

September 5, 2025

SAFE Disposal Event

On Sunday September 7, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., in Union Square, you can safely discard chemical products, medical waste, automotive products, electronics (computers, cell phones, e-readers—though not household appliances), household products (cleaners, pesticides, nail polish, paint, fluorescent bulbs, rechargeable batteries), and flammable materials (no appliances or tires). For more info about this rain-or-shine NYC Department of Sanitation event and to find out how to prepare materials for dropoff, click here.

[Open link](#)

September 12, 2025

Join Us at the Sun Day Festival

Join members of the Earth Care action group after worship on September 21 for the Sun Day Festival at the Fifteenth Street Friends Meeting House (21 Rutherford Place, between Second and Third Aves.). Sun Day is a global day of action celebrating the rise of clean energy. The NYC festival will feature family-friendly activities, entertainment, and a panel discussion with acclaimed environmentalist (and former First Church panelist) Bill McKibben. RSVP by emailing earthcare@fpcnyc.org.

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September 19, 2025

Climate Week

Live more sustainably and help the planet—you can find out more at the many Climate Week events happening in NYC (September 21-28). Join Earth Care at Sun Day (September 21). And come to First's annual yard sale—Saturday September 20, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. It's a great place to start reducing consumption and waste with the 3 Rs: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.

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September 26, 2025

Climate Week NYC

This annual celebration after ends this weekend, but Friday, Saturday, and Sunday are packed with public events and something for everyone. Just on Saturday, choices include The Central Role of Young People in the Climate Movement, Drawing in the Park in Battery Park City, Addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals Through the Power of Kindness and Belonging, and much more. Find more events on this vibrant calendar and attend to keep the planet healthy.

[Open link](#)

October 3, 2025

City of Forest Day

On October 4, First Church is taking part of this citywide day of activities to raise awareness of the importance of the New York City urban forest—and the essential role New Yorkers play in caring for it. From 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., we'll be caring for our own patch of urban forest. Stop by for part or all of the afternoon to help! All ages and ability levels welcome. For more information, contact earthcare@fpcnyc.org.

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October 10, 2025

Celebrating an Environmental Hero

On October 1, the world lost a trailblazing primatologist, humanitarian, and conservation champion. Jane Goodall died peacefully at 91 while on tour promoting life on earth. Renowned for her groundbreaking research on wild chimpanzees in Tanzania, she reshaped understanding of primate behavior and human connections to nature. Through the Jane Goodall Institute and Roots & Shoots, she inspired generations to protect the environment, leaving an enduring legacy. To learn more about how everyone can make a difference, listen to her inspiring words.

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October 17, 2025

Saving Us

During Climate Week, award-winning Christian climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe delivered a powerful keynote presentation, Climate Education in Action. She offered a hopeful, practical guide to bridging political and social divides on climate change through education. Drawing on science, faith, and personal experience, she emphasized the power of conversations rooted in shared values to inspire action, offering a path forward grounded in connection, understanding, and collective responsibility for the Earth. Learn more in her book Saving Us, or explore her free resources on YouTube and social media.

[Open link](#)

October 24, 2025

Plastic-Free Spooky Time

Enjoy a fun and eco-friendly Halloween by avoiding single-use plastics and waste. Beyond Plastics recommends that we skip cheap store-bought costumes, often worn only once before being discarded, and thrift, borrow, or swap instead. Decorate with compostable items like pumpkins, hay, corn, and homemade scarecrows. Create spooky scenes with upcycled materials and use lower impact LED lights. For treats, buy candy in bulk and use paper or cloth bags, choose plastic-free packaging, or hand out fruits, nuts, or other healthy snacks. Orange you glad to join Earth Care in celebrating sustainably?

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October 31, 2025

Celebrating Endangered Species Recovery

Considered iconic and beautiful, green sea turtles have improved globally from “Endangered” to “Least Concern” on the Red List, as announced earlier this month at the World Conservation Congress. This marks a major conservation success, but many subpopulations remain at risk due to threats like microplastics, harvest, habitat development, and climate change. As a keystone species, green sea turtles’ protection supports entire ecosystems. While progress is real, continued conservation action remains essential for lasting recovery.

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November 7, 2025

Earth Care Seminar November 9—Join Us!

On Sunday after worship, Earth Care will host Trees New York executive Taige Rambarran for an informal Q&A about the urban forest and other topics. The mission of this nearly 50-year-old organization is to plant, preserve, and protect New York City’s urban forest through education and community participation. Come for lunch and stay to learn.

November 14, 2025

Sustainable Holidays, Part 1

Thanksgiving brings family, friends, food, and cheer, but it can also lead to avoidable pollution and waste. An estimated 305 million pounds of food will be discarded in the U.S on this holiday alone. To celebrate more sustainably, coordinate meals to prevent waste and opt for portions you can finish. Swap disposable plates, cups, and cutlery for reusable or compostable versions, and be sure to recycle and compost. Buy local, in-season produce to cut food miles, and include more plant-based dishes to lower emissions. This holiday, cherish traditions while giving thanks to the planet too.

November 21, 2025

Sustainable Holidays, Part 2

Here are some more tips to make your holidays more planet-friendly. Celebrate Thanksgiving with creativity, mindfulness, and respect. Use natural materials like pinecones and dried fruit for eco-friendly decor. Honor the true history of Thanksgiving by acknowledging Native American perspectives and contributions. Store leftovers in reusable containers or recyclable foil to minimize overuse of plastic wrap and food waste. Skip the Black Friday frenzy by gifting experiences, handmade items, or secondhand treasures to reduce waste and create holidays that are thoughtful, sustainable, and full of gratitude. Check out our very own A Tartan Christmas Fair Silent Auction, Buy it Now And Crafts - (www.tartanfair.org) where all of the above can be found.

November 28, 2025

A Clean City for All

New administrations may bring change, but some programs should remain. Garbage containerization and composting in New York City have helped reduce rat sightings, benefits everyone can appreciate. Consider encouraging our newly elected leaders to maintain these efforts—and pitch in by composting and containerizing trash. This 2024 article by church member and NYU professor Eugenia (Genia) Naro-Maciel outlines the benefits of composting.

December 5, 2025

Help Our Trees!

On Wednesday December 10, Earth Care will be meeting in the morning to get First Church's street trees ready for the winter by mulching them. If you're available and would like to help, please let us know at earthcare@fpcnyc.org. Unable to join us that day but still want to help? We're always looking for new members and volunteers!

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December 12, 2025

A Win for Sharks and Rays

At the recent Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Conference of the Parties (COP20), countries approved sweeping new protections for more than 70 shark and ray species. These measures close long-standing trade gaps that have driven steep population declines. Protecting sharks and rays matters because they keep ocean ecosystems healthy, support coastal communities, and balance marine food webs. The global vote offers hope for helping these vital species recover before it is too late.

[Open link](#)

December 19, 2025

To a Green New Year

As 2026 approaches, we can all work together for a healthier planet. Simple habits, such as using less plastic, needing less new stuff, eating more plants, walking or biking, and supporting local shops, promise to make a difference. Cutting electricity use, choosing organic foods, reducing waste, reading about nature, and planting trees and native gardens all contribute to a more sustainable lifestyle. Consumer choice and voting for sustainability push change, and small steps add up to lasting impact.

[Open link](#)

December 26, 2025

Sustainable Christmas Tree Disposal

Three ways to let your tree give back to the environment—after you've removed all ornaments, lights, tinsel, stands, and plastic bags. Last year, 52,569 trees were recycled—help top that number this season!

Mulchfest: December 26-January 11; drop your tree off at designated sites all over the city including at Union Square and Washington Square parks

Mulchfest Chipping Weekend: January 10-11; bring your tree and get a bag of mulch—one nearby sites include Tompkins Square Park and Stuyvesant Town

Department of Sanitation Curbside Tree Pickup: Put out your tree or wreath for curbside composting; artificial trees go out with regular garbage.

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January 2, 2026

Christmas Plant Recycling

If you don't have the time, space, or green-enough thumb to help your plants rebloom, you can still help Mother Nature and not add to landfill. Recycle or reuse the pot and then compost the plant on your own or take it to a composting dropoff station. LES Ecology Center has more than a dozen around the city—see the list here—including at many local greenmarkets.

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January 9, 2026

Beavers as Ecosystem Partners

Once labeled nuisances for flooding ranches or blocking culverts, Utah beavers are starting to be recognized as valuable allies in restoring damaged streams. Instead of being killed, they can be carefully relocated to places where their natural dam-building stores water, rebuilds habitat, and helps landscapes withstand drought and wildfire. Experts say coexistence works best, using tools and fencing to reduce human-wildlife conflict. When that is not possible, relocation supports healthier Western ecosystems and gives beavers, natural ecosystem engineers, a second chance.

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January 18, 2026

New York City Buildings' Emissions Dropping

Gothamist recently reported that New York City's government operations have been conducted in a less-polluting, more energy-efficient manner according to a NYC Department of Administrative Services report. Much of this can be attributed to infrastructure retrofits in the past few years—among them, adding more efficient appliances and HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) systems, installing more clean

energy solutions, like solar panels, and phasing out fuel oil for heating. The result has been tangible: the air is cleaner, and New York is contributing less to climate-warming carbon emissions. Buildings account for 70% of carbon emissions in New York City, which is why such progress is crucial on the path toward a carbon-neutral New York. In the coming weeks we'll be reporting on First Church's progress—and plans—in this area.

[Open link](#)

January 25, 2026

The Church's Energy Rating Has Improved

First Church's energy rating (the report card-style letter and number grade outside the building) has improved significantly year-over-year, we learned recently. Since the Church has begun implementing more energy-efficient operations, the rating has increased from below 20 to the mid-40s. While we still have a long way to go—we moved from a low D to a high D—we're on the right track to becoming even greener and more earth-friendly. We'll be reporting more on First's Green Buildings Initiative in upcoming issues of First Matters.

February 1, 2026

Earth Care Lunch and Learn February 1

Curators Nicole Cooper and Danielle Warren will discuss *unEarthed → reRooting*, the current Art at First exhibit, which explores our evolving relationship with the planet. The participating artists responded to our environmental crisis, along the way revealing extraction's toll, uncovering suppressed stories, discovering disrupted ecologies, and reclaiming deep spiritual and biological connections. Join us at 12:30 to learn more about and view the exhibit—and eat!

February 13, 2026

Why Not Cut Down on Meat for Lent?

Wednesday is the beginning of Lent, traditionally a time for abstaining from meat. While going meatless has strong ecclesiastical ties, there are also practical benefits for your health and the planet. "From greenhouse gas emissions and deforestation to water use and pollution, meat production plays a significant role in the planet's changing climate," according to many reports including this one from Stanford University.

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February 20, 2026

Earth Care Seminar and Lunch on March 1—Join Us!

Next Sunday after worship, Earth Care will host Trees New York executive Taige Rambarran for an informal Q&A about the urban forest and other topics. The mission of this nearly 50-year-old organization is to plant, preserve, and protect New York City's urban forest through education and community participation. Come for lunch and stay to learn.

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February 27, 2026

Earth Care Lenten Devotional

The group Presbyterians for Earth Care has put together a Lenten devotional with weekly prayers that incorporate stewardship of our earth into the season of repentance and preparation. "Our essential connection to creation—demonstrated similarly by the Eucharistic elements of grain and grape—expands

across creation's widest horizon to incorporate the totality of universal, human experience: sin and righteousness; stagnation and transformation; loss and gain; darkness and light; death and life. Paradoxically, truth emerges from ashes.

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March 6, 2026

Help NYC Trees Sunday at Coffee Hour!

Overwhelmed and not sure how to give back? Here's a quick way to make an impact. Trees make up the majority of New York City's beloved green space. They cleanse the air, improve ecology, and beautify the landscape. The City Council's parks committee is hoping residents will advocate for a 1% budget allocation (up from .05%) for the Department of Parks and Recreation to ensure sufficient resources for the care, preservation and planting of NYC trees. On Sunday during coffee hour, Earth Care will host a letter-writing table with sample letters to let your council member know you feel strongly about protecting our precious urban forest. Not around Sunday? Here are some talking points, and you can find your council member's contact info here and testimony info here. Or email earthcare@fpcnyc.org, and we'll forward information. Letters must be submitted by Monday March 9 at 10:00 a.m.

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March 13, 2026

Accelerate Solar for Affordable Power (ASAP) Act

Environmental protection is in trouble federally, but state and local legislators have been stepping up. In addition to New York City's recent actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, New York state is formalizing green legislation: New York State Senate Bill S6570—the Accelerate Solar for Affordable Power (ASAP) act—is currently in committee. This act aims to reform the outdated utility interconnection process, which has bottlenecked the state's green energy progress, and it will allow utility-scale solar farms to connect to the electric grid faster. Ultimately, New York State is projected to increase its installed solar energy capacity to 20 gigawatts by 2035. This act will have downstream benefits for all New Yorkers, including New York City as energy costs and harmful pollutants from fossil fuel power sources should decrease. Give a quick thumbs-up or thumbs-down to the ASAP Act (S. 270, S. 5781A) and related bills—and also find and contact your elected officials here.

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March 20, 2026

Eco Egg-Dying

Take a break from commercial egg dye with a fun science project that's environmentally friendly. Steep onion skins, boil red cabbage leaves, strain beet water—there are lots of possibilities. Once the dye has cooled, add some white vinegar, put the eggs in to soak, and see what nature reveals. Once you're done, gather up the scraps—and eventually the egg shells—and either compost them yourself or drop them off at a neighborhood composting center.

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March 26, 2026

Eco-Palms for Palm Sunday

We joyfully sing Hosanna and wave palms to remember Jesus entering Jerusalem, but harvesting those palms can have negative environmental consequences. Since 2019, however, our congregation has purchased palms through a program called EcoPalms.org, which sources sustainably harvested palms from Mexico and Guatemala. These harvesting practices both provide income for workers and protect

natural forests. So as we raise our branches, we're helping harvesting communities. And after worship, we'll compost the leftover palms to help our garden!

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April 2, 2026

Easter Earth Care Devotional

Earlier in Lent, we looked at the Presbyterians for Earth Care Lenten devotional. The Easter entry focuses on John's telling of the story and notes that Mary Magdalene's first impression of the Risen Lord was as a gardener. The writer wonders "how would a dedicated 'Jesus gardener' till and keep the Creation? How might we?" Something to think about as we celebrate the Resurrection—and usher in Earth Month!

[Open link](#)

April 10, 2026

Earth Care Recertification

We're thrilled to report that First Church has been recertified as a PCUSA Earth Care Congregation! That means we've been working—and will continue to work—to make sure that in worship, education, facilities, and outreach, we are good stewards of the earth. This is the eighth year we've received this certification, and we're proud to have been the first church in our Presbytery to do so. Find out more about the Earth Care group here, write to us at earthcare@fpcnyc.org, and stay tuned for information about our annual Neighborhood Cleanup and Planting Flowers in the Tree Beds on Saturday May 16!

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April 17, 2026

Celebrating the Earth

In celebration of Earth Day, the Earth Care action group will have an information table at coffee hour on Sunday. You can find out about all our activities, including the Green Building Initiative and annual Neighborhood Cleanup and Tree-Bed Flower Planting, which takes place Saturday May 16. You can also learn more about our street-tree watering program and Earth Care Congregation. Join us! Want more information? Get in touch with us at earthcare@fpcnyc.org.

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April 24, 2026

Houston, do we have a problem?

During the successful and intricately complex Artemis II lunar mission, the visionary astronauts expressed wonder at our precious and fragile blue marble, viewed from so far away. Pointing to urgent action needed at home, mission specialist Christina Koch declared, "We will explore, we will build, ... But ultimately, we will always choose Earth. We will always choose each other." This Earth Month, it's time to choose a vibrant, safe, and healthy planet. The same teamwork that made space exploration possible can help safeguard this world, reminding us that even as we look outward, caring for Earth must remain our top priority.

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April 30, 2026

The Path to Carbon Neutral

First Church recently installed heat sensors throughout our buildings as part of our ongoing Green Buildings initiative. The sensors, which were funded through a NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research and Development Authority) grant, will precisely monitor energy usage. Once we have enough data, we will be able to create a three-dimensional energy map that we can use to pinpoint spots where we are using too much energy. That will help us become more energy efficient, helping to uphold our status as an EarthCare congregation and bring us closer to our—and New York City's—goal of carbon neutrality. We'll be checking back in here periodically with updates on the initiative and the path to carbon neutral.

May 10, 2026

Tackling Utility Costs

As we approach the summer, be mindful that across the US, electricity utility bills are likely to rise 8.5% on average in the next four months, according to the New York Times. The best way to reduce your energy costs is to use less electricity. And while you might not want to skip air conditioning altogether, you can improve efficiency by inspecting your air conditioners for refrigerant levels and damage that occurred over the winter. And there are other, simpler quick fixes as well. Like First Church is doing, you can add weather stripping to gaps around doors and windows. It's a surprisingly effective (and cheap) way to make your home more energy efficient and reduce costs.

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May 17, 2026

Join Us Tomorrow!

Stop by on Saturday May 16 anytime between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to help us plant the tree beds and clean up the neighborhood. All ages are welcome, just bring your desire to help the earth generally and Greenwich Village specifically. Questions? Contact us at earthcare@fpcnyc.org.

May 22, 2026

Plug-In Solar Panels

Last month, the New York State Senate passed the Solar Up Now New York (commonly known as the "SUNNY" Act), which legalizes plug-in solar panels. These compact solar systems generally cost between \$500 and \$2,000 depending on the power output—anywhere from 200W to 1200W—but the initial cost can generally be recouped via lower electric bills within two to five years. If you have an outdoor space with direct sun exposure (but not enough to support a rooftop solar panel), a plug-in solar system is a great way to access clean, renewable energy without installing hefty rooftop solar panels.

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May 29, 2026

Planetary Boundaries Summer Series, Part 1: Living Within Earth's Limits

Down to Earth will be focusing this summer on the planetary boundaries framework developed by Dr. Johan Rockström and colleagues. This describes nine environmental limits that keep our planet stable and habitable for people and ecosystems, including climate, biodiversity, water, and pollution. The framework reveals how interconnected environmental and social problems are and why protecting Earth's systems is essential for a safe, equitable, and sustainable future. When humanity pushes beyond these limits, the risks of large-scale and potentially irreversible environmental change increase, but there are feasible actions individuals can take to combat each one.

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June 5, 2026

Planetary Boundaries Summer Series, Part 2: Climate Stability

The Climate Change planetary boundary tracks greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere. When carbon dioxide, methane, and other GHGs accumulate, the Earth warms, driving stronger storms, rising seas, heat waves, droughts, and ecosystem disruption. Individuals can help by reducing fossil-fuel use (coal, oil, and natural gas) through public transit, biking, investing in energy efficiency, and using renewable electricity. These choices lower emissions and slow warming, helping keep the climate within conditions that human societies and natural systems can handle safely.

June 12, 2026

Planetary Boundaries Summer Series, Part 3: Protecting Biodiversity

The Biosphere Integrity planetary boundary measures the health and diversity of life on Earth. Species extinction and ecosystem collapse weaken pollination, food systems, soil fertility, climate regulation, and other ecosystem services. Every ecosystem depends on interconnected plants, animals, fungi, and microbes. Individuals can support biodiversity by planting native species, avoiding pesticides, and protecting habitats. Even small gardens and balconies can become refuges for pollinators and birds, helping restore ecological resilience in landscapes increasingly dominated by human development, as outlined in Doug Tallamy's Homegrown National Park.

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June 19, 2026

Planetary Boundaries Summer Series, Part 4: Conserving Natural Landscapes

The Land-System Change planetary boundary concerns the conversion of forests, wetlands, grasslands, and other natural systems into farms, roads, cities, and more. Large-scale land clearing destroys habitats, releases stored carbon, and disrupts rainfall. Agriculture, especially beef production, is a major driver of deforestation worldwide. People can reduce pressure on ecosystems by eating less beef, generating less waste, and choosing sustainable products. Protecting intact landscapes helps preserve biodiversity, stabilize climate systems, and maintain healthy water, nutrient, and soil cycles globally.

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June 26, 2026

Planetary Boundaries Summer Series, Part 5: Protecting Freshwater

The Freshwater Change planetary boundary connects to the disruption of rivers, groundwater, lakes, and soil moisture. Overuse and pollution reduce water availability for people, agriculture, and ecosystems. Climate change intensifies droughts and floods, making freshwater management even more critical. Individuals can help by conserving water through efficient appliances, shorter showers, fixing leaks, and reducing wasteful consumption. Using less water eases pressure on aquifers and rivers, helping ensure reliable supplies for communities and wildlife alike.

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July 3, 2026

Planetary Boundaries Summer Series, Part 6: Combatting Nutrient Pollution

The Biogeochemical Flows planetary boundary focuses on excess nitrogen and phosphorus released from fertilizers and waste. These nutrients wash into waterways, fueling algal blooms and oxygen-depleted "dead zones" that kill aquatic life. Industrial agriculture has dramatically accelerated these chemical flows beyond natural limits. Individuals can reduce nutrient pollution by minimizing lawn fertilizer use, composting responsibly, and supporting sustainable farming. Cutting unnecessary fertilizer demand helps restore healthier soils, rivers, lakes, and coastal ecosystems.

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July 10, 2026

Planetary Boundaries Summer Series, Part 7: Stabilizing Ocean Chemistry

The Ocean Acidification planetary boundary measures how much carbon dioxide oceans absorb from the atmosphere. As seawater becomes more acidic, corals, shellfish, and plankton struggle to build shells and skeletons, threatening marine food webs and economies. Because oceans absorb vast amounts of human emissions, acidification is closely tied to fossil-fuel use. Individuals can help by lowering their carbon footprints through cleaner transportation, energy efficiency, and renewable power. Reducing emissions protects ocean ecosystems that support fisheries, biodiversity, and global climate regulation.

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July 17, 2026

Planetary Boundaries Summer Series, Part 8: Healing the Ozone Layer

Stratospheric Ozone Depletion, the only safely recovering planetary boundary, concerns the thinning of Earth's ozone layer, which blocks harmful ultraviolet radiation from the sun, acting like Earth's sunscreen. Chemicals once common in refrigeration and aerosols damaged this atmospheric shield, increasing risks of skin cancer, crop losses, and ecosystem harm. International action through the Montreal Protocol has helped the ozone layer begin recovering, but proper chemical management remains important. Individuals can contribute by responsibly disposing of old refrigerators, air conditioners, and solvents that may still contain ozone-depleting substances.

[Open link](#)

July 24, 2026

Planetary Boundaries Summer Series, Part 9: Clearing the Air

The Atmospheric Aerosol Loading planetary boundary refers to tiny particles such as soot, smoke, and industrial pollution suspended in the atmosphere. Aerosols damage human health and can alter rainfall, monsoons, and regional climate systems. Major sources include coal burning, diesel engines, and biomass combustion. While this boundary is not yet at high risk, Individuals can help reduce aerosol pollution by supporting cleaner energy and reducing unnecessary fuel combustion. Cleaner air improves respiratory health while also reducing weather and climate disruptions.

[Open link](#)

July 31, 2026

Planetary Boundaries Summer Series, Part 10: Reducing Toxic Pollution

The Novel Entities planetary boundary addresses new and synthetic chemicals, plastics, and materials that ecosystems cannot safely process. Many persist for decades, accumulate in food webs, and contaminate water, soil, wildlife, and human bodies. Plastic pollution and industrial chemicals now reach even remote environments like the deep ocean and Mount Everest. Individuals can help by avoiding single-use plastics, choosing reusable products, and reducing reliance on harmful chemicals. Small consumer choices collectively reduce the flow of persistent pollutants into Earth's systems.

[Open link](#)

August 7, 2026

Planetary Boundaries Summer Series: Conclusion

This summer, Down to Earth has explored the planetary boundaries developed by Johan Rockström and colleagues. The framework identifies nine environmental limits that help keep Earth stable and habitable for people and ecosystems. The interconnected nature of environmental and social challenges underscores why protecting Earth's systems is critical for a safe, equitable, and sustainable future. When humanity exceeds these boundaries, the risk of large-scale and potentially irreversible environmental change heightens. To combat this, the DTEs have highlighted meaningful actions individuals and communities can take to help restore balance and live safely within our planetary boundaries.

[Open link](#)

August 14, 2026

Tadpoles Make Me Late for Dinner

Down to Earth is delighted to celebrate Barbara Davis' beautiful poetry.

My legs young and strong
pushing pedals to the pond.
In the muck that grows
multitudes in the shallows,
my arm scoops, capturing tadpoles.
My thumb rubs the white underbelly
so soft it cannot be amphibious skin.
My mom's voice reaching my ears,
so I know I am already late. My heart stuck
in the mud.

Our bodies changing;
I hope you are wishing to stay tailed
forever, while I wish not my legs away
but selfishly to grow a tail and have you
teach me how to bury myself in the edges.

August 21, 2026

When I Wake at Night

Down to Earth is delighted to celebrate Barbara Davis' beautiful poetry.

I hum that line from the Indigo Girls,
"staring at the sky through the ceiling."
I imagine the 400 million birds migrating
over my head, flying through the night.

Most of them I will never see, nor they me.
They care not about roofs or sleep,
or that nuzzled aside my body,
is a large ginger cat. He is merely

a predator of another time. They soar,
returning home, to sing a pretty song
to the tree that spent its winter covered
in snowy silence with not even a postcard.

August 28, 2026

Little Grievs

Down to Earth is delighted to celebrate Barbara Davis' beautiful poetry.

So many little griefs
tear me apart
with their sharp teeth.

How they gnaw and bite.
How they scratch and claw.
How they nibble me to death.

On these days, hope makes me sad,
like I brought possibility on myself
thinking anything could be good
when all is catastrophe.

Healing was never the end game.
I was only trying to survive,
and on best days, live.

Somewhere between apocalyptic
and toxic positivity, what can I do
but decompose?

September 4, 2026

Little Griefs

Down to Earth is delighted to celebrate Barbara Davis' beautiful poetry.

So many little griefs
tear me apart
with their sharp teeth.

How they gnaw and bite.
How they scratch and claw.
How they nibble me to death.

On these days, hope makes me sad,
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and on best days, live.

Somewhere between apocalyptic
and toxic positivity, what can I do
but decompose?

September 11, 2026

On the Morning After the Apocalypse

Down to Earth is delighted to celebrate Barbara Davis' beautiful poetry.

On the morning after the apocalypse,
everything is beautiful.

The cats cannot stop talking
about the colors in the sunrise.

The trees dance, holding branches,
not caring if they are oak or elm.

Humans are still everywhere,
but they are quiet. So quiet.
They had learned to be kind.

The flowers bloom, their colors
as vibrant as any had ever seen.
Their fragrances gentle breezes.

The fungi, always the theologians,
gathered the community to worship,
although not to preach, only to sing.

The young grass blades finally
push through the dirt, gleefully
calling out to the sky above.

The deer and squirrels,
the birds and turtles,
the dragonflies and ants,
set out picnic blankets
and lounge in the warmth.

The horse chooses not fences
but open plains to bring news
to the buffalo and the bear.

The stream runs cool, as I kneel
and take a long, deep drink,
on the morning after the apocalypse.

4/28/24

September 18, 2026

Agenda for a Sparrow Meeting

Down to Earth is delighted to celebrate Barbara Davis' beautiful poetry.

The meeting begins promptly after the woman feeding
the pigeons stops letting them land on her head and arms.
Please gather along the fence top.

1. Welcome to those migrating, passers through, returning
2. Welcome to guest finches
3. Ideas about sharing food cart scraps
4. Focus Conversation: Thoughts on "Rally on Washington Square Arch" to support reduced light pollution
5. Reminder about dogs not on leashes
6. Reminder to ignore "lawn not in use" signs
7. Ideas for shelters from spring rain before leaves come out
8. Group photo by daffadils

3/29/24

Based on actual experience in WSP.

September 25, 2026

It Began as a Prayer

Down to Earth is delighted to celebrate Barbara Davis' beautiful poetry.

I had not seen you for days. I whispered
to the pulse of your trunk, leaning on you,
my hand pressed hard against your bark,
as if I was catching my breath. You, let

me push as hard as I wanted, nonplussed.
I, holding an umbrella. You, letting rain flow
from every surface you can, outstretched
branches draining down your trunk. You,

wanting the ground around you wet. Me,
trying to stay dry. Yet, when we shared our
thirst, everything made more sense. It began
as a prayer. I ask you every morning to share

your wisdom, plant elder. We are more now.
We are playmates, lovers, birdwatchers, trees.