Auditing your lifestyle

WHY?

Changing our personal lifestyles is essential if we’re to worship God with heart, soul, mind & strength – and love our neighbours as ourselves. ‘We all need to make a complete, radical & honest audit of our lifestyles, their impact on the poor & on the planet,’ said A Rocha UK co-founder Dave Bookless, ‘& to ask God to pinpoint where we should start making changes.’

HOW?

**Where to start?**

A personal lifestyle audit helps you identify where you are doing well & where you could

improve. There are many available measuring slightly different things. Focus on your personal decisions at home rather than corporate decisions of the church body, by using the Creation Care website. The seven categories of questions are in the same areas as the Eco Church survey so the resources provided will help you at home as well as at church:

• Worship & prayer

• Home

• Garden

• Community and global engagement

• Travel

• Food

• Possessions

As households participate, the church they belong to, will see the collective impact of individual choices. Participate as a household at https://creationcare.org uk/

Auditing your personal carbon footprint in detail enables you to set goals to reduce it & to offset the carbon you can’t eliminate if you are able to. Climate Stewards have versions of their calculator suitable for individual households: https://www.climatestewards.org/offset/

Take action by looking at ‘Count us in’. This website recommends 16 manageable steps you can take to reduce your own carbon footprint & to challenge world leaders. Each step shows the impact & the effort required. As you pledge to join, your personal CO2 saving is aggregated with others around the world. It is an inspiring global drive to reduce our collective footprint: https://www.count-us-in.org/en-gb/

The audits all point to things you can do to reduce our personal carbon footprint. Top tips are

‘consume’ (buy) less, eat less red meat & reduce your travel.

**Flying particularly is a problem** as, mile for mile, it is the most damaging way to travel for the climate. More than 80% of the world has never flown, many of whom suffer most from climate change. If you do fly, air travel will take up a large percentage of your carbon footprint. Offset it into projects which improve carbon efficiency around the world - whether by tree planting or more efficient cooking methods. Offsetting is controversial as it is still better not to fly! Climate Stewards provide an easy way to pay a calculated offset: https://www.climatestewards.org/offset/ (select the aeroplane icon).

You can find alternative ways to do your journey through websites such as

https://www.rome2rio.com/ or <https://www.seat61.com/>.

LONGER READS & OTHER RESOURCES

**Longer reads**

Earth Overshoot Day marks the date when humanity’s demand for ecological resources &

services in a given year exceeds what Earth can regenerate in that year. In 2021, it was 29 July. If everyone lived the same way as people in the UK, it would have been 19 May; for China 7 June:

https://www.overshootday.org/

https://www.overshootday.org/newsroom/country-overshoot-days/

Both The Times & The Guardian newspapers have sustainable or ethical living sections in their papers and on the website. They make thought-provoking and up-to-date reads:

https://www.thetimes.co.uk/environment

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/ethical-living