

## Mission 4/1 Earth

# MISSION 4/1 EARTH:

*50 Great Days*

Mission 4/1 Earth is a 50-day collective mission emphasis across the whole United Church of Christ. You should begin now to prepare for how your individual members and congregation will participate. Effective planning is key to widespread participation. You'll have the most success if you work ahead and build momentum.

The first goal of Mission 4/1 Earth is to collectively offer more than [ONE MILLION HOURS of engaged earth care](#), including clean up, advocacy, education, and behavioral changes that will impact the environment.

Reaching one million hours won't be easy, so we need people — ahead of time — to discern how they will participate. Plan a consecration time when you bless and share individual ideas and commitments.

It's also important that you brainstorm unique ways that people can contribute hours of active earth care in creative, not-readily-apparent ways. Early on, you should provide opportunities for people to commit/covenant how they will be donating time and energy to Mission 4/1 Earth, then bless and celebrate these commitments even before Mission 4/1 Earth launches. Don't forget to share your plans by emailing [earth@ucc.org](mailto:earth@ucc.org) — your ideas might be the inspiration another congregation needs for its own successful campaign!

By encouraging participation in the [Ecumenical Lenten Carbon Fast](#), your members and friends will find many ways to help the earth. Provide them with [time cards](#) to keep track of their time to submit as part of Mission 4/1 Earth.

Enroll your church in the [Viridian green energy program](#). All the time spent by the church and by members enrolling to buy green electricity can be counted towards your Mission 4/1 Earth goals.

Attend the [Climate Revival: An Ecumenical Festival to Embolden the Renewal of Creation](#) on April 27 in Boston. Your participation in this festival can be counted toward your Mission 4/1 Earth hours.



### Here are some more examples of how we can get to 1 million hours of engaged earth care:

- If you ride a bike, carpool, or use public transportation, instead of riding alone in a car, count that time toward the goal. Organize a group of 10 friends to do the same, and multiple the earth-care time you're investing.
- Plant and tend an organic garden. Weeding and watering time will mount up quickly.
- Prepare a sermon. Lead a bible study. Plan or attend an earth-care-focused worship service.
- Write advocacy letters, or staff a table to encourage others to do the same. (Remember, letters count twice: toward the 1 million hours goal AND the 100,000 letters goal!)
- Install energy efficient light bulbs or appliances.
- Recycle coffee grounds and old coffee by putting them/pouring them on acid-loving plants.

- Donate items to thrift shops and shop there, too.
- Create a compost bin at your church and/or your home.
- Turn out the lights in rooms you are not in.
- Hold a workshop for youth (and adults, too!). Teach them to weigh the amount of food they leave on their plates and set a goal to reduce the amount of food they throw away. Then track it.
- Donate plastic grocery bags to Goodwill, the Salvation Army or most second-hand shops.
- RECYCLE. Time spent collecting, sorting, and submitting recycled materials. If your city doesn't offer recycling, start a letter-writing campaign to urge them to start one.
- Work with your city or town to set up a recycling center in the church parking lot; or have church members volunteer to work at local recycling collection centers.
- Check all your faucets to make sure they don't drip.
- Wash clothes in cold water. Count 1 hour per load for the 50 days.
- Read the labels — use detergents that don't harm the environment.
- Recycle your old cell phone.
- Ask church members to donate one or more mugs to the church for coffee hour, rather than use paper. That way, you'll have enough for the members, and for visitors, too.
- Return/recycle empty toner and ink cartridges.
- Vinegar can be used for cleaning all sorts of things instead of harsh chemicals.
- Have several litter collection days where church members work in teams to pick up trash along roadsides and in parks.
- Reduce the number of church bulletins and/or newsletters that your church prints.
- Learn ways to live green via online eco-blogs.
- Many documentaries address various issues about our planet. Arrange video discussion nights to watch a video and then discuss it. Here are just a few to choose from:
  - “Renewal”
  - “Food, Inc.”
  - “Fresh”
  - “Troubled Waters (produced by the United Church of Christ)”
  - “Peaceable Kingdom”
  - “Strong Roots, Fragile Farms (produced by the United Church of Christ)”
  - “The End of the Line”
  - “Dirt”
  - “No Impact Man”
  - “Home”
  - “An Inconvenient Truth”
  - “What's On Your Plate”
- Plant a tree in your back yard.
- Use only organic fertilizer on your lawn this spring.
- Use a manual lawnmower (you'll be cutting down on noise pollution, too!)
- Walk to the store, to church, to school, the park, the post office, the library, the cleaners - any short trips you normally use the car for.
- Research or attend workshops on shopping/buying local produce and health eating. Then shop health and eat healthy! Many people find that adopting a locally-grown diet helps both their own health and their neighbors.

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