

A TIME TO ACT

LIVING IN A WARMING WORLD



INTRODUCTION

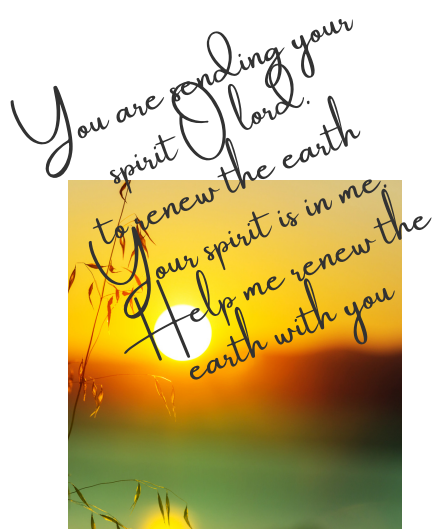


Delegates from over 190 countries will gather in Glasgow for a UN global summit (COP26) from 31 October – 12 November to focus on climate change and its impact on our world. The need is urgent. The earth is warming. The effects are potentially devastating but there is hope... We can limit the destruction. We all need to act now.

This booklet will inform you and help you hear what God might be asking of you personally at this time. Laying out the problem concisely, it offers simple, but effective ideas for prayer and action. It highlights the lifestyle changes we all need to make to protect our life on this planet and to limit further damage.

Changing how you live not only helps our earth, it has a positive impact on your life. You save money. Life is more balanced. You gain a better appreciation of what really matters...

... and in caring for creation you develop a deeper sense of how much God cares for you and how much he needs you to work with him at this important time.



Renew



Glance at the sun.
See the moon and stars.
Gaze at the beauty
of Earth's greenings.
Now think what delight
God gives to humankind.
But we are to work with it.
For without it
we cannot survive.

Hildegard of Bingen

Start by renewing your connection with nature. Recognising the beauty and variety of life around you will help fuel your desire to protect what you see. It is God's creation. It is good. Enjoy it.

Covid has helped us notice and enjoy nature. It forced us out into the open air. We heard birdsong for the first time, discovered green places in the middle of cities we thought we knew. We noticed the changing seasons, saw a bigger world continue its rhythms when the world we created for ourselves was falling apart

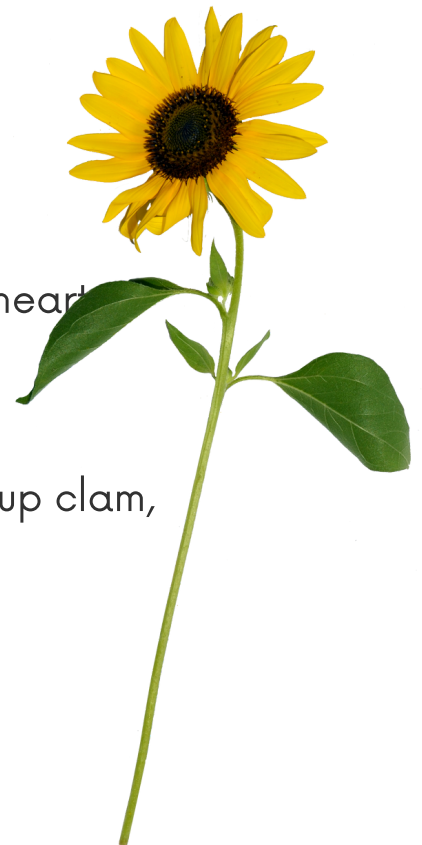
Get outside again. The walking you did then improved your physical and mental health, it brightened your spirits and encouraged you to notice something bigger than yourself. See and savour the beauty of what is around you wherever you find yourself.

Bring nature inside. Rediscover the positive effects of house plants on your well-being, your concentration, on the air and space in your rooms.

Stand still. Be astonished. Look at what God is creating. See how good it is

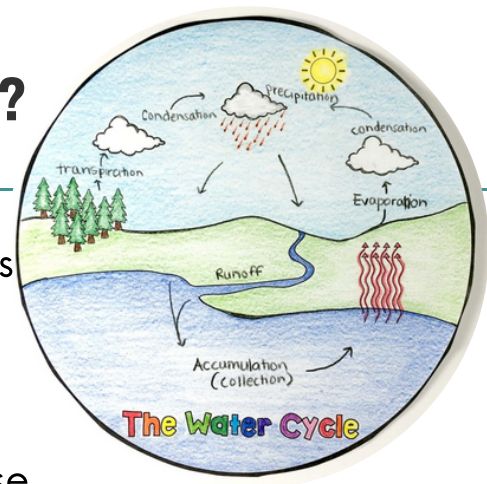
Messenger by Mary Oliver

My work is loving the world.
Here the sunflowers, there the hummingbird—
equal seekers of sweetness.
Here the quickening yeast; there the blue plums.
Here the clam deep in the speckled sand.
Are my boots old? Is my coat torn?
Am I no longer young, and still half-perfect? Let me
keep my mind on what matters,
which is my work,
which is mostly standing still and learning to be
astonished.
The phoebe, the delphinium.
The sheep in the pasture, and the pasture.
Which is mostly rejoicing,
since all the ingredients are here,
which is gratitude, to be given a mind and a heart
and these body-clothes,
a mouth with which to give shouts of joy
to the moth and the wren, to the sleepy dug-up clam,
telling them all, over and over, how it is
that we live forever



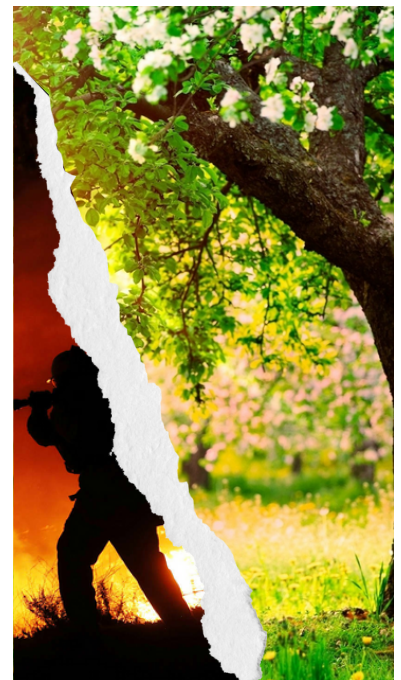
What's everyone so worried about?

Creation is a work of art and engineering. It is a complex system, finely tuned to refresh and renew itself. Oceans and skies recycle and clean water; plants, land and seas absorb carbon dioxide, making something good to use again. Nature provides, replenishes, restores.



For centuries we respected nature's rhythms, going with the flow of the seasons, giving her space to renew. Then came industrialisation and the growth of economies based, essentially, on our insatiable need for 'stuff'.

Making stuff uses energy, produces CO₂. The way we farm, travel, live—all produce more CO₂ than nature can recycle. Half of all the carbon we produce stays in the atmosphere. Indefinitely. It traps heat that is normally released into space. The more we produce, the more heat we trap, the greater the rise in temperature — with disastrous consequences: the extreme droughts, floods and fires we experience now are the result of a 1C rise. We're losing homes and habitats, people are displaced, species dying out



The Paris Climate targets aimed to cap global warming at 1.5C and limit (not prevent!) the impact on the delicate balance of nature we rely on for food, clean air, water, work, safety.

We're not meeting those targets. We are on course for more serious consequences unless we all take action. Now

Where are you?

Principle and Foundation

trans: David Fleming

God who loves us creates us and wants to share life with us forever. Our love response takes shape in our praise and honour and service of the God of our life.

All the things in this world are also created because of God's love and they become a context of gifts, presented to us so that we can know God more easily and make a return of love more readily.

As a result, we show reverence for all the gifts of creation and collaborate with God in using them so that by being good stewards we develop as loving persons in our care of God's world and its development. But if we abuse any of these gifts of creation or, on the contrary, take them as the center of our lives, we break our relationship with God and hinder our growth as loving persons.

At the beginning of his Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius lays down a foundation to help us understand the reason why God created us and to reflect on our response. Alive today, Ignatius would emphasise, again and again, our role in caring for creation. He'd be asking us to get our priorities in order, grow in freedom to let go of our obsession with stuff and status. In his great love of creation and Creator, he would be urging us to cut back on the energy and resources we squander and so cut back on the carbon we put into the air.

As you read Ignatius' foundation on the left, you might imagine Adam's God calling "Where are you?" Adam is hiding, naked, feeling that he is not enough. Hear Ignatius' God saying something quite different to you: you are enough. You have what you need. You are created to be on earth at this time, for a specific purpose.

**Where are you? says God.
I am creating this
beautiful world with you.
I need your help.
What you do really matters.**

What can you do?



Pray

A simple prayer is suggested below. It's easy to remember and carry about in your head. Say it throughout the day. Pray it for the delegates in Glasgow and for yourself

**You are sending your spirit O lord.
to renew the earth
Your spirit is in me.
Help me renew the earth with you**

Walk

Cut down on the amount of fuel you use, and the carbon that produces, by cutting out short car journeys. Walking more helps you sleep better, improves your mood, gets you out mixing with people, improves joint and blood, and a raft of other health issues.

Reduce

- Turn your heating down 1oC, saving £50/yr.
- Reduce your wash temperature from 40o to 30o (40% saving) or use a cold wash. This saves energy, and your clothes last longer)
- Reduce your shower time. Every min saves £4/person/yr
- Turn off appliances rather than leaving them on stand-by



Buy

- Less stuff. God thinks you're great. You don't need it.
- Fair trade: food/goods produced using environmentally sensitive techniques and paying a fair wage.
- Less packaging which only adds to transport costs
- Local. Again, this lower transport costs, produces less carbon
- Second hand clothes and forget fast fashion. Buy good quality.

Eat

- Vegetarian meals instead of meat for one/two days a week
- Seasonal, local food, cutting down on transport costs and carbon produced, supporting the local economy.
- Less processed food, cutting back on energy used in manufacturing, eating less sugar and salt. A healthier option.

Do big things


Small things do make a big difference. Business only makes and sells what we will buy. If we become more discerning and carbon sensitive in our purchases, business will change what it offers - after it tries to persuade us that it really is green and eventually realises that we're not going to be fooled. The current economic model relies on retail and manufacturing growth as a measure of success. It is unsustainable. We must adapt.

There are also some bigger things that you can do. These will significantly and swiftly impact on your carbon emissions:


- Change to an electric car
- Replace your gas/oil heating system with an eco friendly type
- Change to a renewable energy supplier
- Stop flying or only make trips that are really important to you

A few more facts

Nature currently removes half of our CO₂ emissions from the atmosphere. The rest stays there indefinitely. Each time you drive your car, you are sending CO₂ into the air. It will stay there, warming the planet. Indefinitely.



Average UK person's CO₂ emissions each year is 12.7 tonnes



We need to reduce our average to 2.5 tonnes, to limit further destruction.

Calculating the carbon produced in different activities is complex. A rough guide to a few key changes you can make:

	CARBON SAVING
Getting rid of the car	2.5 tonnes/yr
Having two meat free days/week	0.5 tonnes/yr
Avoiding one flight (depending on length)	0.7- 2.8 tonnes/yr
Switch to renewable energy	2.5 tonnes/yr
Insulate home and make more energy efficient	0.4 tonnes/yr
Reduce food waste	0.4 tonnes/yr
Recycle	0.2 tonnes/yr
Line dry clothes	0.2 tonnes/yr

The fashion industry is currently responsible for 10% of greenhouse gas emissions. If we curb our appetite for fast fashion, this also would significantly decrease our impact.

A bit more information



Clear presentation of issues and action.

- **Under the Sky we make:** How to be Human in a Warming world Kimberly Nicholas PhD
- **Shop well for the Planet** on BBC iplayer.
- **The Climate Question** on BBC Sounds

Helpful practical tips

- **ovo energy:**
<https://www.ovoenergy.com/blog/energy/help-change-climate-change-from-home>
- **Friends of the Earth**
<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/climate/live-sustainably-how-be-conscious-consumer#reduce>
- <https://www.bymiles.co.uk/insure/magazine/5-car-journeys-you-could-skip-to-help-improve-air-quality/>
- www.rhs.co.uk info on the benefits of greening your home with herbs and house plants
- www.mind.co.uk information on the positive effects of walking



www.firststepwell.com