



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

VIRGINIA CONFERENCE

POST OFFICE BOX 5606

10330 STAPLES MILL ROAD

GLEN ALLEN, VIRGINIA 23058-5606

**Sue Hauptert-
Johnson**
RESIDENT BISHOP

TELEPHONE: 804/521-1102
FAX: 804/521-1178
EMAIL: terribiggins@vaumc.org

April 14, 2023

United Methodists can invest in the planet

"The LORD God formed the human from the topsoil of the fertile land and blew life's breath into his nostrils. The human came to life." Genesis 2:7 CEB

Virginia Conference,

How often do you talk about creation care in your spheres of influence?

How often do you analyze your own impact on the Earth and its resources?

How often do you consider the health of the planet that is being handed down to your children, grandchildren, and its future inhabitants?

If we are honest with ourselves, we are neither thinking nor talking enough about creation care. The Genesis verse above reminds us that we are in relationship with the Earth just as we were formed from it just as we are in relationship with God, the Creator, who formed us and gave us breath.

The Council of Bishops [shared a statement in November 2021](#) to share a goal of [net-zero carbon emissions](#) by 2050 as part of its Climate Crisis Response.

A big part that we all play in this goal, both individually and collectively, is talking about the climate crisis. It's about understanding God entrusted this Earth to our care; there is no question that humans should be taking our role as stewards far more seriously.

This year, [Earth Day](#) falls on Saturday, April 22, 2023 with the theme of "Invest in our Planet." My encouragement to the Virginia Conference on April 22 is by starting the work. Start researching to learn more. Start talking about creation care and climate justice. Start now. Some considerations for your church include:

1. Taking an [eco-survey](#) of your church
2. Encourage your children to be ["Climate heroes"](#)
3. Research UMC resources on creation care [at this link](#)
4. Learn more about the net-zero emissions goal [at this link](#)
5. Use the [UMC Toolkit](#) to launch Creation Care ministry
6. Learn how your church [can be more 'green'](#)

Grace and peace to you all,

Bishop Sue