

# EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF LONG ISLAND CREATION CARE MINISTRY

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



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## A Word from the Missioner for Environmental Justice:

Dear Friends,

On Ash Wednesday we entered into the season of Lent with an ashen cross on our foreheads, imposed with the reminder that we are dust, and that to dust we shall return. The imposition of ashes is preceded by an opening collect that asks for God's help in "worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness," and followed by a minutely detailed enumeration of our sins in the Litany of Penitence. So it is natural for us to hear our origin and destiny in dust as one more piece of bad news about our lamentable state. There is a hard truth in the ashes, of course: our lives are short, and we need to make the most of them. We need to take advantage of the opportunity Lent offers us to take a good look at ourselves and look for ways to open ourselves to more of the reality of who God created us to be. But there is also good news about us in those words that accompany the ashes.

Look what we get when we substitute the word 'earth' for the word 'dust' in the formula of imposition. We still get a truth that has a hard edge, but one that also connects us at the same time us to a source of abundant life: Remember that you are earth, and to earth you shall return. Or better still: Remember that you are Earth, and to Earth you shall return. We are Earth. We are made of the same stuff as all the other beings God made, from rocks to plankton to the majestic apes who are separated from us by a few little twists of DNA. For those of us who grieve at the damage we have done, and are doing, to the natural world, Lent can present itself as an occasion to acknowledge our carelessness and greed, to ask God's



SPOTLIGHT ON STATE PARKS:  
Heckscher State Park, East Islip



THE REV. DR. MATTHEW MOORE  
Missioner for Environmental Justice  
Co-Chair, Creation Care Community  
Episcopal Diocese of Long Island

To subscribe to this newsletter, email us at:  
[creationcare@dioceseli.org](mailto:creationcare@dioceseli.org)

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# Your Lent Resource Kit



WRITTEN BY THE REV. MARK GENSZLER  
AND THE REV. MAXINE BARNETT



The Paschal mystery names the holiness and complicatedness of suffering. We live into this mystery - and the renewal of all things to which it points - in the wide open season of Easter. Our season of Lent prepares us as a community to enter into this joyful renewing, and to join with all creation in the power of God to make all things new. So, Lent is a season of turning from that which does not give life to that which does. What does a 'return to the Lord' look like for our communities here, on this Paumanok island?

**THIS LENT, COULD YOU...**

- Take up alternative forms of transport?
- Give up single use plastics?
- Live locally?
- Buy nothing new?
- Give up meat?
- Give up electricity for an hour every day?

**TO CHANGE YOUR IMPACT ON THE CLIMATE?**

TAKE UP THE CHALLENGE AT [LIVINGLENT.ORG](http://LIVINGLENT.ORG)

A [community carbon fast](#)? A [Way of the Cross for Holy Week](#) that looks through the eyes of Jesus on the suffering of all creation, near and far? Or, adapt this Cleveland Way of the Cross and [make Stations](#) in your own neighborhood, lamenting and naming the suffering of all creation (and humans!) in your own neighborhood. A Lenten calendar that calls us to be

[attentive to single-use plastics in our lives](#)? Embracing the [vegetarian Lent of our ancestors in the faith](#), lowering our carbon footprint (meat production is a major greenhouse gas and groundwater polluter)? A [Buy-Nothing Lent](#), stepping away from our culture of conspicuous consumerism and focusing on repairing relationships? Our sisters and brothers at St Francis Xavier in Manhattan have a [Spanish/English calendar](#) of eco-Lent quotations and actions!

Sign up for brief, pithy, daily emails with inspiring readings, challenging actions, meditative prompts -- whether from [our sister and brothers in the Episcopal dioceses in the state of Massachusetts](#) or the Jesuits' Ignatian Solidarity Network. Our sister and teacher the Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas led an [online Lenten retreat on March 18 -- 'Healing, judgment.'](#)

Dive into these links, find more communities with more locally developed resources, adapt, and adopt to/for your own contexts. This part of the work is not hard!

These things are not virtue-signaling. They are the practices for every season that lead and point toward life - and the life that is the light of the world. Lent is a time for re-orientation (repentance!) -- so, be re-oriented as an individual and a community toward a life-giving relationship with all that seeks to live, with all creation made in the image of God. Try to take up something new (a practice) even as we allow the Spirit to help us slough off that which does not heal, restore, or lead us into the Risen Life of Easter.

## Introducing a new team member:

**THE REV. LILO CARR RIVERA**  
Assistant Rector  
St. Ann's Episcopal Church, Sayville



The Reverend Lilo Carr Rivera was ordained as a priest in 2021 and serves as the Curate/Assistant Rector at St. Ann's Episcopal Church in Sayville, NY. Mother Lilo was raised with an awareness of energy efficiency and climate issues: her father is a scientist, an early adapter to alternative energy, and is a climate change educator and activist in his retirement. Mother Lilo joined the Creation Care Community because she believes creation care is an essential part of our partnership with God in God's ongoing healing of the world through Jesus Christ.

*Mark your calendars:  
**EARTH DAY,**  
April 22nd, 2023*

**The Bishop, Dean and  
The Creation Care Community  
Diocese of Long Island  
invite you to**

**Earth Day at the Cathedral**

**Saturday, April 22, 2023**

**Holy Eucharist &  
Celebration of God's Good Creation  
Cathedral of the Incarnation  
Garden City, L.I.  
11:00 a.m.**

# Easter calls Christians to act on climate

BY RITA  
GRIFFITH



As I write this, it's literally the beginning of March, but already the bulbs are peeping their stalks up in the garden. Climate change, I think immediately, because it is early March. The winter has been so mild – we haven't even had one decent snowfall – that the bulbs believe it's spring already. Everything seems ominous nowadays. Before, most of us would have reveled in a mild winter.

Now many can see it as a foreshadowing of what we know is coming: a warming planet. But spring is also a time of hopefulness. In our tradition, it is inseparable from Easter, the supreme hopeful and joyful season; the season of new birth and resurrection. After the season of Lenten repentance, after the death of hope with Good Friday, the once-dead Jesus is raised to life again on Easter Sunday and the world is forever transformed. Maybe we can see in the coming seasons similar hope for the Earth. Not dead yet, and maybe with our help can come through the season of fear into a new rising and restoration.

The good news is that, despite those who cling to and loudly shout their denial, the urgency is known and recognized in our own [Episcopal Church](#), within the [Anglican Communion](#), among [Roman Catholics](#) and the [Orthodox](#) Church, and many mainline Christian denominations. We have ample resources as Christians to talk about the climate crisis and to act on the science, informed by our love of Christ and our common duty to care for God's good creation.

For us in the Diocese of Long Island, we are assured that Bishop Provenzano is completely aligned with the need for us, as parishes, missions, and individual Episcopalians, to embark on the urgent effort to halt and reverse climate change and engage in creation care.

At the first retreat of the Creation Care Community of the Diocese of Long Island, in October 2022, Bishop Provenzano said, *inter alia*: "I suspect that in our lifetime now [creation care] will be what the church does in relationship to our ministry to the rest of the world." "It's 'inconvenient' for us to pay attention to God's creation. It's inconvenient because it has serious economic impact on people who need to keep polluting the waters, and the air and all the rest of the environment. So recognize that this is a battle, if you will, to engage from a religious point of view, in terms of our care of God's creation." "I want to caution you that it's not going to be easy work. There will be all kinds of push back, and all kinds of questions and concerns, but I want you to know that [this] matters greatly."

Our Bishop is behind us, and so are our clergy, on the urgent need to respond to what is taking place with our planet and try to help fix it. What better time to start than now, when, in the words of that lovely Easter hymn:

***Now the green blade riseth, from the buried grain,  
wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;  
love lives again, that with the dead has been:  
Love is come again like wheat that springeth green.***

We are moving, and invite you all to come along. If you haven't yet had a parish visit from the Rev. Dr. Matthew Moore, Diocesan Missioner for Environmental Justice, or members of his team, what better time than Easter to start the ball rolling? Let's do this.

## Lent through a Sustainability Lens

DARREN J. GLENN, EDITOR



Now that Lent is already underway, we have a really precious opportunity to re-engage with the ways in which we move through the world. Yet, it has come to feel as if this tradition were simply a communal endurance race, with a collective albeit tacit understanding that the discipline that is nourished through the process should be the primary objective of Lent, and not necessarily an ongoing, more fundamental change in one's way of living and being in the world. While the discipline and reorientation to need and material things that comes from fasting is of tremendous value in and of itself, I was always left with a desire to see the potential of Lent to reshape habits realized more often.

Independent of Lent, over the past approximately three years, I have been on an earnest journey of living progressively more sustainably. Consuming less. Generating less trash. Minimizing harm that my personal livelihood poses to creation. This hasn't been at all easy. Nor has it been linear; sometimes I take a few steps forward and then even more steps back. But my intention throughout this sustainability journey is to make sustained, cumulative progress.

In thinking about my own Lent practice this year, it occurred to me that the kind of intention that I apply to living more sustainably could easily be applied to this season of devotion ahead of Easter.

**[cont'd on pg. 4]**

### ***A Word from the Missioner for Environmental Justice, (cont'd)***

forgiveness and for the grace to do better. Well and good. But I want to commend another spiritual practice for this Lenten season: the practice of embracing the reality that we are Earth.

Exactly what this practice will look like for you depends on the shape of your daily life, and the ways that Creation speaks most deeply to you. It could be as simple as taking a mindful walk in a wild place, or adding a thanksgiving to your daily prayers in which you call to mind the animals or creatures that speak most intimately to you of God's creative love. The point is to find and cultivate the awareness that you are Earth, that the life of Creation is your life, and that all creatures are your kin.

Lent is a season of renewal, above all a renewal of relationships: of our relationship to God, and our relationships to our neighbors. May you find, in this Lenten season, a relationship of renewed solidarity with the Earth God has entrusted to our care. May you find a blessing in the knowledge that we are all Earth, and that to Earth we shall return.

Blessings.  
Matthew+



High Altar, Cathedral of Incarnation  
2019 © CCCDLI

**Lent through a Sustainability Lens, (cont'd)**

The consequence of this realization is that this year, I am being far more judicious and thoughtful about the things I am trying to cultivate in myself and in my life this Lent season. I could easily elect a more common “sacrifice” that can do much to build endurance and an appreciation for the experiences of those in some sort of need, but perhaps does far less in helping facilitate a fundamental transformation in how I exist in the work. Or I can elect to use this season to adopt a change in how I interact with the people and the ecosystems around me based on the person I want to become. The person that I want to become happens to be a better steward of God’s creation.

I hope that some of the principles of the sustainable living journey can inspire a fresh approach to the tradition of Lent. Stepping deeper into my journey to be a better steward of

creation has given me a novel way to see the traditions we have around Lent—specifically the concept of giving something up.

Who do you want to become? And how can Lent be an opportunity to help you move forward in the journey to become that person?



SPOTLIGHT ON STATE PARKS:  
Shadmoor State Park, Montauk

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(Above, Left) Altar of Repose, Church of the Transfiguration, Freeport 2018 © CCCDLI.  
(Above, Right) Clergy in procession for the Chrism Mass at Cathedral of the Incarnation, Holy Week 2019 © CCCDLI



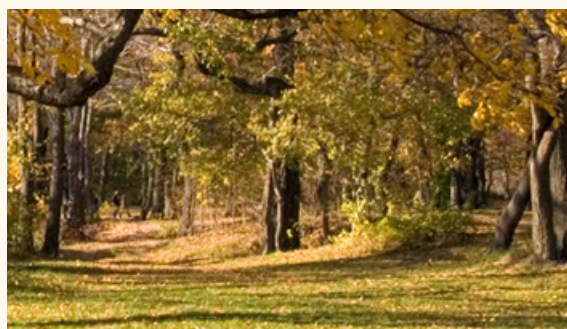
**Spotlight on State Parks:**

You may have noticed that, throughout this issue, we have featured photos of State Parks throughout Long Island. The New York State Department of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation manages 180 sites throughout the state, 37 of which are on Long Island. As the weather begins to get warmer and the days grow longer, this spotlight on local state parks is meant to offer our readers encouragement to visit these treasured locations. During the cold months, it may be difficult for many of us to remember that our state parks offer an opportunity to connect with the natural world. Let this issue act as a reminder of this vital and simple way to stay connected to God’s creation.



SPOTLIGHT ON STATE PARKS:  
(Above, Left) Sunken Meadow State Park, Smithtown. (Above, Right) Playground at the Valley Stream State Park.

(Below) Belmont Lake State Park, North Babylon



(Left) Hempstead Lake State Park, Hempstead  
(Right) Jones Beach State Park

Photos retrieved from parks.ny.gov and Longisland.com

