



Have you been concerned about the impact of single-use plastic on our planet?

- ◆ Nanoplastic particles contaminate soils and end up in our food.
- ◆ About 8 million tons of plastic enter the oceans every year.
- ◆ Microplastic fibers have been found in drinking water.
- ◆ Millions of animals are killed every year by entanglement or starvation due to plastic.

Join our Grace Earthcare team and the global community in declaring single-use plastic free July! Check out <https://www.plasticfreejuly.org/> to sign up and for suggestions and

recommendations for dumping the single-use plastic habit for 31 days. See the calendar below for daily suggestions.

At the end of the month, share with an Earth Care team member what worked and what didn't. **The most successful participant will get a lovely plant from the team, and all suggestions will be shared with the congregation.**

We hope you will accept the challenge and have some fun. Your Earth Care Team: Kathy Anderson, Barbara Di Giorgio, Bethallyn Black, Lavenia Black, Nancy Brixey, Jane Burkland, Mark Burnham, Pat Devine Cummings, Karen Hastings-Flegel, Marlene Hall, Meg Keeley, Julia Linde, Gail Peterson, and Charie Reid.

No Single Use Plastic Suggestions for the Month of July

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| <p>July 1 Use beeswax sheets instead of plastic wrap.</p> <p>July 2 Use paper instead of plastic bags at stores.</p> <p>July 3 Avoid purchasing food wrapped in plastic.</p> <p>July 4 Aim for a plastic-free 4th of July!
Avoid styrofoam coolers and cups.</p> <p>July 5 Bring your own cup and don't use the foam or plastic ones or the single-use plastic lids.</p> <p>July 6 Use wooden pencils and metal pens in lieu of plastic.</p> <p>July 7 Use silicon sandwich bags instead of single-use plastic.</p> <p>July 8 Don't accept water in single-use plastic bottles. Bring your own washable water bottle.</p> <p>July 9 Bring your own bamboo forks and spoons- say no to single use plastic tableware.</p> <p>July 10 Use bamboo stirrers for coffee and tea.</p> <p>July 11 Use bamboo toothbrushes instead of plastic.</p> <p>July 12 Use toothpaste powder in glass bottles instead of plastic toothpaste tubes.</p> <p>July 13 Use wooden clothespins.</p> <p>July 14 Buy tea in paper tea bags, not plastic.</p> <p>July 15 Don't buy potato chips in small, single-use non-recyclable plastic bags.</p> <p>July 16 Look for bread in paper bags instead of plastic</p> <p>July 17 If ordering pizza, ask them NOT to put that white plastic thing in the middle of the box!</p> | <p>July 18 Purchase produce at a farmer's market.</p> <p>July 19 Choose wine corked with real cork, not plastic.</p> <p>July 20 Choose plastic-free chewing gum!
https://myplasticfreelife.com/2010/01/chewing-on-plastic-yum/.</p> <p>July 21 Stop using plastic dental floss-- here are alternatives! https://myplasticfreelife.com/2017/06/searching-for-a-plastic-free-zero-waste-dental-floss/.</p> <p>July 22 Start your winter garden seeds in peat pots.</p> <p>July 23 Write the names of your seeds on wooden tags with wax pencils.</p> <p>July 24 Buy toilet paper free from plastic packaging: https://www.thelessen.com/eco-friendly-products/bathroom/toilet-paper-without-plastic-packaging/.</p> <p>July 25 Bring metal or paper straws; don't accept plastic.</p> <p>July 26 Use paper tape instead of plastic!</p> <p>July 27 Use metal thumbtacks instead of plastic push pins.</p> <p>July 28 Use paper/cotton swabs rather than plastic ones.</p> <p>July 29 Use bar shampoo instead of plastic bottles of shampoo.</p> <p>July 30 Avoid individually wrapped bars and cookies- make your own; store in glass or metal containers.</p> <p>July 31 Calculate your plastic use -https://www.omniculator.com/ecology/plastic-footprint.</p> <p>Congratulations!! This month you made a difference.</p> |
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My Faith Story

I am first generation Italian-American. If you remember the wedding scenes in “The Godfather” you will have a rough idea of my family life as a child. I grew up in the Roman Catholic faith. For a few years I went to school in a poor Catholic Parish in Chicago. There were no uniforms and little or no tuition for my sister and I. There was no doubt in my mind that I believed Christ was my Savior. I was enthralled with the Bible stories and stories about the Saints who were martyrs.

On holidays and many Sundays, the entire family would gather in the basement kitchen of the house. My mother and my aunt would prepare the meal. The kids would sit on the floor and watch a holiday movie (in black and white). Holidays were Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, New Year, Easter, Palm Sunday and any special birthday.

In 1951, everything changed. It was like the family was breaking up. My brother was drafted and went to Fort Ord for training. His letters said he was going to stay in California. My first cousin and her husband moved to Los Angeles to start a new life and a business venture.

My widowed mother and my aunt had a decision to make. Due to circumstances, they had been sharing expenses for the past seven years. Should they stay in Chicago or move to California? The deciding factor was that their respective children had moved West. A long train ride and Grand Central Station welcomed us to Los Angeles in the 50’s.

My Catholic education continued via Sunday Church and Confirmation classes. My High School years could best be described as a sanitized version of “Grease”. God was not a subject on the curriculum. In those years, He was still in the schools as a moment of Prayer. I think there were symbols of the cross or things like, “in God we trust”.

School was over. Time to face the world as an adult. Where was God? In the same place he had occupied for a few years. Did he influence my life or my decisions? Of course not! I had all the answers. I knew where I was going. Who died and made me Queen?

The years that followed were such a mix of twists and turns. Somehow, God put me with people who were smarter than me. What a concept! Occasionally, He would give me boot where most needed.

There were many friends who were Christians. Some took me to their church. People who were believers seemed to be around for so many years. My three BFFs are women strong in their faith in God

and they even attended church regularly. Two were people I’ve known for over 50 years.

God never let me get far away. He would lay a trail of bread crumbs to a new path, hoping I would wakeup and smell the roses. Finally, the bug bit. While playing a Sunday game of cards at a Rossmoor Clubhouse, Jonnie mentioned something about Bible Study.

Although an avid reader, I had never really read the Bible. It sounded interesting and - challenge accepted. I was in my 60’s at the time and still finding my way around. I was never one to join clubs, so it would take a commitment to follow through on a Bible Reading Class. After all, how hard could it be? It was only a book. Could I really have been that naive?

The study was more complex than I had imagined. There was history and art and science and all sorts of wondrous events. This would take time. Maybe months. Eight years into the studies, my summer Bible study was no longer available. The man teaching it had found a new interest for his summers.

I was at a loss. In addition to cards, Mahjong had become a new interest. On Friday, the subject of Bible study came up during a game. Marty (Landon) said her church offered Bible study once a week. Come for a visit! The following week, I went to my first meeting at Grace Presbyterian Church.

To end my little story, it is important to talk about what the years at Grace have become to me. My family tree has been severely pruned by time. My sister and I are in the Bay Area. I have a cousin in Chicago and two in L.A. Why is that important to know? My family is way bigger than three or four cousins. It is comprised of the warm, generous, loving men and women who welcome my sister and I at Grace. It is filled with memories of other Grace-filled friends who have passed on and many Christian friends over the years who never gave up on bringing me back to the fold.

You have guessed by now; I love a good movie. Allow me to ask you to recall the last scenes in “Moonstruck”. In place of the cast, imagine the Sanctuary of Grace filled with all the wonderful people I’ve met, each holding a flute glass of champagne containing one sugar cube, ready to toast“Mi Familia”!!

