



**Celebrating that Christ is all and in all by seeking, inviting, belonging,
serving and reverencing God's creation**

The “Greening” of Christmas

As we green our homes in preparation for Christmas, consider this: Americans throw away 25% more trash from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day than any other time of year. This extra waste amounts to 25 million more tons of garbage that end up in our landfills.

A great way to avoid all that trash is to make the wrapping part of the gift. Durable, reusable bags provide a wonderful way to easily package gifts. Another option is to wrap the gift in a colorful bandana, scarf, or cloth napkin—something that can be re-used by the recipient. Reusable decorative tins and baskets are also a good choice, especially for baked goods and other handmade gifts. A sprig of holly or evergreen makes a nice, fragrant bow!

A wonderful “gift” for our beautiful Earth is the decision to mindfully reduce the number of single-use plastic bags used by your family from an annual average of 1500 to just a handful of reusable bags, kept in your car, always ready to use. Plastic bags, like those given out in grocery stores, are used an average of 12 minutes but stay in the environment forever, as they don't decompose. Over time, they degrade into microplastics in our waterways and into airborne particles we breathe into our lungs.

Some of the best Christmas gifts involve no waste at all. The Episcopal Relief Fund recently listed several ways of helping others:

https://support.episcopalrelief.org/gifts/?ID=211025GPA000100&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=fy21micrositeupdate&utm_source=211025GPA000100

In addition, giving of your time is always appreciated by those who need help with household tasks, as well as the gift of experience in the form of dinners, admission tickets to special events, and trips together.

A gift of time or an experience shared is sure to be remembered and cherished, and it is wrapped in the best way possible—in love.

