduce as many animal products from your diet as you can.
- **Change your method of transport.** Try a walk each day, go on the bus, maybe park at Stourbridge Junction (plenty of room now) and catch the little shuttle train to the town thereby reducing your carbon use taking the car into town.
- **Take a step to save energy in your home.** Swap a bath for a shower. Turn the thermostat down a notch and put on an extra layer. T shirts and heating on full are “a thing of the past”
- **Join the Eco Church community.** Make a commitment to long term action on the environment in your local community through Eco Church or other greening schemes. If you're already part of an Eco Church, find out how you can help your church achieve the next award level. Ask Pauline if you want to know more about Eco Church

Where do I start?

We are all different: what matters is that you take the first step. So choose a change to make – be gentle on yourself and realistic – but challenge yourself too!