



*Embracing Our Resolution*  
**Survey Results Report**

**July 12, 2023**

Submitted by the Creation Care Team for the Episcopal Church in Colorado

*We encourage you to view and share the report electronically to conserve resources and reduce printing costs.*

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## Summary of Results

At the 2022 Annual Convention of the Episcopal Church in Colorado, delegates voted to approve the Care of Creation resolution proposal encouraging all churches and diocesan institutions in the diocese to engage in the work of caring for creation. Put forward by the Diocesan Creation Care Team, the first step following the resolution's approval was to assess the current level of engagement in this work and to better understand ways to support congregations. To this end, the team created a detailed survey and invited church and diocesan institution members to describe their current level of engagement in six areas of caring for creation:

1. Greening your church or diocesan institution
2. Church or community gardening
3. Eco-justice
4. Worship and prayer around caring for creation
5. Protecting the natural environment
6. Education and study around creation care themes

Seventy-four people responded to the survey, representing 54 churches and diocesan institutions. All five regions of the diocese, across the broad diversity of geographies and ecologies of our state, were represented. The highest level of response came from the Sangre de Cristo region, with 80% of congregations responding. Overall, the results expressed a wide range of levels of engagement, inspiring and creative ways that congregations have initiated this work, and a keen desire to be involved in the work of caring for creation.

Are you engaged in Creation Care?	Individuals	Churches Represented
Yes	31 (42%)	28 (52%)
Considering	21 (28%)	13 (24%)
No	22 (30%)	13 (24%)
Total Responses	74	54

The responses indicate that 76% of the responding churches are either already engaged in or considering care of creation actions or ministries. Interestingly, although 24% of responding churches said they weren't currently engaged in creation care, in their responses to the more detailed questions that followed, nearly all churches indicated concrete actions their churches had already taken (e.g., recycling and energy efficiency measures).

We asked respondents to consider the barriers they face in participating in the work of caring for creation. Many indicated more than one barrier. Here's what they said:

- Interest and energy for this topic – 46
- Time – 32
- Not knowing how to get started – 18
- Other – 9

"Other" barriers included people to do the work, leadership, money, using a shared worship space, historical status of building, and congregational awareness of issues.

The responses to this question highlight the importance of:

- Inviting congregations to embrace caring for creation as a vital part of our call as Christians to honor and protect God’s gifts and to live out the promises of our baptism.
- Raising awareness of the various aspects of creation care and the powerful impact individuals and churches/diocesan institutions can have in this work.
- Helping individuals and congregations realize that every action matters and that we can’t do it all, but we each can do something.
- Assisting congregations in engaging in creation care that is relevant and life-giving in their individual contexts. There is no one-size-fits-all.
- Identifying simple, practical ways to engage in this work, specific to a congregation’s situation.

The results in the following pages provide an overview of ways congregations are already involved in caring for creation. For each of the six defined areas, we have provided statistical information relating to church/diocesan institution engagement in that area. This data will serve as a benchmark for future surveys, helping us see how we are progressing in this work. We also have highlighted “noteworthy findings” and “recommendations” for furthering this work. A sampling of comments received for each section has been included as appendices, and we hope churches will find in them inspiration and encouragement for their own actions and ministries.

## **Next Steps for the Creation Care Team**

- Retreat at Cathedral Ridge, August 18-20, 2023—*Seeing God’s Creation Anew: Thinking Big and Small*
- Convention workshop for 2023 diocesan convention
- Bi-monthly diocesan-wide sharing sessions hosted by the Creation Care Team
- Follow-up with individual congregations regarding their interest in support, such as presentations or connecting with other churches
- Continue publishing monthly Care of Creation e-newsletter to share curated resources and spotlight the work of congregations
- Follow-up survey: January 2025

## Area 1: Greening Your Church/Diocesan Institution

This area includes implementing energy efficiency measures, reducing a church's carbon footprint, reducing waste, eliminating plastics, eliminating harmful chemicals used in maintaining the campus, xeriscaping.

### Quick Summary

How engaged in this work is your church/diocesan institution?

Level of Engagement	Individual Responses	Churches Represented*
Very engaged	13 (18%)	12 (22%)
Somewhat engaged	47 (63%)	36 (67%)
Not at all engaged	6 (8%)	3 (5.5%)
We plan to engage in this work	8 (11%)	3 (5.5%)
Total Responses	74	54

\*Note: Occasionally, respondents from the same congregation differed on the perceived level of engagement. When this occurred, the more engaged level is reflected in the church number (i.e., if one respondent indicated "Somewhat engaged" and another indicated "Not engaged," this number reflects the "Somewhat engaged" response).

[View comments related to this area >](#)

### Noteworthy

- Of the six topics included in the survey, Greening Your Church/Diocesan Institution had the highest level of engagement for our churches. Eighty-nine percent of churches are very or somewhat engaged in this work. Churches are especially committed to recycling, eliminating plastics and toxic cleaning agents and lawn-care items, reducing water use, and implementing measures for energy efficiency.

### Recommendations

- Hold Zoom forums about engaging members of congregations in the work of creation care. Include a panel of people from churches with active teams/groups.
- Identify simple, practical ways to engage in this work, specific to a congregation's situation.
- Connect churches interested in learning from one another's efforts.



Holy Comforter, Broomfield, Green Team; Converting Lights to LED, St. Michael's, Colorado Springs; St. John's Cathedral Green Team Event

## Area 2: Church or Community Gardening

This area includes using a portion of church grounds for growing food on-site for parishioners and/or the community.

### Quick Summary

How engaged in this work is your church/diocesan institution?

Level of Engagement	Individual Responses	Churches Represented*
Very engaged	19 (26%)	15 (28%)
Somewhat engaged	11 (15%)	6 (11%)
Not at all engaged	40 (54%)	30 (56%)
We plan to engage in this work	4 (5%)	3 (6%)
Total Responses	74	54

\*Note: Occasionally, respondents from the same congregation differed on the perceived level of engagement. When this occurred, the more engaged level is reflected in the church number (i.e., if one respondent indicated “Somewhat engaged” and another indicated “Not engaged,” this number reflects the “Somewhat engaged” response).

[View comments related to this area >](#)

### Noteworthy

- 39% of congregations are very or somewhat engaged in gardening ministry. Churches engaged in this ministry often donate produce to local food pantries and some share it within the congregation.
- Altitude presents significant challenges to gardening.
- Congregations are considering creative ways they might use their outdoor spaces to garden and grow food.

### Recommendations

- Continue connecting congregations with resources available from the Episcopal Church Agrarian Ministries and Good News Garden movement.
- Offer regular opportunities for gardening churches to engage with one another.



Raised Beds at St. Timothy's, Centennial; Honey from Hives at St. Ambrose, Boulder; Youth Gardening at Little Shepherd of the Hills, Crestone

## Area 3: Eco-Justice

This area includes advocating for people especially harmed by the effects of ecological deterioration and climate change (e.g., poor air and water quality, climate-intensified natural disasters, heat).

### Quick Summary

How engaged in this work is your church/diocesan institution?

Level of Engagement	Individual Responses	Churches Represented*
Very engaged	4 (5%)	4 (7%)
Somewhat engaged	21 (28%)	17 (31%)
Not at all engaged	44 (60%)	28 (52%)
We plan to engage in this work	5 (7%)	5 (9%)
Total Responses	74	54

\*Note: Occasionally, respondents from the same congregation differed on the perceived level of engagement. When this occurred, the more engaged level is reflected in the church number (i.e., if one respondent indicated “Somewhat engaged” and another indicated “Not engaged,” this number reflects the “Somewhat engaged” response).

[View comments related to this area >](#)

### Noteworthy

- Despite the relatively low range of engagement (just 7% of churches “very engaged”), many respondents expressed significant interest in the work of eco-justice. Figuring out how to connect to this work can be a challenge.
- Many engage in this work on an individual level rather than through/with the congregation.

### Recommendations

- Provide opportunities to learn about the links between justice and climate change/environmental degradation.
- Focus on eco-justice priorities in the state of Colorado and ways to get involved on a local level.
- Offer diocesan-wide presentations from speakers engaged in eco-justice initiatives.



Broomfield Farmers' Market FISH (Fellowship in Serving Humanity) Donations, Holy Comforter, Broomfield; Produce Grown to Help Stock Local Food Pantry, St. Patrick's, Pagosa Springs



## Area 4: Protecting the Natural Environment

This area includes advocating for biodiversity and protection of species, environmental cleanup, conservation.

### Quick Summary

How engaged in this work is your church/diocesan institution?

Level of Engagement	Individual Responses	Churches Represented*
Very engaged	4 (5%)	4 (7%)
Somewhat engaged	36 (49%)	31 (57%)
Not at all engaged	32 (43%)	18 (33%)
We plan to engage in this work	2 (3%)	1 (2%)
Total Responses	74	54

\*Note: Occasionally, respondents from the same congregation differed on the perceived level of engagement. When this occurred, the more engaged level is reflected in the church number (i.e., if one respondent indicated “Somewhat engaged” and another indicated “Not engaged,” this number reflects the “Somewhat engaged” response).

[View comments related to this area >](#)

### Noteworthy

- Concerns for the natural environment are tied to the geography of the region.
- Many people engage in this work individually, less as congregations/diocesan institutions.

### Recommendations

- Create an increased awareness, through presentations and discussion, of our natural environment in Colorado and the primary impacts of climate change and other environmental degradation in our state.
- Provide links to local, state and national organizations engaged in environmental protection actions and biodiversity advocacy.



Creation Care Camp at Cathedral Ridge; Adopt-a-Trail Cleanup, St. Michael's, Colorado Springs; Spay & Neuter Clinic on Navajo Nation Supported by Church of the Nativity, Grand Junction

## Area 5: Worship/Prayer around Care of Creation

This area includes using care of creation prayers and liturgies; observing the Season of Creation (September 1-October 4), Earth Day, and/or St. Francis Day; incorporating care of creation themes in preaching.

### Quick Summary

How engaged in this work is your church/diocesan institution?

Level of Engagement	Individual Responses	Churches*
Very engaged	15 (20%)	12 (22%)
Somewhat engaged	37 (50%)	30 (56%)
Not at all engaged	17 (23%)	7 (13%)
We plan to engage in this work	5 (7%)	5 (9%)
Total Responses	74	54

\*Note: Occasionally, respondents from the same congregation differed on the perceived level of engagement. When this occurred, the more engaged level is reflected in the church number (i.e., if one respondent indicated “Somewhat engaged” and another indicated “Not engaged,” this number reflects the “Somewhat engaged” response).

[View comments related to this area >](#)

### Noteworthy

- St. Francis Day blessing of animals is the primary way churches engage in worship/prayer around care of creation.
- Many churches are engaged in the Season of Creation (September 1-October 4 annually), especially in worship.
- There is limited engagement around lesser-known liturgical days, such as the annual Rogation Days.

### Recommendations

- Make worship/prayer resources widely available to congregations.
- Provide information about other opportunities for special worship, e.g., Rogation Days.



Holy Hikes, Christ's Church, Castle Rock; Paws for a Blessing Service, Church of the Nativity, Grand Junction

## Area 6: Education and Study around Creation Care Themes

This area includes series or studies about ecology, the environment, climate change and its impacts, loss of biodiversity, understanding the ecological needs in our communities.

### Quick Summary

Level of Engagement	Individual Responses	Churches*
Very engaged	8 (11%)	8 (15%)
Somewhat engaged	22 (29%)	18 (33%)
Not at all engaged	39 (53%)	24 (45%)
We plan to engage in this work	5 (7%)	4 (7%)
Total Responses	74	54

\*Note: Occasionally, respondents from the same congregation differed on the perceived level of engagement. When this occurred, the more engaged level is reflected in the church number (i.e., if one respondent indicated “Somewhat engaged” and another indicated “Not engaged,” this number reflects the “Somewhat engaged” response).

[View comments related to this area >](#)

### Noteworthy

- Churches engaged in education and study around creation care themes are finding many ways to engage in learning together, including series during Lent and the Season of Creation, an Earth Day retreat, Sunday school experiential learning, inviting speakers, and hosting book studies.
- Engagement in this area depends on each church’s capacity for offering this type of formation.
- In some churches, there is simply not enough interest.

### Recommendations

- Continue offering diocesan-wide opportunities for learning and engagement, which can serve all churches seeking learning opportunities, but especially congregations without the capacity for this type of offering.
- Continue curating new resources for learning, such as books, videos, and curricula.

**CHRISTIAN FORMATION AT SAINT JAMES**

**Listen to the Voice of Creation**  
Season of Creation 2022  
Sept. 11 - Oct. 2

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SERIES**

Week One: Christians and Climate Change  
Week Two: Water and Justice  
Week Three: Christian Vegetarianism  
Week Four: How Pets Connect Us with God

**The Burning Bush**  
Ex 3:1-12

Wednesdays at 1 p.m. - In person in the Parish Hall  
Mondays at 7 p.m. via Zoom



Christian Formation Series Offered by St. James, Wheat Ridge during Season of Creation; Resources for Engaging in Care of Creation

## Additional Questions

### How helpful have you found the Creation Care web page?

- Very helpful - 9
- Somewhat helpful - 15
- Not at all helpful - 2
- I'm just now learning about the web page – 46

**What this tells us:** Despite its creation in 2019, the creation care web page is still not well known, although the majority of people accessing it find it somewhat or very helpful.

**Recommendation:** Continue to maintain the web page, while being more proactive in sharing resources through the monthly Care of Creation e-newsletter.

### Which, if any, diocesan-wide Care of Creation presentations have you attended?

- Making an Informed Choice to Drive an Electric Vehicle (June 2022) – 7
- Our Last Best Act: Sustainable End-of-Life Practices with author Mallory McDuff (May 2022) – 5
- Soil Presentation by the CSU Extension (January 2022) – 7
- Reconsidering Recycling (June 2021) – 4
- Earth Day Prayer Services (annual) – 14
- Understanding Climate Science with CSU Professor Jim Hurrell (January 2021) – 3
- Overcoming Barriers to Behavior Change with Colorado EPA (February 2021) – 3
- Food & Gardening Conversation with Episcopal Church Missioner for Agrarian Brian Sellers-Peterson (September 2020) – 2
- Viewing and Discussion of *The Human Element* (August 2020) – 2
- Honoring and Protecting Creation retreat at Cathedral Ridge (January 2020) – 4

**What this tells us:** People are seeing and registering for these offerings. Tying an offering to a special day, like Earth Day, inspires participation.

**Recommendation:** Continue finding relevant topics for presentations and opportunities for engaging and learning with another across the diocese.

### If someone in your neighboring community asked you how your church/diocesan institution seeks to address climate change and ecological destruction, how would you respond?

Here are several responses to this question:

*We are individually committed to creation care and include it in our prayers and worship.*

*It's a priority for our faith and for the people of God gathered in Colorado.*

*We aspire to spread knowledge and understanding about our Christian calling to promote individual and collective decisions favoring environmental stewardship.*

*We aspire to live into our call to care for God's creation to the fullest.*

*It is fundamental to our spiritual and daily practice.*

*Believing that God is the source of all creation, the national and diocesan branches of the Episcopal church are very involved in and with creation care and its important work on a national and state level.*

*We take this issue seriously and are looking into reducing the carbon footprint of our church through energy use upgrades. We maintain a garden and a beehive. We are educating ourselves on issues of social justice including environmental justice. We are encouraging our members to do the same.*

*We have multiple ways we are and will "Speak and act on behalf of God's good creation." I'd claim this is a focused area of ministry for our congregation, describe our current areas of activity, explain we are still seeking to grow in this area AND invite them to join us!*

*We have a Climate Care Team that is addressing several environmental issues within climate change. I would give a few examples of what we are doing and invite them to join our group!*

**What this tells us:** Churches are inspired to engage in this work and communicate their efforts with the community. Some are seeking to define their "why" in this work and to find language that communicates their commitment to both parishioners and the wider community.

**Recommendation:** Provide opportunities for learning and discussion around the theology of caring for creation and the role of humans as part of the interconnected whole of creation.

## In Conclusion

The results of the *Embracing Our Resolution Survey* reveal a meaningful level of engagement in churches across the diocese in the work of caring for creation, while at the same time highlighting opportunities for both deepening and broadening our ministries to address the current crisis of climate change and environmental devastation, and the impacts on people, especially the most vulnerable, as well as our non-human kin, and landscapes everywhere.

In looking at a side-by-side comparison of the various ministry areas, we see the highest levels of engagement (“very engaged” or “somewhat engaged”) in greening our churches/diocesan institutions and worship and prayer. Although there is significant interest in eco-justice work, churches in general find it more challenging to find ways to enter into this work. The comparison also indicates a opportunities for increased engagement in education and study around care of creation, which can lead to a higher level of passion and commitment in this work. *We won’t save a place we don’t love; we won’t love a place we don’t know; and we can’t know a place we haven’t learned*, says Senegalese environmentalist Baba Dioum.

Level of Engagement	Greening	Gardening	Eco-Justice	Protecting Environment	Worship & Prayer	Education & Study
Very engaged	13	19	4	4	15	8
Somewhat engaged	47	11	21	36	37	22
Not at all engaged	6	40	44	32	17	39
We plan to engage in this work	8	4	5	2	5	5

In January 2025, the Creation Care Team will conduct a second survey using the same data points, which will allow the team to benchmark how far we’ve come as a diocese against the 2023 survey results. In the meantime, there is much life-giving work to be done, prayerfully and intentionally, each person and each congregation in their own context.

*Let us go in peace to love and serve God’s creation.*

*If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously. The poverty and austerity of Saint Francis were no mere veneer of asceticism, but something much more radical: a refusal to turn reality into an object simply to be used and controlled.*

~Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*

## Appendix A: Care of Creation Resolution

*Title:* Call for Creation Care Action

Submitted to the Episcopal Church in Colorado 135th Annual Convention, October 2022

*Sponsored by:* the Creation Care Team for the Episcopal Church in Colorado

*Whereas,* In July 2022 the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church concurred with Resolution A086 directing the Task Force for Care of Creation and Environmental Racism to “continue its work on developing theological resources and materials on a range of environmental topics including but not limited to the sin of environmental racism, an exploration of environmental reparations and the ethical and moral implications of responding to climate change;”

*Whereas,* In July 2022 the 80<sup>th</sup> General Convention of The Episcopal Church concurred with the bishops and adopted Resolution A086 Continuing the Task Force for Care of Creation and Environmental Racism;

*Whereas,* The House of Bishops issued a statement during the final day of the 80th General Convention naming the climate crisis as an urgent and overarching issue that affects all the other issues of social justice that the convention considered: “Climate change and environmental degradation are manifestations of our turning away from God. The effects of this willful separation from God resonate across our collective lives: All areas of justice are either worsened or made better depending on the health of the planet. A changing climate and degraded environment worsen conflict, forces human migration, and causes food insecurity. These related crises increase the rate of violence, cause more natural disasters and humanitarian crises, and deepen the wounds of those already suffering from racism. People living in poverty are plunged further into poverty by the deteriorating condition of the planet.”

*Resolved,* that the 135th Episcopal Church in Colorado Annual Convention affirms the climate crisis as an urgent and overarching issue that affects all other issues of social justice considered by General Convention and that it is the responsibility of every Episcopalian to live out our baptismal vows by responsibly caring for God’s creation on this fragile earth, our island home.

*Resolved,* that the 135th Episcopal Church in Colorado Annual Convention encourages all congregations, diocesan institutions, and Episcopal Church in Colorado governing entities to engage in the work of care of creation, relying on scripture as well as learning and teaching about and implementing best practices supported by scientific research.

### **How will the Resolution build up and strengthen one or more of the marks of mission: proclamation, discipleship, servanthood?**

Passage of this resolution will 1) raise awareness that as followers of Christ we are also stewards of God’s creation and 2) strengthen diocesan, congregational and personal servanthood, empowering all to do what we can to mitigate the effects of the climate crisis, safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

### **Who will be impacted by the resolution, and how?**

The resolution impacts all congregations and their surrounding communities within the diocese, especially those communities disproportionately affected by harmful environmental practices, by creating a more healthy and sustainable environment. Congregations will not only save financial resources by reducing consumption but also favorably enhance the sustainable practices in their respective communities and in the State of Colorado.

**How will the resolution be enacted, including an estimated timeframe for enacting the resolution? Who is responsible for enacting the resolution? Who will be accountable? Against which criteria will it be evaluated (how will we know it's been done) and specifically how long implementation will take.**

Following God's call to care for creation, this ongoing work will be encouraged and supported by the diocesan Creation Care Team and the diocesan network of creation care advocates through the provision of communications, resources, and workshops offered to congregations.

Upon passage of this resolution, the Creation Care Team will conduct a survey of churches and ways they are engaged in various aspects of care of creation. A second survey will be conducted prior to the 136<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Episcopal Church in Colorado in 2023, to determine any notable changes in state-wide engagement as well as identify care of creation practices that congregations have found effective.

**Are there budgetary implications? What is the source of funding? It should include a cost estimate and detail the source.**

Care of creation measures have the potential to save congregations money. There is no expectation of funding from the diocese for this resolution.

**What is the impact on the time and workload of diocesan staff, congregations and other responsible parties?**

Congregation resources of time and talent will be offset by the environmental benefits experienced by their parishes and respective communities.



## Appendix B: Survey Comments Relating to Greening Your Church or Diocesan Institution

*We have a pollinator garden and a church garden and we donate the produce to the food bank.*

*Our vestry will start the conversation about reducing water usage for lawn, converting to native and drought resistant planting.*

*Several rounds of fire mitigation through the campus to reduce dead trees, limbs, etc.*

*We are working to phase out single-use items at receptions/coffee hour. We have updated much of our lighting. We are working with the city to install EV charging stations. We grow organic vegetables on campus. We are planning to cut back on-campus water usage. We are exploring the possibility of solar car ports.*

*Our Green Team became the seed for our farmers' market.*

*We are currently looking at the feasibility of installing a solar garden on our property.*

*We are a very small parish with mostly older parishioners. Currently we have recycling at church that is collected by our trash pickup provider. We keep the heat as low as possible when the building is unoccupied and have high efficiency furnaces. We replace older CFC and incandescent light bulbs with LED lamps as they burn out.*

*Climate Change and Care for Creation began in August 2020 as one of several small groups, a program suggested by our pastor to help people stay connected during COVID. We met to discuss the book, "The Future We Choose". Then we became a small group that meets monthly to check in and to share climate/environmental items of interest, and ideas for action, both individual and group.*

*We worked with a local environmental agency to reduce waste and save energy, and have been certified as being on the Pathway to net-zero for faith-based organizations.*

*We provide parking services to college students, staff, facility, and visitors. We are installing EV charging stations to offer to our parking patrons.*

*Our church has worked with a local group "Food not Bombs," which gathers soon-to-be-discarded food from local grocers and uses the church kitchen to prepare a meal for the homeless from these still good products that would otherwise go into the trash.*

*When the church landscape was reshaped in 2012, two master gardeners volunteered to design our gardens for best use of water and for high pollinating plants. In 2022 we received congratulations from a local pollinators group as being one of the best pollinators in the town. They brought tours through our gardens throughout the summer.*

*We minimize driving by holding some meetings via Zoom or Microsoft Teams. We practice biodiversity regarding landscape maintenance around certain sections of the church property.*

*We switched from paper plates and plastic utensils to ceramic plates and stainless steel utensils before the pandemic began.*

*We are a family-sized congregation and we are all committed to keeping our church green. For instance,*

*we ceased using paper bulletins each Sunday and returned to our prayer books. We replaced windows in the sanctuary for better efficiency. We installed insulated blinds.*

*We don't have a green team, but the whole congregation, led by the Bishop's Committee, is practicing creation care through reduction of plastic use and regular recycling of all paper and plastics used at the church. We have a large lawn around the church, and are discussing ways to reduce the amount of water and other expenses required for its upkeep.*

*I lead a small group of parishioners who have replanted the church grounds with native and drought-resistant species.*

*We have a small green team that has offered presentations on climate science and tips to reduce individual, family, and the church's carbon footprint.*

*Our Climate Care Team meets every first Thursday of the month, and we have about 15 members, most of them are active members. Our team has completed 3 or 4 environmentally friendly projects and/or gifts for our parish each year.*

*When we were planning our renovation we investigated with our town the possibility of putting solar panels on our roof. That was not even entertained because it would interfere with the historic character of the building which is part of the Historic District. This privileging of the past over the future is striking.*

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## Appendix C: Survey Comments Relating to Church or Community Gardening

*Parishioners have gardens and we bring our vegetables to the church for sharing.*

*We have six raised beds that we grow vegetables in and donate to the community. We have a pollinator garden as well.*

*It's very hard to grow food at 8,500 feet—hail, intense sun, four legged critters, little water, etc. We might try it anyway.*

*The congregation comes together to plan and maintain an on-campus community garden, the fruits of which are donated to local food volunteer organizations outside our church.*

*We could potentially put in some gardening boxes along the street.*

*As a rural community many of us grow food on our farms or gardens. So a better question would be how do we engage our member farmers/gardeners into a community that can share produce, distribute to needy parishioners or even share this from the church, perhaps jointly in a farmer's market?*

*Our Youth Group built raised bed gardens for community produce donations last year. Our biggest issue is access to water and cost of the water bills.*

*We have a prayer garden along with a flower cutting garden.*

*We have a small community "gleaning" garden for the community. We also have a food/hygiene pantry available to anyone passing by.*

*We have raised garden beds and belong to "Good News Gardens." We also have a small orchard of fruit trees and beehives.*

*We have three raised beds and a smaller bed for herbs. We mostly grow vegetables and sunflowers in the beds. The produce is free for anyone to harvest at any time. The Community Pantry uses the produce to supplement their pantry. We received a \$500 grant last year from the Garden Club, which we used for new and supplemental plants and seeds and materials for the herb garden.*

*Brigit 's Bounty provides 2000+ lbs. of food to a local food bank and offers gardening camp for kids in summer.*

*Recently, High Country Conservation, the local environment focused organization, placed an organic waste collection bin in our parking lot. People in the parish became concerned that this would be off-putting for others in the parish, that it's unsightly and that it would smell bad, etc. The focus was not on how much more convenient this makes it for us and our neighbors to responsibly dispose of our organic waste to contribute to our compost supply.*

*Community gardening is a part of our vision. This is currently a possibility for 2023. A labyrinth has also become part of our grounds and is guided with reflections about creation.*

*We have limited open space for parking or any other activities. We might be able to use our columbarium and vertical planting.*

*Our gardening group grows food year-round at Geothermal Greenhouse Partnership's Community Garden Dome. We donate to a food pantry every week. Food security is a Peace and Justice issue.*

*There is a vegetable garden on the property, tended by members of the three churches. The food is shared with parishioners of the three churches.*

*The youth are exploring the feasibility of a vegetable and herb garden in our yard near the outdoor sanctuary.*

*We converted a strip of land between our parking lot and the street into a community garden with 14 small plots that are allocated to neighbors to grow vegetables and flowers. It has been a fine beautification project as well as a good way to interact with neighbors.*

*We have a large garden that produces substantial amounts of food—more than the small team has been able to effectively harvest. Some is sold by donation to parishioners, and a large amount is given to food banks. We would be interested in partnering with a community garden organization that could help us make more effective use of the land to help feed hungry neighbors.*

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## Appendix D: Survey Comments Relating to Eco-Justice

*Long-range idea to share housing with climate-disaster displaced refugees.*

*In February 2023 we launched a new small group using the JustFaith curriculum for Eco-Justice "Sacred Water" with a group of 15 participants.*

*We have a book club that meets regularly with our rector. We have considered the topic of eco-justice in some of the books we have read. The book club's overall foci are the issues of social and racial justice.*

*This is something that youth feel strongly about. I would like to bring it up.*

*Our area is especially prone to wildfires. We have been evacuated on occasion.*

*Although we co-sponsor an Afghan family who are refugees, we have not been engaged in eco-justice issues, as far as I know. However, our Care for Creation group viewed the documentary called "The Letter" about Pope Francis' actions to care for creation. One of the four participants was a young man who is a refugee because of climate change. It started us thinking...*

*We would like to learn more about ways to engage this issue.*

*[We are a] meeting place for support of Marshall fire neighbors. We make an annual donation to Episcopal Relief and Development for the purchase of animals.*

*We have a Becoming Beloved Community group that focuses on social justice issues with book discussions, lectures, etc. They are aware of the connection to environmental justice but not especially focused on this part.*

*Our Social Justice Ministry engaged with the Colorado Council of Churches in selecting/discussing General Assembly bills impacting environment to engage legislators with letters, maybe blog essays, testimonies to support or oppose, e.g., HB23-016.*

*We are not really engaged other than giving support when local disasters happen such as the mud floods in Manitou Springs when the rains caused forest lands, which had been burned shortly before, to wash away causing mud floods which were very destructive. Congregation members helped to dig out from the mud and attended meetings encouraging mitigation to future floods.*

*We have always been a congregation focused on outreach to those on the margins, however, we are moving more into social justice work and changing structures. Our focus there has been on housing and homeless issues, however, Creation Care is something we want to do across the parish.*

*I try to highlight the effects of ecological degradation and the effects of climate change in sermons. We have some members who aren't sure if climate change is real.*

*For the past three years, we have had fundraisers to benefit communities impacted by climate change. In the fall of 2021, we raised funds to assist the Colorado Haiti Project. At Christmas 2021, we adopted a small Episcopal parish in Louisiana that was badly damaged by a hurricane, and not only sent money but also sent personal cards of encouragement to parishioners there. This past Christmas, we raised funds to help those in southwest Florida struggling to pay insurance deductibles following Hurricane Ian.*

*We need to research this to see how we might take part. Mostly our support for such harms is monetarily*

*through support of organizations like ERD.*

*Three of our leadership teams focus respectively on Climate Change related issues: food insecurity, inadequate housing, and social inclusion. Aspirational plans include deepening our cooperation with other area churches and building on the interest of two more nearby congregations to work cooperatively.*

*Members of our Creation Care team joined in a Fracking Protest in Loveland, Colorado. We've also received training and follow-on activity with Citizen's Climate Lobby and advocated for national policy and climate friendly legislation—all of which offer benefit and relief to the populations most vulnerable to climate change.*

*We install solar panels at St. Christopher's Mission in Navajoland. Our volunteers installed insulation in their new worship space.*

*I consider our busy food pantry and community food equity to be eco-justice initiatives. Our gardeners supply fresh greens every week.*

*We have not put much effort into eco-justice work. However, we have actively done advocacy in other areas (immigration issues, for example). The Joint Ecological Team is more involved—this year we are planning to look at the relationship between climate and migration.*

*The CEO of Rocky Mountain Institute attends our church and reminds us of the global impact of climate change and the importance of advocating for the environment. We hold a regular session entitled Beyond the Red Doors and we invite advocates to educate us.*

*We have a relationship with St. Barnabas' Church in the Diocese of Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania, where the Rev. Pearson Nhayo is doing phenomenal climate justice work, including planting trees and educating the community about new types of farming as the land experiences desertification. We want to bring Pearson back this summer, but need to partner with other parishes to do so.*

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## Appendix E: Survey Comments Relating to Protecting the Natural Environment

*People do things on their own, but not as a church effort.*

*Careful to use beneficial fertilizers, composting, drip systems, all add protection to our grounds!*

*Regular fire-mitigation.*

*I advocate for measures to protect the natural environment and to fight climate change—particularly as an advocate for pro-environment legislation at the Colorado state level. I have worked primarily with the Colorado Sierra Club.*

*At this point, I don't know what we can do to protect the environment other than continue to be good stewards of our land.*

*This is something that youth feel strongly about, I would like to bring it up.*

*Living adjacent to national forest and park lands we are extremely aware of the many initiatives in our area.*

*We spent a morning with our “Sunday school,” outdoors, collecting acorns and seeds, talking about how trees grow, and how they help the environment. We have also focused on the importance of trees in several of the weekly e-bulletin announcements.*

*We have all-parish work days to clean up our church grounds, care for our trees. Have planted more trees on our grounds.*

*Our beehive is part of our effort to take concrete action for biodiversity.*

*As above, e.g. including current bill to eliminate lead shot in CO hunting (Our Social Justice ministry engaged with Colorado Council of Churches in selecting/discussing General Assembly bills impacting environment to engage legislators with letters, maybe blog essays, testimonies to support or oppose e.g. HB23-016.)*

*Our newest project was the "Dumpster Project" which provided four dumpsters to be placed in an area where unhoused people had lived and left. The area had been turned into a two or three-acre garbage dump. One of our unhoused neighbors told us if we provided the dumpsters, he would get people to clean it up. After getting permission from the landowners, we used grant and outreach money to provide the dumpsters and coordination. Most of the work was done by unhoused neighbors.*

*Several members are involved in environmental cleanup each spring.*

*Individual members participate in local work days and support environmental nonprofits.*

*This question suggests some possible future ministries that we could engage in here in our mountain town, e.g., trail maintenance, participation in cleanup days...*

*Recently we have shifted our newsletter efforts from focusing simply on reporting on the climate crisis to plans to regularly include the voices of parishioners in written prayers that express our need to tie together our concern for our planet with our hopes and commitments as people of faith.*

*We have started a fledgling effort to incorporate the views and knowledge of our middle school and high school youth to invite them to write about these issues in our weekly bulletins.*

*The Climate Change team regularly participates in local marches and climate action events including outdoor downtown advocacy.*

*We've participated in several local trail clean-up activities and have plans for guest speakers who will educate about water quality and quantity.*

*The Peace & Justice team supplies eco-friendly biodegradable reusable cups, plates, serving ware at Parish gatherings to reduce plastic. Our goal is to eliminate plastic.*

*The Joint Ecological Team has participated in some tree planting activities (after the recent fires in Northern Colorado).*

*Our priest is on the Healthy Rivers board and this group has provided grant funding for multiple environmental projects.*

*The ED of the Roaring Fork Conservancy attends our church. We engage in river clean up annually.*

*In the past couple of years, our team has given these 3 gifts: reusable water bottle and reusable grocery bag, both with our church logo on them, and an Environmentally Friendly Advent Calendar, with tips for a "greener" holiday season.*

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## Appendix F: Survey Comments Relating to Worship/Prayer around Care of Creation

*We have a St. Francis/blessing of the animals and a Season of Creation, with a formation activity around both. We have some additional services outside in the summer and a camping trip.*

*We use the creation liturgy; we do the blessing of the animals.*

*Our rector periodically mentions issues around creation care in her sermons. We celebrate St. Francis Day but the emphasis is more on pets than creation care. We do regularly pray for the care of this earth during our weekly prayers.*

*We hold St. Francis Day services outdoors and have a yard clean-up day in the summer. I do occasionally integrate creation care themes into sermons.*

*Plans are currently in the works for both an Earth Day observance and observance of the Season of Creation. We began a program called "Altars in the World" that took people out-of-doors to experience the environment in "non-recreational" ways. Part of the intention has been that better knowledge/experience of the environment would translate into greater concern for protecting it.*

*We pray for the planet weekly in the Prayers of the People.*

*We have hosted open community pet blessings on our farmers' market lot in conjunction with St. Francis Day.*

*We have a retreat on Earth Day and are planning on using worship around creation.*

*We added the Prayers for the Natural Order pp. 827-828 BCP to the Prayers of the People during Lent 2022, asking people to pray about the pledge for Creation, which was posted in the Narthex during Lent, and available in print as well and which was signed then after Easter. We had a service devoted to Creation, coordinating with the Director of Music to use Hymns and Anthems that dealt with creation in this service.*

*We do a blessing of the gardens every spring around Earth Day and bless our harvest of fruit in the fall.*

*This fall we did the "Season of Creation" with readings, special sermons, etc., culminating in the St. Francis blessing of the animals.*

*We have an annual St. Francis Day blessing of the animals that includes the local community. We included special music and readings and preaching for the Season of Creation this past year. We usually have special prayers on Earth Day.*

*We have taken to celebrating the Season of Creation in September, which includes a liturgical focus on Creation Care coupled with spiritual formation at all age levels.*

*In 2020 we began an eight-week Season of Creation that begins with the Blessing of the Animals on St. Francis of Assisi Day. This has been a wonderful way to reach out to the community and invite new people to join in and learn about this. We have used creation care Prayers of the People and Eucharistic Prayer C during this time. Some sermons have creation care themes. It has helped us bring in new people. I've introduced this slowly because it is somewhat controversial.*

*We have held Rogation Day processions through our gardens.*

*During the Season of Creation, we use a Celtic worship which reminds us of how entwined our lives are with creation.*

*During ordinary time we typically use a diocese-approved Celtic liturgy which connects us more to creation.*

*We incorporate care of creation in our weekly liturgy in our services. We use IFPL [Interfaith Power and Light] materials especially during the Easter season but draw on them throughout the year.*

*A special "Thanks-Serving" Sunday in November led us directly from worship and into the community for hands-on projects and activities in the Care of Creation.*

*Have engaged in Season of Creation for several years—developed Stations of Creation to use during that season, during midweek services use more creation-based liturgy.*

*Peace & Justice wrote the Prayers of the People for 2022 Earth Day and gave out sunflower starts for transplanting. The sunflowers symbolize Peace in Ukraine. We sponsored Coffee Hour for Rogation Day(s) and taught about the history of Rogation Day. We read the Episcopal Creation Care Pledge together.*

*In Earth Day 2023, we'll partner with our Methodist neighbors and Interfaith Power and Light for a Creation Care Study and then participate in Earth Day community gathering.*

*During General Convention, we created a slide show featuring each of the proposed resolutions relevant to Creation Care. We projected the slides at Coffee Hour on a silent loop, encouraging conversation.*

*In fall of 2022 we had a joint worship service with all 3 of our partner churches—with a theme of Creation Care. The service was paired with a joint adult forum on Creation Care for members of the 3 churches.*

*For the first time last fall, during the 5 weeks of Season of Creation, our priest included lectionary readings each Sunday that encouraged all of us to be respectful conservators of our common home. And, in each bulletin, we included a paragraph dealing with each of the themes for the 5 weeks.*

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## Appendix G: Survey Comments Relating to Education and Study around Creation Care Themes

*Hosted Creation Care Summer Camp*

*Blooming Buddies inquired information from a couple who operate a farm in Canon City. Tammi and Chris Hartung grow and sell medicinal plants, xeriscape and different grasses! Classes are offered to the public!*

*Sunday school classes on care of the environment*

*Launching a new small group using the JustFaith curriculum for Eco-Justice "Sacred Water"...Three parishioners were trained to lead efforts and will be teaching the 10 week class.*

*I would very much like to start an education focus on these issues at our church but we have very poor attendance at any of our adult education efforts.*

*As a rural community, climate, water use, soil conservation is integral to our way of being/living in the world.*

*We have done some educational events. Most of the "Altars in the World" programs have had educational components.*

*Our theme for our retreat on Earth Day is tied into creation care.*

*Our seminarian intern facilitated a book group discussing "Braiding Sweetgrass".*

*Our Care for Creation announcements in our weekly e-bulletin have been our main way of educating.*

*Members of our Care for Creation Team had a pledge-signing coffee hour after Easter in which people were invited to sign a giant copy of the pledge (now hanging in the parish hall), and participated in recycling games.*

*Presented a skit about recycling at a coffee hour in which the children of the congregation helped Oscar the Grouch know which bin (trash-recycling-compost) to put various items.*

*We have put more compost bins in the parish hall and kitchen, with labels as to what belongs where.*

*Put Care for Creation tip of the week in the weekly online newsletter. Published stories about creation written by one of the team members in the newsletter.*

*Members of the group have presented activities on creation at our children's Sunday School. We talked about recycling, how God created various kinds of seeds, and sent the children on a scavenger hunt to find various types of seeds from the wide variety of plants located on the church grounds. They had a great time.*

*We just finished a study of Trisha Tull's book, "Inhabiting Eden," including a zoom conference with the author.*

*We did a book study in conjunction with Care of Creation.*

*To date I'd say study has been individual, and I believe somewhat in the children's Godly Play services.*

*This past fall, we had a four-week series of classes during our Season of Creation. Topics included Christians and Climate Change, Water and Justice; Christian Vegetarianism; and How Pets Connect Us to God. The season culminated with our annual Blessing of the Animals. I expect we will continue to offer a variety of environmental-themed classes in the future.*

*There are lecture series on various topics that occur almost every week and are well attended, primarily online. Topics include the impact of climate change as well as other subjects related to the well-being of people, animals, plants, and the planet.*

*Our challenge is to connect the work of various efforts seamlessly and to expand our growing cooperation with faith efforts of other churches in the area and with other faith groups. We have done a lot of this informally and our new clergy are looking at how our activities connect with one another and can be strengthened. The lecture series are not focused solely on climate but there is growing realization that every aspect of our lives is being affected by the climate crisis and that as people of faith we cannot ignore the degradation of our planet.*

*We engaged in a robust study of "A Life of Grace for the Whole World," the Bishops' Pastoral Teaching on the Environment.*

*Presenters from Colorado State University and Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) were eagerly received and members of our Creation Care Team are also connected with organizations such as Green Faith and Colorado Rising and Interfaith Power and Light.*

*We are considering a VBS this summer that deals with a care of creation theme.*

*Some Peace & Justice folks studied at the Methodist Church one evening a month for six months. The course of study was Creation Care 101.*

*We sponsored a successful multi-session discussion of the book "Braiding Sweetgrass". This was attended by folks from all 3 of our partner churches.*

*See above re: Red Doors, etc. (The CEO of Rocky Mountain Institute attends our church and reminds us of the global impact of climate change and the importance of advocating for the environment. We hold a regular session entitled "Beyond the Red Doors" and we invite advocates to educate us.)*

*Several on the green team hope to hold a book study focusing on the spiritual aspects of care of creation. We are considering the works of Thomas Berry, the book "Church of the Wild", or "Braiding Sweetgrass".*

*Our ongoing clergy and lay people led inquiry lecture series includes attention to the impact of climate change on nearly every aspect of our lives. In aspiration we need to ramp up congregational and multi-congregational awareness that leads to action in our community and beyond, and helps parishioners move forward to take action fueled by faith rather than by fear to change nearly every aspect of our daily lives.*

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