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## Lent Plastic Challenge

<p>For Anglicans Lent is the time when we remember the 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness, facing challenge and temptation. It is a time when we reflect on God’s purpose for our life. This year we challenge you to give up single-use plastics – to reduce the actions which damage God’s Creation.</p> <p>Over <b>8.3 billion tonnes</b> of plastic have been produced since the 1950s. That’s enough plastic to cover every inch of the UK ankle-deep more than ten times over. Just <b>9%</b> was recycled.</p> <p>‘To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth’ The Anglican Communion’s Fifth Mark of Mission.</p> <p>Share your journey with others on the <a href="#">Plastic-Less Lent Facebook Group</a></p>		<p><b>6 Ash Wednesday</b> <b>Isaiah 24:4-5</b> ‘The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers; the heavens languish together with the earth. The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants ....’</p>	<p><b>7 Give up disposable cups &amp; drinks in plastic bottles</b> Carry a travel mug or water bottle. Get a reusable bottle, fill it up with tap water before leaving the house, and refill it wherever you happen to be.</p>	<p><b>8 Bring your own reusable bags</b> Plastic bags and produce bags in particular are often used for minutes before being discarded. Most plastic bags are not recycled, ending up in landfills.</p>	<p><b>9 Carry your own non-plastic cutlery</b> Plastic disposable cutlery and straws are among the worst plastic pollution culprits. Get in the habit of carrying your own cutlery with you and leaving a set in the car.</p>		
<b>Food &amp; drink</b>	<p><b>Sunday 10 March</b> <b>Psalms 104: 25-30</b> ‘There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number—living things both large and small.’  By 2050 we could have <b>more plastic than fish</b> (by weight) in the sea.</p>	<p><b>11 Buy in bulk to minimize or eliminate packaging</b> This goes for food and drink as well as cleaning supplies, toiletries, hardware items – anything that may come in plastic packaging.</p>	<p><b>12 Avoid overpackaged, processed, canned and frozen convenience foods</b> Stay clear of the three tomatoes sitting on a Styrofoam tray and covered in plastic cellophane.</p>	<p><b>13 Buy fresh bread that comes in either paper bags or no bags</b> This eliminates plastic wrapping waste from shop bought bread and you help support local businesses.</p>	<p><b>14 Choose milk in returnable glass bottles</b> Many areas have local dairies that provides milk in returnable glass bottles rather than plastic or plastic-coated cardboard.</p>	<p><b>15 Use non-plastic containers for food—</b> lunches, leftovers, freezing, storage, take-out, travelling... Request takeaways use your container instead of their disposable one. Take a container when you buy meat, fish or cheese.</p>	<p><b>16 Shop at markets</b> Fresh food markets are not only often cheaper and fresher than supermarkets but they sell fruit and vegetables loose. Don’t forget to take your reusable bags.</p>
	<b>Bathroom</b>	<p><b>Sunday 17 March</b> Every day <b>millions of microplastics</b> enter the sea from toiletry products.  Start a conversation or ask to talk about how you are taking action on plastics at church.</p>	<p><b>18 Look around your bathroom and see what plastics you can replace</b> Do you have plastic bottles sitting in the shower? Find a brand you like and try and get it in bulk. If it's not available in bulk – ask the manufacturer to offer it.</p>	<p><b>19 Use a razor with removable blades</b> Disposable razors and razor blades are two of the biggest contributors to plastic waste.</p>	<p><b>20 Check labels of toiletries</b> Did you know some facial scrubs &amp; toiletries products contain tiny plastic beads? Avoid anything with “polyethylene” listed as an ingredient.</p>	<p><b>21 Use a bamboo toothbrush or a toothbrush with recyclable heads</b> and try to find dental floss that doesn’t come in plastic packaging.</p>	<p><b>22 Use bar soap instead of liquid hand soap</b> This is an easy change to make, if you are feeling keen you can even make your own soap bars.</p>

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<b>Kitchen</b>	<p><b>Sunday 24 March</b> <b>Colossians 1:16-17</b> 'For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible.' Consider organising a community litter pick.</p>	<p><b>25 Look around your kitchen and see what plastics you can replace</b> Use a dish brush with a wooden handle and compostable bristles.</p>	<p><b>26 Use natural cleaning cloths instead of plastic &amp; synthetic sponges</b> Compressed natural cellulose sponges are often sold without any plastic packaging.</p>	<p><b>27 Use a blender made of glass</b> If you find yourself needing to purchase a new blender in the future, try and go for a glass alternative if possible.</p>	<p><b>28 Buy glass and/or stainless steel containers for food storage</b> <i>Glass works well for freezer storage</i> as well, just ensure you leave room at the top of the jar.</p>	<p><b>29 Avoid foil wrapped crisps and chocolates</b> Some sweet wrappers are now recyclable but don't forget to check.</p>	<p><b>30 Share your leftovers or unwanted food</b> Reduce waste by joining a food sharing network like Olio.</p>
<b>Clothing</b>	<p><b>Sunday 31 March</b> <b>Job 28:12-13</b> 'But where can wisdom be found? Where does understanding dwell?' Do you use disposable cups at church? Can you encourage people to bring their own mug?</p>	<p><b>1 Choose natural fibres</b> Synthetic fabrics create microfibre pollution when washed. When buying new clothes look for organic cotton, wool, and other natural fibres.</p>	<p><b>2 Alter and Modify Old Shoes and Clothing into New</b> Do you have old clothes and shoes that you never wear because they don't fit or are out of style? Take them to a tailor or cobbler for alteration.</p>	<p><b>3 Buy clothing second-hand</b> Buying clothes second hand not only saves you money but ensures that the second hand clothes you purchase have an extra long lease of life.</p>	<p><b>4 Do a clothes swap</b> Look online for local events or get advice on how to set up your own. Take a look at sites like Get Swishing.</p>	<p><b>5 Invest in quality</b> By doing this you are minimising the demand for cheap items that end up in landfill. In the long run it will save you money.</p>	<p><b>6 Request zero plastic packaging</b> If you're buying clothes online ask the retailer if they can reduce or remove plastic packaging.</p>
<b>Home</b>	<p><b>Sunday 7 April</b> <b>Psalms 24:1-2</b> 'The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it'.</p>	<p><b>8 Put a "No Junk Mail" sticker on your letterbox</b> This will reduce the number of letters with plastic windows. It will also reduce your paper waste.</p>	<p><b>9 Make it from scratch</b> Try and cook as much as possible from scratch and take your own sandwiches and snacks when you go out.</p>	<p><b>10 Avoid wet wipes</b> These contain plastic fibres so don't break down like toilet roll, despite often being described as flushable.</p>	<p><b>11 Acquire necessary plastic items used instead of new</b> Check second-hand shops, Freecycle or Freegle. Look for sharing groups locally.</p>	<p><b>12 Buy second-hand plastic-free furniture</b> There's lots of advice about repairing, upcycling and finding good wooden or metal furniture online.</p>	<p><b>13 Don't buy new CDs and DVDs</b> Stream or download music, shows, and films online, buy second hand or borrow them from the library or friends.</p>
<b>Travel</b>	<p><b>Sunday 14 April</b> <b>Micah 6:8</b> 'He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.'</p>	<p><b>15 Avoid plastic pens and giveaways</b> Try using a refillable fountain pen or pencils.</p>	<p><b>16 Bring your own toiletries</b> Skip the free travel size shampoos, soaps, and lotions offered by hotels. Instead, fill up your own reusable travel-size containers at home.</p>	<p><b>17 Avoid the Mini bar snacks and drinks</b> Not only incredibly expensive but they all come in plastic packages or bottles. Even if you can't avoid plastic entirely, you can resist single-serving sizes.</p>	<p><b>18 What lasting changes are you going to make?</b> Do you find yourself looking at plastics in a different way? List three things you are going to commit to changing.</p>	<p><b>Make your voice heard:</b> Share what you are doing with friends, family and community. Ask your <u>MP</u> what they are doing to tackle single use plastics. Join the UN's <u>Clean Seas</u> campaign and Greenpeace's <u>Plastic Pledge</u>. Find out your <u>own plastic footprint</u>. Call on supermarkets for a <u>Plastic Free Aisle</u>. We hope this challenge has made you more aware of your plastic use and helped you create some lasting changes.</p>	

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