



CARBON FAST 2015

WELCOME TO THE LENTEN CARBON FAST 2015!

What is a carbon fast for Lent?

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. Many persons take this opportunity to give up certain habits or fast from something. This year our challenge to you is to undertake a carbon fast.

Carbon dioxide or CO₂ produced by human activity is causing global warming which is in turn causing climates to change. In Jamaica we are aware of climate change because of our warmer temperatures, swings between floods and droughts, and rising sea levels. Warmer temperatures and rising sea levels are undesirable because they will have negative impacts on agriculture, fishing, community developments, important infrastructure like power plants, hospital and roads and plants and animals that are important to Jamaica's ecosystems and the protection of our coastline. These changes can affect our quality of life and threaten the survival of the natural world. Additionally other environmentally unfriendly actions (e.g. littering, cutting down our forests) make the impacts of climate change worse.

A carbon fast is a challenge to us all to look at our daily actions, to reflect on how they impact on the environment and our fellow Jamaicans. It challenges us to take some small steps – some of which will reduce our carbon dioxide output while others will help the environment - for a more sustainable world. In the process we may come to rediscover a different relationship with God, with His Creation and with one another.

Join the Carbon Fast - because you can change the world a little in 40 days, but more important, you can change yourself a lot!

How do I take a carbon fast?

Consider Ash Wednesday, 18 February, to Palm Sunday, 29 March as a time of reflection and action. Each week has a theme and challenges. Read the daily verse, consider the challenge, pray, and then where possible do that day's challenge or commit to doing it later. See also if you can make these actions into habits to continue after Lent.

At the end of the Fast, reflect on the entire experience. Share your thoughts on our website www.carbonfastjamaica.com. Pray that you may continue to be a good steward for the environment.

"Love the earth just as much as God does..." - Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu

"Climate change is an issue that impels us to think about God's justice and how we are to echo it in our world." Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, during the Conference of the Parties to the UN Climate Change Framework Convention, 2007. . <http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2015/01/rowan-williams-challenges-faith-community-to-respond-to-climate-challenge>

PREPARATION

Ash Wednesday 18 February to 22 February

We're glad that you are joining us on a path less travelled towards a carbon-light, environmentally friendly lifestyle and outlook. From Ash Wednesday through to Sunday of this week we will spend the time preparing ourselves for the fast ahead by thinking about what makes up our environment – the air, the seas and oceans, the earth, plants and animals, human beings. Do we appreciate the value of all that is created?

Read the Creation story, Genesis 1: 1-31. Reflect on the completeness of creation.

This Sunday and on the Sundays during the Fast, make it a time of reflection and meditation. Look back over the year and how you use your Sundays: How much petrol do you use? How much do you spend? Do our lives reflect a calling to stewardship in responsible use and protection of the natural environment? Reflect on how you have treated the environment.

Commit yourself to simple Sundays during Lent—spending time with friends and family, simpler food, less travel, enjoying God's creation.

Pray to God asking Him for insight, wisdom and courage to do the tasks ahead as we go on the road less travelled.

Gracious Lord, as we fast from carbon, we mourn the destruction of so much of your creation. May we take up the challenge to walk the path less travelled, to restore more of your creation than we destroy. Help us to act with love and care for all that you have created.

Week 1 – Simple Living

Monday 23 February – Sunday 1 March

This week's challenge is to simplify our lives in terms of the things we own and acquire and how we dispose of them.

- A joint pastoral letter from the Bishops of the Antilles Episcopal Conference called for Christians to set their face against the tide of consumerism and to preach to the world by the simplicity of their lives. Increased consumption leads to increased emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases that contribute to global warming.
- Lent is a good time to de-clutter, live lightly and share with others in need. Identify some things to give away that others can use and find somewhere to **donate them**.
- Jamaica's environment is suffering because of garbage we produce that is not properly disposed of. When the environment is degraded then the impacts of storms and extreme events are made worse

- We can commit to reducing the amount of waste we produce (see www.carbonfastjamaica.com) for tips on waste reduction) and to be good neighbours and good stewards of the environment by not burning garbage, by packaging garbage properly and not dumping waste into gullies, rivers, the sea.

Week 2 – Food and Forests

Monday 2 March – Sunday 8 March

This week’s focus is on the importance of trees and forests and how food production can affect greenhouse gas emissions.

- About 30% of our island is forests. Forests provide valuable ecological and environmental services. For example, forests are the main source of oxygen in the atmosphere. Trees directly remove carbon dioxide and store it as wood and foliage. Trees planted near buildings reduce the demand for air conditioning, and electric power production.
- By planting a tree you can help to reduce emissions. You could plant fruit trees in particular and consider doing so in your church, community or school, during Lent or commit to planting a tree during the rainy season or observing National Tree Planting Day in October (www.forestry.gov.jm)
- A great deal of food is wasted every year and one third of municipal waste is food waste. When food waste is sent to a landfill, it degrades and generates methane gas which also causes global warming. We can avoid this by not cooking too much, eating all we cook, not buying too much food and using all we buy before it goes bad. We can also compost. You can learn how to compost using this information: <http://www.nswma.gov.jm/publicinfo.php#backyard>.
- Producing food organically through backyard farming will result in lower GHG emissions. Organic farming locks up CO₂ in the soil by relying on natural methods of increasing soil fertility. **Consider starting a backyard garden** today using organic material. Alternatively, consider **supporting local farmers during Lent** who use natural methods to produce their foods.

Week 3 – Energy and Transportation

Monday 9 March – Sunday 15 March

This week’s action is to reduce energy used for light, power and transport. Reduce your use: Reduce emissions.

- One of the ways to reduce emissions is simply to conserve on electricity. Every time you turn off or don’t use electricity, less fossil fuels need to be burnt.
- Fuel used in transportation is also one of the biggest contributors to global warming.

- There are several simple ways of saving energy, saving money and reducing emissions. For example, when an appliance is plugged in, even if it is not on, it is using electricity. **Consider plugging out** the charger when the phone is fully charged. Attach the TV and other appliances to a power strip and plug it out at night. Find other energy-saving tips and share them with friends.
- Consider using solar energy if possible, and changing your bulbs to energy saving bulbs.
- Jamaica's electricity consumption is highest between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. daily. Consider **not turning on any appliance** or as few as needed for one hour between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. on one day of this week and other weeks during Lent.
- Note also the global initiative Earth Hour - a 'Lights Off Event' observed on 28 March between 8:30 and 9:30 p.m. to raise awareness about climate change.
- Motor vehicles that are not serviced use more energy and release more emissions. They also pollute the air and contribute to the health problems of others. **Make sure your engine is serviced and your tyres properly inflated.** This will help with clean air for all. These useful tips can help the environment and your vehicle: <https://www.calljaa.com/motoring/jaa-car-care-tips/>

Week 4 – Water

Monday 16 March – Sunday 22 March

This week's action is to conserve water.

- Climate change will affect the available water for Jamaica.
- On 17 March, International Day of Forests will be observed worldwide and locally under the theme Forests| Climate| Change|. Our forests are important as they capture rainfall and cleanse and replenish our water supply.
- World Water Day is observed annually on March 22. The theme this year is 'Water and Sustainable Development'. Access by all to freshwater is among Jamaica's Vision 2030 goals. Raise awareness of World Water Day.
- There are several simple ways of conserving water. Find water-saving tips and share them with friends. For example,
- Consider taking shorter showers for Lent. Set a timer for 5 minutes and see how your normal shower length compares. Try to finish your next shower before the timer.
- Reduce or eliminate your consumption of bottled water. Boil or treat your water instead and get a re-usable bottle and fill it up.
- Turn the water off while brushing your teeth. If you brush your teeth twice a day and allow the water to run for only 2 minutes or less, you can save up to 70 gallons of water per week! If you have children, teach them to do this.

- Fix leaking taps, hoses and toilets. Global studies show that about 10% of the water used in homes is wasted because of leaks. A leak of only 1 drop per second, wastes 2,400 gallons per year!

Week 5 – Reduce, Re-use, Recycle

Monday 23 March – Palm Sunday 29 March

This week's challenge is to reduce waste.

- On 23 March, World Meteorological Day 2015 will be observed under the theme Climate Knowledge for Climate Action. Pray for those who provide climate information. Visit www.metservice.gov.jm.
- Some materials such as certain plastics and polystyrene (styrofoam) take hundreds of years to degrade and some such as styrofoam are not easily recyclable.
- There are several ways to reduce waste.
- Recycling paper by using both sides of the paper will not only save money, but also reduce the waste going to landfills.
- Consider going styrofoam free and take a container for your lunch. Use paper or glass plated meals for remaining gatherings in Lent
- If you are not already doing so, start sorting plastic items for deposit to one of the new recycling collection points around the country. Establish a central collection point in your office, church or community. Find out how to get the plastic to the recycling depots. Why not give them a call?
- How many ways can you use a plastic bag? After you bring them home from the shop, what happens to them? Think of ways to reuse 'scandal bags'. Can they be used in innovative craft? Can you use them again when next you shop? Think of three ways to reuse plastic bags and share with a friend.
- We are a throw-away society. If it stops working we throw it away and buy a new one. We are generating a lot of e-waste and it is becoming a problem for the environment. Is there something you could fix instead of throwing out? Consider doing so and helping out the earth.

Share your experience on our webpage. Go to www.carbonfastjamaica.com