



St Mary's & St Leonard's
Wallingford
open to God, open to all

Lent Plastic Challenge



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.



6 Ash Wednesday

'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 ...' Isaiah 24:4-5

Thur
7

Give up disposable cups & drinks in plastic bottles

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.

Fri
8

Bring your own reusable bags

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.

Sat
9

Carry your own non-plastic cutlery

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.

FOOD & DRINK

Sunday 10 March

'There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number – living things both large and small.' Psalms 104:25-30

By 2050 we could have more plastic than fish (by weight) in the sea.

Mon
11

Buy in bulk to minimize or eliminate packaging

This goes for food and drink as well as cleaning supplies, toiletries, hardware items – anything that may come in plastic packaging.

Tue
12

Avoid overpackaged, processed, canned and frozen convenience foods

Stay clear of the three tomatoes sitting on a Styrofoam tray and covered in plastic cellophane.

Wed
13

Buy fresh bread that comes in either paper bags or no bags

This eliminates plastic wrapping waste from shop bought bread and you help support local businesses.

Thur
14

Choose milk in returnable glass bottles

Many areas have local dairies that provides milk in returnable glass bottles rather than plastic or plastic-coated cardboard.

Fri
15

Use non-plastic containers for food – 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.

Sat
16

Shop at markets

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.

BATHROOM

Sunday 17 March

Every day millions of microplastics enter the sea from toiletry products.

Start a conversation or ask to talk about how you are taking action on plastics at church.

Mon
18

Look around your bathroom and see what plastics you can replace

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.

Tue
19

Use a razor with removable blades

Disposable razors and razor blades are two of the biggest contributors to plastic waste.

Wed
20

Check labels of toiletries

Did you know some facial scrubs & toiletries products contain tiny plastic beads? Avoid anything with 'polyethylene' listed as an ingredient.

Thur
21

Use a bamboo toothbrush or a toothbrush with recyclable heads

and try to find dental floss that doesn't come in plastic packaging.

Fri
22

Use bar soap instead of liquid hand soap

This is an easy change to make, if you are feeling keen you can even make your own soap bars.

Sat
23

Choose lotions and lip balms in plastic-free containers

Some shops will now refill glass toiletry containers or give you a discount if you return old packaging.

Over **8.3 billion tonnes** 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 **9%** was recycled. '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.

KITCHEN

Sunday 24 March

'For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible.'
Colossians 1:16-17

Consider organising a community litter pick.

Mon
25

Look around your kitchen and see what plastics you can replace

Use a dish brush with a wooden handle and compostable bristles.

Tue
26

Use natural cleaning cloths instead of plastic & synthetic sponges

Compressed natural cellulose sponges are often sold without any plastic packaging.

Wed
27

Use a blender made of glass

If you find yourself needing to purchase a new blender in the future, try and go for a glass alternative if possible.

Thur
28

Buy glass and/or stainless steel containers for food storage

Glass works well for freezer storage as well, just ensure you leave room at the top of the jar.

Fri
29

Avoid foil wrapped crisps and chocolates

Some sweet wrappers are now recyclable but don't forget to check.

Sat
30

Share your leftovers or unwanted food

Reduce waste by joining a food sharing network like Olio.

CLOTHING

Sunday 31 March

'But where can wisdom be found? Where does understanding dwell?' Job 28:12-13

Do you use disposable cups at church? Can you encourage people to bring their own mug?

Mon
1

Choose natural fibres

Synthetic fabrics create microfibre pollution when washed. When buying new clothes look for organic cotton, wool, and other natural fibres.

Tue
2

Alter and Modify Old Shoes and Clothing into New

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.

Wed
3

Buy clothing second-hand

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.

Thur
4

Do a clothes swap

Look online for local events or get advice on how to set up your own. Take a look at sites like Get Swishing.

Fri
5

Invest in quality

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.

Sat
6

Request zero plastic packaging

If you're buying clothes online ask the retailer if they can reduce or remove plastic packaging.

HOME

Sunday 7 April

'The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.'
Psalm 24:1-2

Mon
8

Put a 'No Junk Mail' sticker on your letterbox

This will reduce the number of letters with plastic windows. It will also reduce your paper waste.

Tue
9

Make it from scratch

Try and cook as much as possible from scratch and take your own sandwiches and snacks when you go out.

Wed
10

Avoid wet wipes

These contain plastic fibres so don't break down like toilet roll, despite often being described as flushable.

Thur
11

Acquire necessary plastic items used instead of new

Check second-hand shops, Freecycle or Freegle. Look for sharing groups locally.

Fri
12

Buy second-hand plastic-free furniture

There's lots of advice about repairing, upcycling and finding good wooden or metal furniture online.

Sat
13

Don't buy new CDs and DVDs

Stream or download music, shows, and films online, buy second hand or borrow them from the library or friends.

TRAVEL

Sunday 14 April

'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.'
Micah 6:8

Mon
15

Avoid plastic pens and giveaways

Try using a refillable fountain pen or pencils.

Tue
16

Bring your own toiletries

Skip the free travel size shampoos, soaps, and lotions offered by hotels. Instead, fill up your own reusable travel-size containers at home.

Wed
17

Avoid the Mini bar snacks and drinks

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.

Thur
18

What lasting changes are you going to make?

Do you find yourself looking at plastics in a different way? List three things you are going to commit to changing.

Make your voice heard:

Share what you are doing with friends, family and community. Ask your MP what they are doing to tackle single use plastics. Join the UN's Clean Seas campaign and Greenpeace's Plastic Pledge. Find out your own plastic footprint. Call on supermarkets for a Plastic Free Aisle.

We hope this challenge has made you more aware of your plastic use and helped you create some lasting changes.