

Zero Waste Lent

Let's resolve to make our church waste-free for Lent.

Theological foundation.

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. Psalm 24:1. It follows then that we must avoid thinking of and treating the earth as if it were our own. We must consider that the earth is God's, and as such consider the earth to be holy. In Lent we pray as David did, "*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and give me a new and steadfast spirit.*" Psalm 59:10. It would be contradictory to pray for a clean heart, and at the same time generate garbage in our church. We cannot trash what belongs to God.

Rationale.

It has become clear to scientists and to the general public as well that the garbage we generate is harmful to animal and bird life. The capacities of our dumps are limited. Our waterways and oceans are seriously compromised with toxic waste. Plastic is killing marine animals and seabirds, destroying the marine environment as well as people's livelihoods, infiltrating the human food chain and causing cancers and birth defects. Scientists have found plastic in tap water and even in salt. Microplastic enters our lungs. We can no longer ship our waste overseas. We must severely reduce our waste. Christians should set the standard in waste reduction.

What we can do.

Use washable dishes and cutlery. Avoid using disposable containers and single use plastic.

Use cardboard takeout containers. Avoid Styrofoam. Styrofoam cannot be recycled. <https://recyclingpartnership.org/itsallyou/is-styrofoam-recyclable/>

Use reusable beeswax cloth or waxed paper. Avoid plastic film; it cannot be recycled.

Let's reduce our use of paper, and be careful to recycle used paper.

Let's be mindful of the waste generated in food packaging and avoid purchasing packaged foods. Avoid packaging materials that cannot be recycled. We can bake our own goodies, or buy in bulk.

Wilton Cheese Factory will package cheese in beeswax cloth if they are provided with the cloth and it is ordered in advance of pickup.

Please suggest other ways of reducing our waste.

Tap water is fine, no need for bottled water.

Compost coffee grounds, paper towels and other organics. Let's appoint someone to take the compostables home each week to add to their private compost bins.

Conclusion

As we journey to Easter, let's make sure we keep the earth God has given us clear of trash. All of these measures can apply in our homes as well. Christians can be leaders in protecting God's earth.

References.

<https://gs2019.anglican.ca/cc/resolutions/a201/>

<https://anglicanchurchsa.org/church-declares-climate-emergency-and-calls-for-ban-on-plastics/>

<https://www.anglicanjournal.com/before-the-clock-runs-out-of-time/>