

# Have a green Christmas

*And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. (Luke 1:46, 51-53 NRSV)*



But perhaps, we can give some thought to what and how we give, recognizing that misuse and overuse of resources is a justice issue and Jesus was born to save all people of the world.

## **Individual action:**

- Give less (particularly ‘monetarily cheap but planet-expensive products’), give gifts of time or favours, give homemade items or buy locally, or donate to charitable organizations in lieu of gifts.
- Use wrapping that is reusable or recyclable (e.g., kraft or newspaper) and reuse your decorations.
- Finally, plan your festive meals and celebrations to include food that is produced locally or grown sustainably and so that it is not wasted after.

So let’s talk about the carbon footprint of Christmas. There is no doubt that the external celebration of Christmas continues to be very consumption oriented. Even highly packaged “Advent” calendars seem to be around in greater numbers.

It was estimated in 2017 that Canadians sent 540,000 tonnes of wrapping paper and gift bags alone to landfills, and for every kilogram of paper, 3.5 kilograms of carbon dioxide are produced.

Giving and being generous is a good and appropriate response to God’s great gift — Jesus Emmanuel, God with us.



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## **Parish action:**

- Host a discussion on making Christmas more sustainable and lead by example for parish-sponsored events.
- Use LED bulbs on the church Christmas tree.
- Promote the PWRDF World of Gifts or similar catalog.

**Resources** (links and more resources at [nb.anglican.ca/GreeningUp](http://nb.anglican.ca/GreeningUp)):

- How the holiday buying season

adds fuel to a rapidly warming planet, from The Conversation Canada ([theconversation.com/ca/](http://theconversation.com/ca/))

- A guide to a sustainable Christmas in Canada from ECO Canada ([eco.ca](http://eco.ca))
- Tips for a more sustainable Christmas from the Carbon Trust ([carbontrust.com](http://carbontrust.com))

*Cheryl Jacobs worships at Christ Church Cathedral and is trying to live greener...*