

Suggestions for Honoring God's Creation

COMMUNITY



All the believers were one in heart and mind.

No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had.

ACTS 4:32, NIV

- Get involved in your community. Each year, AmeriCorps offers 75,000 opportunities for adults of all ages and backgrounds to serve local and national nonprofit groups through a network of partnerships. Whether you clean up a park, tend a community garden, or give a child a second chance, you'll find opportunities to serve your neighbors. For more information, visit <http://www.americorps.org>.
- Initiate a creation care group in your community so that you can encourage one another, and work toward community-wide changes.
- Start a share board at the town hall or at church— people can list what they need, and you can list what you have to lend.
- Ask the recycling center if they can set aside space for a permanent swap area. If you don't have access to clean energy options, petition the local utility.
- If you need better public transportation or bike lanes, ask the town council. Start a bike share program by soliciting and repairing unused bikes, painting them a bright color, and making them available for public use.
- Host neighborhood gatherings in your backyard on a regular basis. Don't wait for someone else to initiate; if you plan it, they will come.
- Start a community garden.
- Ask the post office if you can put out a sign-up sheet for local families to bring in a tray of holiday treats each day of December.
- Find a central gathering place and start your own community tradition: a shared produce table in late summer, a canned goods drive at Thanksgiving, handmade Valentine cards to give out in nursing homes, or a year-round board for posting free items.
- If your city or town doesn't have an official recycling program, take action to get one started. Talk to your local officials about asking Recycle Bank (<http://www.recyclebank.com>) to come to your town. This program rewards recycling efforts with points that can be redeemed at hundreds of local and national businesses. Just toss your recyclables into the bin. No sorting required. Help your community and get paid to recycle!
- Take advantage of free events. Libraries often sponsor free performances for children. Schools will allow you to attend concerts and plays if you check in at the front desk. Band concerts in the park and Veterans Day parades are a big deal to a young kid, as is the annual open house at the fire station. Sometimes the best things in life really are free.
- Plant trees. Trees can increase a home's value as much as 10 percent. If you have a \$200,000 house on a lot with several mature trees, your house could be worth \$20,000 more than the same house on a treeless lot. Each mature tree can add up to \$5,000 in value.



- Organize neighborhood-wide improvements to streetscapes (street tree plantings, container plantings, small parks, parking lot screens, and median plantings). They can add more than 25 percent to the value of a nearby home.
- Support area greenways and trash cleanups. Neighborhoods within one-quarter mile of a green corridor increase in value 20 percent. Homes located in “business improvement districts” (BIDs)—neighborhood-based organizations that provide special services like trash pickup and greening—are valued 30 percent higher than comparable homes not located in BIDs.



OUR MISSION

Blessed Earth is an educational nonprofit that inspires and equips faith communities to become better stewards of the earth. Through outreach to churches, campuses and media we build bridges that promote measurable environmental change and meaningful spiritual growth.

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