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# CARBON FAST LENT 2026

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*A journey of faith,  
simplicity, and care for  
creation.*

*During Lent 2026, St. Mary's  
Church, Overton invites you to join  
us on a journey toward a  
simpler, lower carbon way of living.  
Each week offers a theme,  
reflection, and practical  
steps we can take at home to  
honour God's creation and prepare  
our hearts for Easter.  
Small changes, made in faith and  
community, can renew both our  
world and our spirit.*

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## GO MEAT FREE FOR LENT

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Alongside the daily prompts, we challenge you to go Vegetarian or Vegan for Lent. Choosing a vegetarian or vegan diet is one of the simplest ways to protect our planet. Plant-based foods use far less land, water, and energy than meat and dairy, while producing significantly fewer greenhouse gas emissions. By eating more plants, we can help reduce deforestation, cut pollution, and slow climate change, creating a healthier Earth for future generations, one meal at a time.

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## WEEK ONE: FEBRUARY 18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY

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### *Energy Awareness: "Let There Be Light (Responsibly)"*

*Scripture: John 1:5 – "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."*

*Prayer: Lord of light, help us to use the earth's energy wisely and gratefully.*

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18<sup>th</sup>. Consciously switch off lights when leaving a room.

19<sup>th</sup>. Consider switching your energy to a renewable energy supplier or tariff.

20<sup>th</sup>. Unplug devices and turn off chargers when not in use- they use electricity even when they are not charging.

21<sup>st</sup>. Lower your Thermostat by 1-2 degrees Celsius.

22<sup>nd</sup>. Take a "Tech Sabbath" one day this week. You could take a break from social media or have a completely technology free day.

23<sup>rd</sup>. Line dry laundry instead of using a dryer. If the ground is dry outside then the washing will dry.

24<sup>th</sup>. Put lids on pans when cooking- they will boil faster, and there will be less condensation in your home.

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## WEEK TWO: 25<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY- 3<sup>rd</sup> MARCH

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### *Food Choices: "Taste and See"*

*Scripture: Psalm 24:1 "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it."*

*Prayer: Creator God, bless our food and make us mindful of its source and impact.*

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25<sup>th</sup>. Identify a weekly meat free day, and share your favourite veggie recipe with a friend or family member.

26<sup>th</sup>. Choose local and seasonal produce: Try going to Wilson's greengrocers where you will find what you need.

27<sup>th</sup>. Consider growing your own food. Could you start with something simple like cress? Or plan to grow

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### TRY COMING TO CHURCH THIS LENT

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We are always happy to welcome new members to our church, and information about services can be found on our website:  
<https://overtonbenefice.org.uk/st-marys/>

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### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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Climate Clinic 08/02/26, St Mary's Church Rooms.  
Earth Hour: 28/03/26 8.30pm to 9.30pm.  
Repair Café: 07/03/26, Overton Community Centre.

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### SHOPPING SUGGESTIONS

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Wilson's Greengrocers: for plastic free, locally sourced fresh fruit and vegetables

The Village Refillery: visit Gaynor and take a container that you would have thrown away, such as a jam jar or large yoghurt pot to refill. You'd be amazed at how many things she sells- rice, pasta, flour, sugar, nuts, spices and herbs- and it's often cheaper too.

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### INTERESTING LINKS

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Calculate your own Carbon Footprint:  
<https://footprintr.me>  
<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk>  
<https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk>  
<https://greenchristian.org.uk>  
<https://climatestewards.org>  
<https://prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk>

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tomatoes in a pot this spring and summer? Or join in with the Community Kitchen Garden's efforts yourself, and you could earn some lovely fresh produce to take home.

The next work party is [insert date here].

28<sup>th</sup>. Sign up for the "Big Plastic Count"- [thebigplasticcount.com](http://thebigplasticcount.com) to get an idea of your plastic usage and how you could cut down.

- 1<sup>st</sup>. Give thanks before each meal for Creation's gifts.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup>. Reduce plastic packaging: Reuse a container and fill it with some food at The Village Refillery.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup>. Try using your Hampshire Food Waste Bin if you have not used it already; if you have, why not help someone else to use theirs, or take note of what is going into your and think about what you can reduce. If you have space you could also make a compost heap or compost bin in your garden for uncooked scraps.
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### WEEK THREE: 4<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> MARCH

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#### *Travel Lightly: "The Journey Matters"*

*Scripture: Micah 6:8 – "What does the Lord require of you but to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God."*

*Prayer: Lord, guide our journeys that we may walk humbly and tread lightly upon your earth.*

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- 4<sup>th</sup>. Today is there a journey you can make on foot instead of driving short distances.
  - 5<sup>th</sup>. Try public transport for one regular trip.
  - 6<sup>th</sup>. Drive more calmly. Aggressive driving, which includes excessive acceleration and frequent braking, wastes petrol or diesel.
  - 7<sup>th</sup>. Explore your local area for a day instead of driving far
  - 8<sup>th</sup>. Combine errands to reduce car journeys.
  - 9<sup>th</sup>. Don't idle, idling wastes fuel and pollutes the air. When you are sat at the traffic lights or outside school in Overton try turning off your engine.
  - 10<sup>th</sup>. Share rides in the car with others.
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## TAKING THE NEXT STEP

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Use re-chargable batteries instead of disposable ones.

Basingstoke Green Team will conduct a free home energy survey.  
[www.basingstoke.gov.uk/home-energy-survey](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/home-energy-survey)

Borrow Sustainable Overton's Thermal Imaging Camera to find out more about where your home is losing heat.

Have you thought about ensuring that your banking and pension are invested in ethical green funds?

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## WEEK FOUR: 11<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> MARCH

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### ***Reduce, Reuse, Repair: "Enough for Our Needs"***

*Scripture: Matthew 6:21 – "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*

*Prayer: Generous God, teach us to live with gratitude and simplicity.*

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11<sup>th</sup>. Have a "buy nothing" day this week.

12<sup>th</sup>. Declutter and donate gently used items

13<sup>th</sup>. Mend or repair something instead of replacing it. You can take it to the Repair Café if you are not sure how to repair it. It's on 07/03/26 in Overton Community Centre.

14<sup>th</sup>. Unsubscribe from all your unwanted email advertising. This may reduce how much you are tempted to buy, but also storing less data will reduce your carbon footprint.

15<sup>th</sup>. Before you buy something for your next DIY project consider borrowing or sharing items with a neighbour.

16<sup>th</sup>. Taking inspiration from the reusable handtowels at church, are there any swaps you can make? Such as using reusable wipes instead of disposable ones.

17<sup>th</sup>. Develop a "thrifting" habit and avoid fast fashion. Look in the charity shop or try the Vinted App

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## WEEK FIVE: 18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> MARCH

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### ***Water & Waste: "Living Water"***

*Scripture: John 7:38 – "Whoever believes in me, streams of living water will flow from within them."*

*Prayer: God of life, help us to value and protect your gift of water.*

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18<sup>th</sup>. Take shorter showers (maximum 4 minutes).

19<sup>th</sup>. Fix dripping taps: you can get a leaky loo strip from the Basingstoke and Deane green team, or from water companies, to work out if your flush is leaking.

20<sup>th</sup>. Use water more conservatively: collect rainwater for plants using a water-butt or just a bucket; and stick a jug under the tap when you are waiting for water to run hot and use this to water your plants.

21<sup>st</sup>. Use Eco-Friendly cleaning products or consider making your own from recipes such as those of Nancy Birtwhistle. You can buy what you need at The Village Refillery, where you can also get some advice.

22<sup>nd</sup>. Take a reusable coffee cup or waterbottle out with you today instead of buying disposable options.

23<sup>rd</sup>. Pick up litter in your street or when you see it out on a dog walk.

24<sup>th</sup>. Only boil as much water as your need in a kettle.

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## WEEK SIX: 25<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> MARCH

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### ***Community & Creation: "All Things New"***

*Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:17 – "If anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation."*

*Prayer: Lord, renew us and all creation through your love.*

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25<sup>th</sup>. Plant a seed, flower or tree.

26<sup>th</sup>. Join or start a church or community eco-group, such as St Mary's Church Eco Committee or Sustainable Overton. Find us on facebook or on the website.

27<sup>th</sup>. Ask Basingstoke and Deane Green Team to come and survey your garden, they can advise you on how to nurture a garden that encourages nature and helps to capture carbon to tackle climate change. You can find out how to do this at:

<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/garden-survey>

28<sup>th</sup>. Take part in Earth Hour this evening.

29<sup>th</sup>. Take some time out today to spend some mindful time in nature.

30<sup>th</sup>. Find out about an environmental charity that means something to you, and consider starting a direct debit.

31<sup>st</sup>. Commit to volunteering at the next community or church environmental event.

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### ***Closing Reflection***

*May this Lent draw us closer to the Creator, deepen our gratitude for the gifts of the earth, and inspire us to live gently and joyfully within God's creation.*