

Creation Justice @



In Jesus, God so loved the whole world. We follow Jesus, so we love the world God loves. Concerned for the global climate emergency, drawing on diverse approaches for our diverse contexts, we commit to form and restore loving, liberating, life-giving relationships with all of Creation. The Episcopal Church's Covenant for the Care of Creation is a commitment to practice loving formation, liberating advocacy and life-giving conservation as individuals, congregations, ministries, and dioceses.

In 2022, St. Michael's launched conversations, initiatives, and ministries that support The Episcopal Diocese of Colorado and the National Episcopal Church's invitation to be better stewards of God's creation. Under the umbrella of **Creation Justice** at St. Michael's, we have taken up church-wide action to safeguard the integrity of Creation and to sustain and renew the life of the Earth.

Earth Day is April 22, 2024



The theme for Earth Day 2024 is *Planet vs. Plastics*, highlighting the fact that 380 million tons of plastic are now produced every year—while only 9 percent of plastic ever produced has been recycled. **Did you know?**

- Of the 380 million tons of plastic produced every year, 50% is for single-use purposes.
- Plastics can take from 20 - 100s of years to decompose & less than 14% of plastics are actually recycled.
- 60 billion single-use water bottles are bought per year. It takes 6x the amount of water inside the bottle to produce the plastic bottle itself & 14% of all litter comes from beverage containers.
- 14 million tons of plastic (a garbage truck every 45 sec.) are dumped into our oceans every year.
- 99% of plastic is made from fossil fuel chemicals. By 2050, plastics will account for 20% of total oil consumption.
- Over 1 million marine animals are killed by plastic pollution every year.



“...human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbor and with the earth itself. We are not God. The earth was here before us and it has been given to us. This allows us to respond to the charge that Judeo-Christian thinking, on the basis of the Genesis account which grants man “dominion” over the earth, has encouraged the unbridled exploitation of nature by painting him as domineering and destructive by nature. It is not a correct interpretation of the Bible as understood by the Church. Although it is true that we Christians have at times incorrectly interpreted the Scriptures, nowadays we must forcefully reject the notion that our being created in God’s image and given dominion over the earth justifies absolute domination over other creatures.”

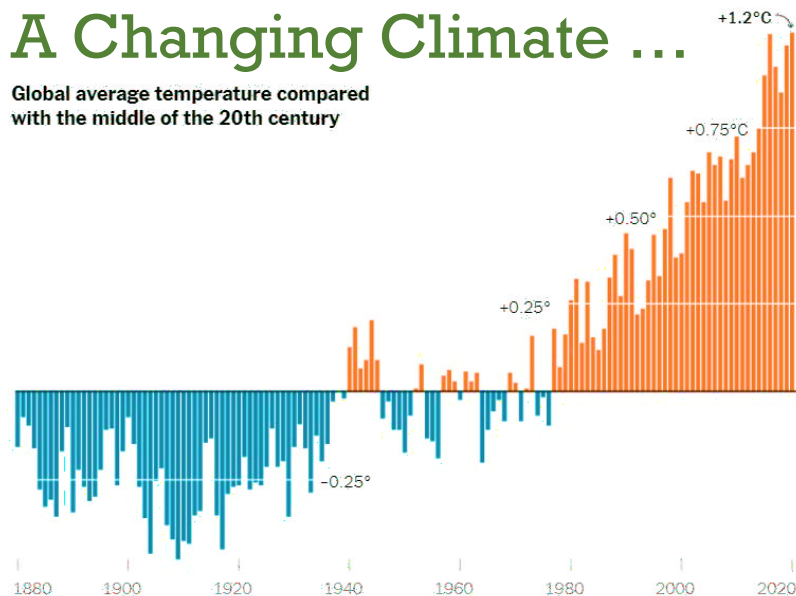
On Care for our Common Home, Laudato Si - Pope Francis, 2015



Learn more @ www.stmikeschurch.com/socialjustice

A Changing Climate ...

Global average temperature compared with the middle of the 20th century



Source: NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies • By Veronica Penney

The Earth's atmosphere makes life possible by trapping heat, water and necessary gases like in a greenhouse. However, just like a greenhouse can get too hot for plants, the Earth's atmosphere can get too warm and cause major disruptions such as extreme weather, flooding, and droughts, which can threaten lives, property, and food systems. The Earth's climate constantly changes, but there is no denying that human activities since the start of the industrial revolution have drastically changed our climate. (*See graph for reference.*) Two gases are the primary drivers of trapping heat in our atmosphere: CO₂ & Methane.

Did you know?

- Fossil Fuels account for 75% of global CO₂ emissions with electricity & heat production as the largest contributors, followed by transport, manufacturing, construction, and agriculture.
- Behind CO₂, Methane is the second most potent greenhouse gas, driven primarily by agricultural activities. Methane only lasts a decade or so versus centuries or more for CO₂, but per molecule, Methane traps 28 times more heat than CO₂.
- Agriculture, especially beef production, is the largest methane producer & makes up a staggering 14.5% of all global greenhouse emissions.

1. Commit to reducing single-use plastics.
2. Reduce beef consumption & eat more vegetables.
3. Reduce or consolidate your transportation needs.
4. Compost food waste.
5. Plant a vegetable garden and choose water-wise landscaping.
6. Shop for local products and produce.
7. Choose reusable over disposable products.
8. Perform an energy audit of your home with COS Utilities.
9. Support Food to Power for local food waste reduction.
10. Support Episcopal Relief & Development & Sustain Island Home Project.

Data sources: www.ourworldindata.org & www.plasticoceans.org



St. Michael's
Episcopal Church
COLORADO SPRINGS

What we have done ...

Over the past several years we have taken the follow steps to be better stewards of creation on our campus.

- Installed 3 new water fountains with bottle refilling stations.
- Converted 95% of all light fixtures to high efficiency LED bulbs.
- Converted 8 flower beds to rock or zero-scaping to reduce watering.
- Converted all thermostats to a unified system to reduce costs & energy usage.
- Began utilizing more reusable cups, plates, and silverware for hospitality.
- Moved to primarily digital delivery for the Archangel newsletter.

Beyond our walls ...

In 2023, St. Michael's adopted a portion of the Santa Fe Trail from the Edmondson Trailhead north two miles to Ice Lake. The average time to walk this 4-mile roundtrip, including clean up, is 90 minutes. To volunteer, go to stmikeschurch.com/signup and let us know you can help.

The Great American Cleanup

April 27, 2024

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Prospect Lake

Register by April 15 Online:
stmikeschurch.com/signup

10 Creation Justice Practices You can do at home!

