

Dear Fellow Members,

On this bright sunny and breezy morning our pup, Ringo, and I enjoyed the joyous symphony of the trees on our early morning walk, which reminded me of the celebratory report I had received from the UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST this week entitled PLANT A TREE. My last two messages addressed this 50th Earth Day effort and here's how we in the UCC contributed, and thanks to each of you who participated!

The report began: "Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad... let all the trees of the forest sing for joy."

--Psalm 96: 11-12

As many of you know Ringo and I don't live in the forest but there were plenty of trees singing here in Wayne Heights earlier and they're still singing as I write this message to you.

The report continued, "Along with the trees of the forest, the United Church of Christ has much to rejoice. Amid difficult times, our members came together across the country in an effort to plant trees of hope. In marking the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, a spirit of generosity arose within our denomination that will lead to the planting of nearly 10,000 trees! The Gospel of Matthew reminds us that "the tree is known by its fruit," and we can say that the UCC is without question a good tree producing good fruit. This good fruit will be seen in places like Kenya, Zambia, and Palestine where 493 new trees will be planted. It will also be seen in four National Forests—two of which have current wildfires, while the other two have suffered from fires in the recent past. Those National Forests include Klamath in California, Wallowa-Whitman in Oregon, Pike in Colorado, and Superior in Minnesota. A total of 8,212 trees will be planted in these national treasures! Interfaith Power & Light additionally reports that 963 trees were reported by UCC members that either planted trees on their own or donated to other organizations. Thanks to our members and the cherished values we collectively embody, hope and healing are at work in the world!

In partnership with: 3 Great Loves, Interfaith Power & Light, Global Ministries, and the Arbor Day Foundation.

3 Great Loves is our denomination wide mission initiative telling the stories of how we live out God's love through the lens of 3 Great loves: Love of Neighbor, Love of Children, and Love of Creation. For sharing the stories of how we, as a united church, live out God's love in missional, measureable, and meaningful ways, please visit www.ucc.org/3greatloves."

For a brightening of your spirit during this pandemic stay-at-home time I urge you to visit the 3 Great loves site to see the photos and read the many heartwarming stories! Today's message concludes my look at the Love of Creation with a focus on the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, so I leave you by highlighting again the importance of celebrating EARTH DAY EVERY DAY.

Therefore, here is a list of 45 tips from the Earthday.org site so you can make a difference every day of the year:

1. Turn the faucet off while brushing your teeth
2. Unplug appliances when not in use
3. Wash laundry in cold water
4. Turn off the heat dry function on your dishwasher
5. Buy eco-friendly household products
6. Invest in a bidet
7. Use cloth towels instead of paper towels
8. Stop buying bottled water
9. Turn off lights when you leave the room
10. Don't let your vehicle idle when unnecessary
11. Take a reusable cup to the coffee shop
12. Collect rainwater
13. Try reusable batteries
14. Fix leaky faucets
15. Use stairs instead of elevators
16. Ditch plastic straws
17. Calculate your carbon footprint
18. Leave the car at home
19. Give your home a "green" makeover
20. Fix something rather than throw it away
21. Unsubscribe from junk mail
22. Go paperless
23. Switch to E-books
24. Unplug at night
25. Recycle old electronics
26. Add plants to your home
27. Make your yard creature friendly
28. Start a garden
29. Shop at a Farmer's Market
30. Switch to reusable bags
31. Get to cooking
32. Go meatless
33. Compost food waste

34. Repurpose jars & containers
35. Make your own cleaning products
36. Clean dishes by hand
37. Manually wash & air-dry laundry
38. Hold a yard sale
39. Shop second-hand
40. Shop Eco-friendly clothing brands
41. Go for a hike
42. Organize a cleaning effort
43. Start a “zero waste” challenge
44. Plant a tree
45. Volunteer at an environmental organization

The website has a paragraph to explain each one if you have questions or need more information, and hopefully you are already doing many of these things. I realize, too, that some of the items may not be possible for you to do during this time or at all.

Take good care and when the opportunity arises, remember to enjoy the singing of the trees!

Bob