

*I commend to you this Earth Sunday reflection by  
the Rev. Joan Cavanaugh Clark.*

- Archbishop Colin Johnson



### Ability + Action = Abundance

On Earth Day, many people stop to think about the environment, but unfortunately, for some, this is one of the few times a year they take any action for the earth's wellbeing. Just as many people are disconnected from the true meaning of Christmas, many people are disconnected from the earth. Creation belongs to God, we are but stewards – but how deeply do we know, believe, or engage in, this truth?

We have the ability to bring joy, the resources to bring hope, and the power to create abundance not only through God's resources but through our God-given gifts. To do this we need to act in a different way, with a different vision, intention, and hope. There is more than enough for all, but how we use God's resources is the challenge we face now and in the future.

The Bible speaks of human dominion over creation, but this is not to be interpreted as creation being unlimited resources for humans to use, or worse yet to exploit. Rather, the Bible tells us of our responsibility to live out God's blessing of abundance. We are not to exploit or create more than we need or can reasonably use. With the authority to rule also comes the ability and responsibility to rule well. To be good stewards and rule well means making decisions that are not always popular, easy, or what the majority wants. Remembering this in all our actions will hold us and the earth in good stead.

From the abundance God has provided we are to share and be aware of what it is we do with what we have. We have the ability to take action to create abundance for all and live out the words of the fifth Mark of Mission, "To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth." Thanks be to God.

### Action Ideas

*"To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation  
and sustain and renew the life of the earth"*

-Fifth Mark of Mission of the Anglican Communion

#### Safeguard

- Want to learn more about climate change and how to communicate it effectively? Canadian-born, Texas-based (and Christian) climate scientist Katherine Hayhoe has produced a series of 12 short videos that address frequently asked questions (and objections) on climate change. Check them out at <http://globalweirdingseries.com>
- Climate change demands not only action but prayer. The Rev. Canon John Hill and Diane Marshall offer a workshop on Strengthening the Prayers of the People in a Time of Climate Crisis. To book them for your parish contact Canon Hill at [john.w.b.hill@sympatico.ca](mailto:john.w.b.hill@sympatico.ca).

#### Sustain

- Encourage re-use of household items by holding a clothing or toy swap at your parish. Invite your local community. It's a great way to get to know people and reduce consumption!
- Use the Green Congregation Guide available from the Diocesan website ([www.toronto.anglican.ca/environmental-issues](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/environmental-issues)) for more ways to reduce your parish's ecological footprint.

#### Renew

- Participate in a community clean-up. Many cities and towns hold such events in April and May – check your municipal website for details and to register. If your municipality doesn't have one, or you've missed it, why not organize your own? Involve children and youth, and begin and end with a prayer, Scripture reading or hymn that speaks of care for creation.
- Plan and plant a community garden. It's a great way to get your congregation involved in the neighbourhood, addressing creation care and food security at the same time. Contact Greening Sacred Spaces for more info: <http://greeningsacredspaces.net/sacred-green-spaces/>

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