



# Sustain Island Home: Standing Up for Life

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Missioner for Creation Care*

**W**e know that climate change is upon us. The world is already starting to experience its effects — from extreme storms to floods, droughts, rising seas, and refugees on the move. What we may not know is that we have the power, in our own households, to make a significant difference in combating climate change. If all Americans made better choices in five areas (how we heat and electrify our homes; how we transport ourselves; what we eat; and how we deal with waste), our national carbon emissions would plummet by 40%!

The Episcopal Church is launching a new initiative, Sustain Island Home ([www.sustainislandhome.org](http://www.sustainislandhome.org)), which

will give us tools to reduce our carbon emissions and make good choices in those five areas of daily life. It provides a “carbon tracker” to help us mark our progress and it aggregates our commitments, so that we can see how our personal life-style changes are contributing to the larger whole.

The carbon tracker was piloted in the Diocese of California and endorsed last summer by the Episcopal Church’s 79<sup>th</sup> General Convention (Resolution C008). The Diocese of Western Massachusetts is honored to be one of five dioceses – along with the Dioceses of Connecticut, Kansas, North Carolina, and Olympia — that will be early adopters of Sustain Island Home. We will lead the way in testing

and refining the process of introducing Sustain Island Home to congregations. By Earth Day (April 22), all the dioceses of the Episcopal Church will come on board.

Lent is the perfect season to begin exploring Sustain Island Home. During these 40 days, we take the first step in what Presiding Bishop Michael Curry calls the Way of Love: we turn toward Jesus. We notice the ways that we have gone astray, and we turn again toward love. In Lent we re-orient ourselves to the love of God, asking ourselves: What are the habits of thought and behavior that prevent God’s love from being fully expressed in my life? How have I — deliberately or unwittingly — been caught up in

# SUSTAINING EARTH, OUR ISLAND HOME

## A Call to Action for All Episcopalians

**223** Households  
Participating

**34** Tons CO<sub>2</sub>e  
Reduced/Year

**892** Actions  
Committed

Image courtesy of [sustainislandhome.org](http://sustainislandhome.org) ▲

the powers of greed, hatred, fear, injustice, or oppression? What practices will restore me to a whole-hearted love of God and neighbor, so that I live my life more in tune with the Holy Spirit and become a bearer of God's love?

Learning how to live a carbon-neutral life — how to ditch fossil fuels and to turn toward energy efficiency, energy conservation, and clean renewable energy — is one of the most powerful and prayerful ways we can align ourselves with the love of God and neighbor, including our other-than-human kin. At a time when unchecked climate change is unraveling the web of life, what changes will you make this Lent in order to live more simply and in harmony with the rest of Creation? Take a look at the [SustainIslandHome.org](http://SustainIslandHome.org) website and review your options. Some of the changes are easy to make; some of them ask you to stretch yourself. What is God inviting you to do, as each of us takes responsibility for sharply rein- in our use of dirty fossil fuels?

While everyone should feel free to explore the website, Sustain Island

Home is intended to be used by congregations, not only by individuals. We have formed a diocesan team that would be glad to help introduce the carbon tracker to your congregation (perhaps at a coffee hour, Forum, or special event), and to diocesan groups. To bring a member of our team to your congregation for a demonstration of the website and carbon tracker, please contact our Team Convener, the Rev. Eric Elley: Phone: (860) 394-8728 Email: [eelley@live.com](mailto:eelley@live.com)

I am proud to be part of a diocese that, in so many ways, is answering God's call to care for Creation. I know that many of you are implementing the diocesan resolution we passed last October, "Creation Care in our Congregations: Living Lightly on God's Good Earth," which asks every congregation to create a "green team" and carry out an energy audit, reporting on progress before our next diocesan convention. Thank you for getting that done.

I am grateful for the enthusiastic support and prophetic leadership of Bishop Doug Fisher in our shared effort

to protect — in the words of Eucharistic Prayer C — "this fragile Earth, our island home."

With Sustain Island Home, we now have a grace-filled opportunity to accelerate and amplify our commitment to live lightly on God's good Earth. If you visit the Episcopal Church's website for Creation Care ([www.EpiscopalChurch.org/Creation](http://www.EpiscopalChurch.org/Creation)), you will find a Care of Creation Pledge. I hope you will join me in making your Pledge, which can include making a commitment to explore Sustain Island Home and the carbon tracker.

If you knew that making a few simple changes today would bless your children and future generations for years to come, would you make those changes? Of course you would! I look forward to discovering how we can encourage each other to make the changes that will help us express more fully our love for God and neighbor, and our commitment to build a safer, healthier future. ♦

# How SustainIslandHome.org Works



## Create your profile

**It's easy to get started. Create your household profile and enter some information on your current activities so we can track your success!**



## Take sustainable actions

**Browse a list of actions that will help reduce your impact, then add them to your dashboard. We'll help with next steps, costs, and questions.**



## Work together

**When you create your account you will automatically be added to your local congregation group! Work together and help each other succeed!**

Graphic: adapted from [sustainislandhome.org](http://sustainislandhome.org)