



# Climate Sunday

## Climate and Food

**Here you can find resources to help you explore Climate & Food in worship, commitment to action and in joining with others to call for change. This resource has been produced by Caroline Pomeroy, Director of Climate Stewards, an organisation which helps you calculate your carbon footprint, reduce it if you can, and offset the rest.**

Climate-Focused Service

### Exploring Climate & Food in Theology

The bible is an 'earthy' book, and has plenty to say about food and farming. Farmers feature heavily in the old and new testaments, Levitical laws protect the land and people from exploitation, and many key events revolve around meals. At the heart of our faith is the Eucharist (literally, 'thanksgiving'), when we eat a symbolic meal of bread and wine to remind us of Jesus' death, resurrection and presence with us.

The bible doesn't say much about carbon footprints, food miles or plastic, but it does talk about justice, generosity and loving our neighbour. That's why we care about our carbon footprint. In response to the Pharisees' question 'Who is my neighbour?' Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan, reminding us that our neighbours are not necessarily the people who live next door. In today's world I believe that our neighbours include our local neighbours suffering from food poverty; our global neighbours facing malnutrition and starvation due to crop failure, floods, droughts caused by climate change; our future neighbours - our children and grandchildren, who will see much harsher impacts of climate change; and our non-human neighbours facing extinction from our farming practices. If we are to truly love all of our neighbours, then our food choices should cause them blessing, not harm.

Here are some passages which could help you explore this topic further during your climate-focused service:

Exodus 12:1-14: - The story of the passover meal

Exodus 16 - God provides manna from heaven

Romans 14 - Paul tells us to give grace to one another using food choices as an example.

Psalms 104:14-15 - God's provision of food

Psalms 145:15-17 - God's provision and faithfulness

## **Prayer**

Creator God,

We thank you for your generosity in providing abundant food from fields and forests, sea and farms, factories and kitchens. Thank you for the joy and pleasure of eating and sharing meals.

But we know that our food choices can cause harm to your creation and our global neighbours as we consume more than we need, waste what others could be eating, and create unnecessary rubbish.

Give us wisdom as we decide what to eat, where to shop, what to grow and how to dispose of our waste. Help us to live more simply, act justly and love mercy.

We ask this in the name of our Saviour and Sustainer, Jesus Christ, Amen.

## **Further Reading:**

Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating by Norman Wirzba,

Food for Life: the Spirituality and Ethics of Eating by Shannon Jung

Scripture, Culture and Agriculture by Ellen Davis

[Thoughtful Eating: a Biblical Perspective on Food, Relationships and the Environment by Eves, Martin, Phillips and Redmayne](#)

## **Commit**

*Resources to help you commit to change as a community*

## **Maintain a posture of gratitude and worship to God for the provision of food.**

This can be in the form of prayers of thanksgiving in church services or in personal prayer.

## **Work out the carbon footprint from your diet**

You could use [360carbon](#) (for churches) or the [Climate Stewards carbon calculator](#) (for individuals) to work out the carbon footprint of your diet, as a starting point for committing to change

## **Eat lower down the food chain**

When you've found out how your food impacts the planet, you can start to look for lower impact alternatives and practices. Take a look at [this graph](#) (Section 7) to compare the impact of different foods. Commit to this action [here](#).

## **Don't waste food**

Only buy what you [need](#), be creative with [leftovers](#) and compost food waste. Take a look at these resources to think creatively about how you can reduce food waste. In the UK, the average family wastes [£700-worth](#) of food per year. Commit to taking this action [here](#).

## **Eat seasonally**

Learn what food is [in season](#), to help minimise your impact. Eating seasonally also helps avoid air-freighted food which can account for up to 10% of a food items carbon footprint. Commit to this action [here](#).

## **Minimise packaging**

Take your own bags and containers to the shops, use wax wraps, buy a Keep Cup, look for [local recycling](#) plastic options, but don't forget that plastic is not always bad. It [prevents food waste](#) (13 out of 17 fresh fruits and vegetables will last at least 3 days more when wrapped in plastic when stored in the fridge).

## **Call**

*Resources to help you join with others to call for action around Climate & Food*

Contacting your local council and your MP with your concerns and to call on them for action makes a difference. [Hope for the Future](#) can help you. Hope for the Future provides research, training and support for faith groups in order to build a relationship with your local MP.

Join a national campaign calling for climate justice by thinking about the food we eat and other actions in order to limit the rise in global temperature to 1.5 degrees C. Sign The Time is Now declaration [here](#).