

THE *Episcopal* CHURCH



APRIL 21, 2013 – FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

EARTH DAY 2013

Tomorrow, April 22, the Episcopal Church celebrates the 43rd national Earth Day. The following resources offer information and assistance to individuals and congregations in addressing environmental concerns throughout the coming year.

“Sunday Morning Sustainability: Eco-justice Impacts and Opportunities”

<http://www.nccecojustice.org>

As part of the National Council of Churches’ Eco-Justice program, the Episcopal Church assists each year in the development of Earth Day Sunday materials to help congregations celebrate and care for God’s Creation. This year’s offering, “Sunday Morning Sustainability,” examines many of our Sunday morning routines, such as turning on lights, logging onto our computers, making coffee, taking a shower, getting dressed, and going to church. By better understanding the ecological footprint these activities leave, we can adjust our routines to become better caretakers of the earth and improve people’s lives around the world.

“Examining these issues can feel overwhelming, and to a certain degree, we are bound by the systems in which we live and operate,” this document acknowledges. “As Christians, we can draw strength and guidance from our shared faith, committing together to place our communal values over our individual desires. We can change our own ways of consumption as we work to transform political, economic and social systems for justice and sustainability” (Sunday Morning Sustainability, p. 6).

“The Future We Want”

<http://www.un.org/en/sustainablefuture>

The Episcopal Church’s Office of Global Relations supports the United Nations as it works toward global, collective ecological responsibility. In 1992, world leaders assembled for an “Earth Summit” in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and created the Rio Declaration, which became known as Agenda 21. It called for balance between the economic, social, and environmental needs of present and future generations.

In June 2012, on the 20th anniversary of the Rio Declaration, 40,000 people gathered at the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development to discuss two main themes: how to build a green economy to achieve sustainable development and lift people out of poverty; and how to improve international coordination for sustainable development. The resulting document, “The Future We Want,” calls for a wide range of actions to establish sustainable development goals, promote reporting measures, encourage sustainable consumption and production, engage civil society, and recognize the importance of voluntary commitments on sustainable development.

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners. ISAIAH 61:1

Sunday Morning Sustainability

Eco-justice Impacts and Opportunities

Many of us have similar Sunday morning routines. These routines, like our other daily activities, create an ecological “footprint,” which impacts God’s Creation—both people and planet. As we examine our routines and adjust them to create smaller ecological footprints, we can be better caretakers of God’s Creation and we can improve lives around the world.

<http://www.nccecojustice.org>