

Because the world *can change a lot* in 40 days.

Lenten Carbon Fast 2015

Lent is a time to repent, reflect, sacrifice, and listen for God. This year, our congregation is joining with many others in taking on a Lenten Carbon “Fast.” May this season serve as a wake-up call to be mindful of the ways that our daily choices impact everyone, especially our neighbors in poverty. Each of these actions will reduce our production of climate pollution and help to preserve God’s great gift of Creation.



www.iowaIPL.org

Our religious response to climate change.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
18 FEBRUARY <i>“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you...so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” —Matthew 6:2-4</i> Ash Wednesday reminds us to be faithful in action even when no one is paying attention. If we were all living in harmony with the rest of God’s Creation, especially when no one is looking, our households, our churches, and our society would also be transformed. Remove one light bulb from your home and live without its light for the next 40 days. This will decrease your energy use, and act as a reminder of your Lenten Carbon Fast.				19 Be aware of how much food you discard this week. Look for opportunities to avoid wasting food by planning well and eating leftovers. Join Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance’s Fast for Life. (E-Alliance.ch > Food > Fast for Life)	20 Turn down your thermostat by at least one degree. Aim for 68 degrees during the day and 60 degrees at night. Program your thermostat if you can. Always turn the heat off when you leave home.	21 Take action to protect Iowa from the pipeline that would transport highly volatile Bakken crude oil through 18 counties in Iowa. Pipelines leak. Leaks of this pipeline will do permanent damage to Iowa. (IowaIPL.org/Act)
22 Make one of your journeys more environmentally friendly today. Could you combine two trips? Carpool rather than driving solo? Bike, walk, or take a bus or transit instead of driving.	23 Go meat-free today. Christians have been eating less meat during Lent for generations. Choosing meat-free meals is a powerful choice you can make to reduce your carbon footprint. (MeatlessMonday.com)	24 Ask your utility for a home energy audit to find out how to improve your home’s efficiency. These audits are usually free and make you eligible for rebates on improvements.	25 If your utility audit doesn’t include checking for drafts around windows and doors, test it yourself with a ribbon or the smoke of a blown out candle. If it moves, seal the leaks. (IowaEnergyCenter.org/Home-Series)	26 Talk with others at your church about ordering “eco palms” for Palm Sunday on March 29. These palms help improve workers’ living standards and protect forests in Mexico and Guatemala. (EcoPalms.org)	27 Help your fridge function efficiently: vacuum the coils; set the temperature between 37 and 40 degrees; and test the seal by closing the door on a dollar bill—if the bill slips out easily, have the seal checked by a professional.	28 Do you have enough insulation in your attic? Check with your local utility for rebates for improving your insulation. Or search the database for residential incentives at DsireUSA.org.
1 MARCH Run your washing machine only with full loads and turn the knob to “cold/cold.” Washing your clothes in cold water gets them just as clean as using hot water, but it uses half the energy.	2 Many caring Christians are working to protect Creation. Sign up for Iowa Interfaith Power & Light’s newsletter at IowaIPL.org and join other people of faith in Iowa taking action to care for creation.	3 Turn off lights you’re not using. Shut off lights as you leave a room. You can put reminders on your switchplates or install motion sensors (about \$20 each) that turn lights off automatically.	4 Save paper today: print double-sided or wrap your next present in color comics or in a reusable gift bag. To reduce paper towel use in public restrooms, order <i>These Come From Trees</i> stickers at TheseComeFromTrees.com.	5 Consider composting your food waste, returning nutrients to the soil and reducing landfill emissions. Learn more at HowToCompost.org or use your city’s green waste compost curbside bin.	6 Try buying nothing today. See if you can shift your thinking and get creative about repurposing objects or borrowing from a neighbor instead of buying new.	7 Planning to travel? Consider getting there without flying. If you have to fly, balance the carbon impact by buying offsets. Fund a project that prevents one ton of greenhouse gases for each ton that your trip will cause. (NativeEnergy.com)

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8 Hang clothes to dry on a rack or clothesline. Save 200 pounds of carbon a year for every dryer load you reduce per week. Save money too—the air will dry your clothes for free!	9 Many electronics still draw power when off. Place your TV, stereo and home office equipment on power strips and switch them off when not in use. Phantom loads account for 6% of our nation's electrical use.	10 End junk mail that wastes paper. Stop unwanted mail yourself (CatalogChoice.org), or pay \$35 to have it cancelled for you (41Pounds.org).	11 Try the newest CREE 4Flow LED lightbulb : dimmable, warm white, instant on, for use in enclosed fixtures, rated for 25,000 hours, 82% more efficient than incandescent—and no mercury! 60-watt equivalent sell for \$8.	12 Talk to your pastor about raising up Creation care from the pulpit around Earth Day on April 22, or invite one of our speakers: lowaIPL.org/Learn-2/Speakers-Bureau.	13 Minimize disposables today. Bring a mug to get coffee. Use cloth napkins at meals. Wipe up with a rag instead of paper towels. Stow a fork in your purse or briefcase for the next time you eat out during the work day.	14 Purchase more mindfully today. Print, cut out, and tape together a “Wallet Buddy” so your credit card can remind you of questions to ask yourself before buying: Act. NewDream.org/Page/SignUp/WalletBuddy.
15 The world's poor are being hit hardest by climate change. Learn more: ActionAidUSA.org/What-We-Do/Climate-Change.	16 Reduce your shower time by 5 minutes and install a low-flow showerhead. You could save 250 pounds of carbon per person! Showers account for two-thirds of home water heating costs.	17 Are you recycling everything you can? Refresh your memory today on what items your city or county allows for curbside recycling. Place an item that can be recycled, but that you usually don't recycle, into your bin.	18 Show reverence for life and for Earth today by obeying the speed limit when driving. Increasing your speed by 10 mph reduces fuel economy by 4 mpg and increases the risk of getting into an accident.	19 Let your dishwasher breathe. Run it only with a full load, and skip the energy-intensive drying cycle by choosing the “air-dry” option—or just open the door overnight. This saves 200 pounds of carbon a year!	20 Celebrate Spring! Support tree planting around the world. Donate at CO2Covenant.org.	21 Planning to make Easter baskets? Purchase Fair Trade chocolates that don't involve child labor and supports farmer communities. Learn more: FairTradeAction.org.
22 Have an “ embrace the silence ” Sunday: make it a No Electricity Day! Turn off everything, and unplug it if you can. Read Blessed Earth's resources on Sabbath living at SabbathLiving.org.	23 Plan now to have an organic garden this summer. Grow your lawn and garden without toxic chemicals, and order a “Pesticide-Free” lawn sign at BeyondPesticides.org.	24 Own stock? Find out if shareholder resolutions have been filed to “green” the companies' practices (ProxyDemocracy.org) and consider divesting from fossil fuel companies (GreenAmerica.org/FossilFree).	25 Help people on the front lines of climate change. Carbon Covenant links U.S. churches with carbon-reducing projects in developing countries (CO2Covenant.org). Others bring clean energy (NVRE.org and SolarSister.org).	26 It's hard to open ourselves up to the reality of what is happening to our climate. Learn more about our warming planet (350.org/science and ClimateRealityProject.org/climate-101) and listen to what it is telling us.	27 Measure your household's carbon footprint with the Iowa IPL calculator designed especially for Iowa, from our Cool Congregations program that helps people reduce their carbon footprint as an act of faith. (lowaIPL.org/Act/Cool-Congregations-2)	28 At 8:30 p.m., join hundreds of millions of people around the world and switch off your lights for one hour to remind yourself how much energy you use. (WorldWildlife.org/EarthHour)
29 Think today about the role of your church in its local environment. Could your community better care for Creation? Get involved with green work, and flock together with other “green sheep” through Interfaith Power & Light. (IowaIPL.org)	30 Replace all incandescent light bulbs in your house with LEDs. Replacing one incandescent saves hundreds of pounds of climate pollution a year. Don't forget to save one efficient bulb for Maundy Thursday. (ShopIPL.org)	31 Place an insulating cover over your hot water heater. You can find a blanket at most hardware stores. (If you have an electric water heater, it's an easy job. If you have an oil- or gas-powered heater, you may need a plumbing professional.)	1 Start or restart your congregation's Care for Creation Committee or Green Team. Iowa IPL has information on how to get your congregation involved, including ideas for starter projects. (lowaIPL.org/Talk)	2 Maundy Thursday Replace the bulb you removed on Ash Wednesday with an energy-saving LED bulb. Learn more about how your electricity is generated: EPA.gov/CleanEnergy/Energy-and-You.	3 Good Friday Arrange for your congregation to host a Cool Congregations workshop to learn more about saving energy in the home as an act of faith. Learn more: lowaIPL.org/Act/Cool-Congregations-2.	4 It can be difficult to contemplate your own end. Think about greening your final arrangements . Consider a green burial (GreenBurials.org) or a casket made in Dubuque from wood from sustainable forests (TrappistCaskets.com).
Easter “Jesus' appearance changed the world . His disciples were being asked: speak truth to power, love your enemies, but most of all love God and your neighbor. This was a new way of being in relationship. Today's seemingly ‘impossible appearance’ is that humans are changing the climate. This calls for a new way of being in the world, to relate differently to each other and to nature. There are great glimmers of hope on the horizon.” —The Rev. Canon Sally G. Bingham, president and founder, Interfaith Power & Light				5	 Take some time today to reflect on all of the activities that you have performed during Lent, and how they have brought you into greater harmony with Earth and with all life. Conclude your Carbon Fast by making a personal pledge to serve God and serve others by pursuing a more sustainable way of life.	