

# BLESSED EARTH

*Serving God, Saving the Planet*

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## Good Steward Workshops yielding a harvest

Friends,

One of the best parts of our work is receiving letters from people around the country, sharing their creation care journey. Last spring, we began offering a Good Steward Workshop. During the workshop, each person creates a Sustainable Lifestyle Covenant, listing practical things they pledge to do today, this week, this month, and this year to help care for God's creation. We send accountability emails periodically, to check in on how they are doing reaching those goals and to encourage each other. The stories we get back are inspiring -- they keep our well filled!

### *A few testimonies from our Good Steward Workshops:*

"I have been decluttering and donating, as well as reading Scripture that emphasizes our responsibility to care for God's Earth. I bought all the organic I could at the grocery store, used my cloth bags, and didn't purchase things I didn't need. Plus, we bought a reel mower, and Brian has mowed the grass twice with it. He enjoys it, and the kids love that he can hear them knocking on the windows when he's cutting the grass! I bought my first tomato seeds, and hope to start a small garden soon. And, I'm going to the local farmers market this Saturday!  
**Christina from Mobile, Alabama**

"With the help of the Lord, we would say we are doing well. Right now we are celebrating



*Emma Sleeth with her father, Dr. Matthew Sleeth, in their earth-friendly (unmowed) yard.*

our 15th anniversary, and it's been so cool to see us as couple recycling items in our room. We just place them in a separate bag and wait until we see a bin for the plastics or paper. I thank the Lord that Steve is also doing this with me."

**Karoline from Costa Rica**

I am in the process of clearing a spot for the compost bins. I actually had to do some major work tearing down a fenced in area. The church has made a \$5,000 commitment to plant trees -- we are not sure yet whether we will do it through Floresta or through some

missionary folks we support in Burkina Faso who are doing some reforestation work. We're waiting for the containers promised by my guys who work for the water authority to start the church recycling project.

**John**

With every blessing,

**Dr. Matthew Sleeth**  
Executive Director



### Creation Care Scripture

"Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker, but those who are kind to the needy honor him."

**Proverbs 14:31**

### Green Tip of the Month

Try making some old-fashioned Sun Tea! Children are fascinated by the sun's power to change things and love to get involved in this process. Not only will you have saved energy by not boiling your water on the stove, but your whole family can get involved and get outdoors!





# Letters from you: Back to the basics

By **Jim Williamson**  
Contributing Writer

What a difference a month makes...

A little over a month ago I attended a Creation Care conference hosted by Flourish and CrossPoint Church. I really didn't know what to expect. Not familiar with any of the speakers, I hoped I would not get sucked into a left-wing, liberal faction. What I found, however, was a group engaged in the honest exploration and discovery of where we are globally, nationally and locally as it relates to the issue of caring and being good stewards of God's creation - the Earth and all its wonders.

The discussion of the obvious effects of our pollution of the earth was especially convicting. It also became clear that the lifestyle I maintain has both ripples and cost to others.

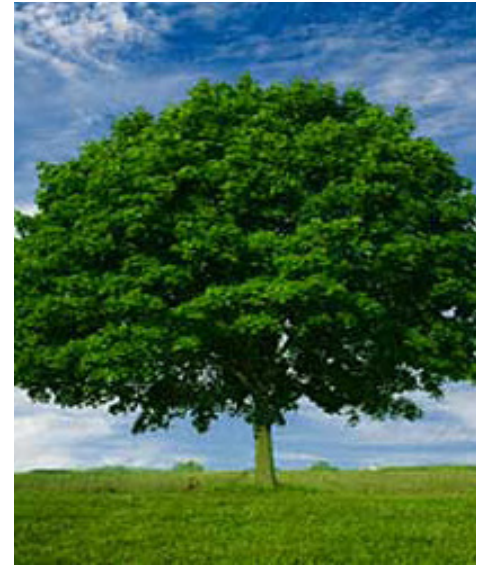
It seems a lot of what I enjoy and focus on comes at a cost to others who have a small voice or little opportunity to overcome. It was never intentional on my part; I just hadn't slowed down in a long time to consider that every choice I make impacts the world. It sounds simple but, literally, when I use paper towels, that paper comes from trees. Usually the cheapest trees available are trees from the rain forests of Central and South America. The forests are, therefore,

producing less oxygen. This directly causes less rain in regions of Africa that are already having water problems. Then, the competition for water in these areas becomes taxed. Families in Africa are forced to source water from farther locations to bring back to their homes, and children are often given the task of collecting that water. Their very safety is at risk to being captured for exploitation in armies or human trafficking. The ripples of our actions are bigger and farther reaching than we often think.

Another helpful part of the conference was a practical workshop led by Nancy Sleeth. Nancy challenged us to take a complete inventory of the consumption in our own lives.

Some of the changes I made immediately upon my return home were easy and are already producing results. Here are just a few:

- I joined a community garden in my neighborhood. I now have a time set aside to do a short presentation about creation care in our children's program on Sunday.
- It's been simple taking "Navy" showers and moderating my water use. For example, whatever the dogs do not drink in their bowls goes out to water plants.
- I've had coffee with my Pastor to go over what I learned in the conference and dis-



cussed what we might do as a church. We talked about starting a community garden on unused church property.

- I haven't upgraded my TV for the digital transition -- and I may not!

Evangelism seems to be most effective when the local church is truly reaching into and loving its community. After attending the Flourish Conference, I definitely believe creation care is one of the most powerful ways to reach into today's community and change lives for Christ.

## Prayer & Praise

### Praises

- Our intern for the month of June produced a large number of short videos featuring creation care reflections and practical tips. We will periodically release a video on our YouTube page.
- We are now working on a 12-film creation care series with Dot&Cross (producers of the NOOMA films featuring Rob Bell). They are geniuses at what they do, and we are grateful for the opportunity to provide a resource like this to the Church.
- *The 700 Club* interviews filmed last month will begin airing July 6. See our Media Digest for more information.

### Prayer Requests

- Continued discernment of God's next steps for our ministry.
- Vigilance and wisdom for being good stewards of new opportunities we are receiving as a ministry.
- A restful vacation this July as we take some time to recharge from an extremely busy year.

## MEDIA & SPEAKING EVENTS



### Follow us in July with these upcoming press appearances:

July 2, 2009 Lexington Herald-Leader. Nancy Sleeth interviews with Sharon Thompson to share eco-friendly cooking, gardening, and meal ideas that save time, money, and God's green earth.

July 6, 2009 700 Club, "Inside Green." Dr. Matthew and Nancy Sleeth walk you through their home while teaching everyday practical tips for serving God and saving the planet. Check your local cable listings for air times.

*If you would like to schedule an interview with Dr. Matthew or Nancy Sleeth, please e-mail us to share your inquiry at [press@blessedearth.org](mailto:press@blessedearth.org).*

Resource of the Month

# SUMMER GREEN GUIDE

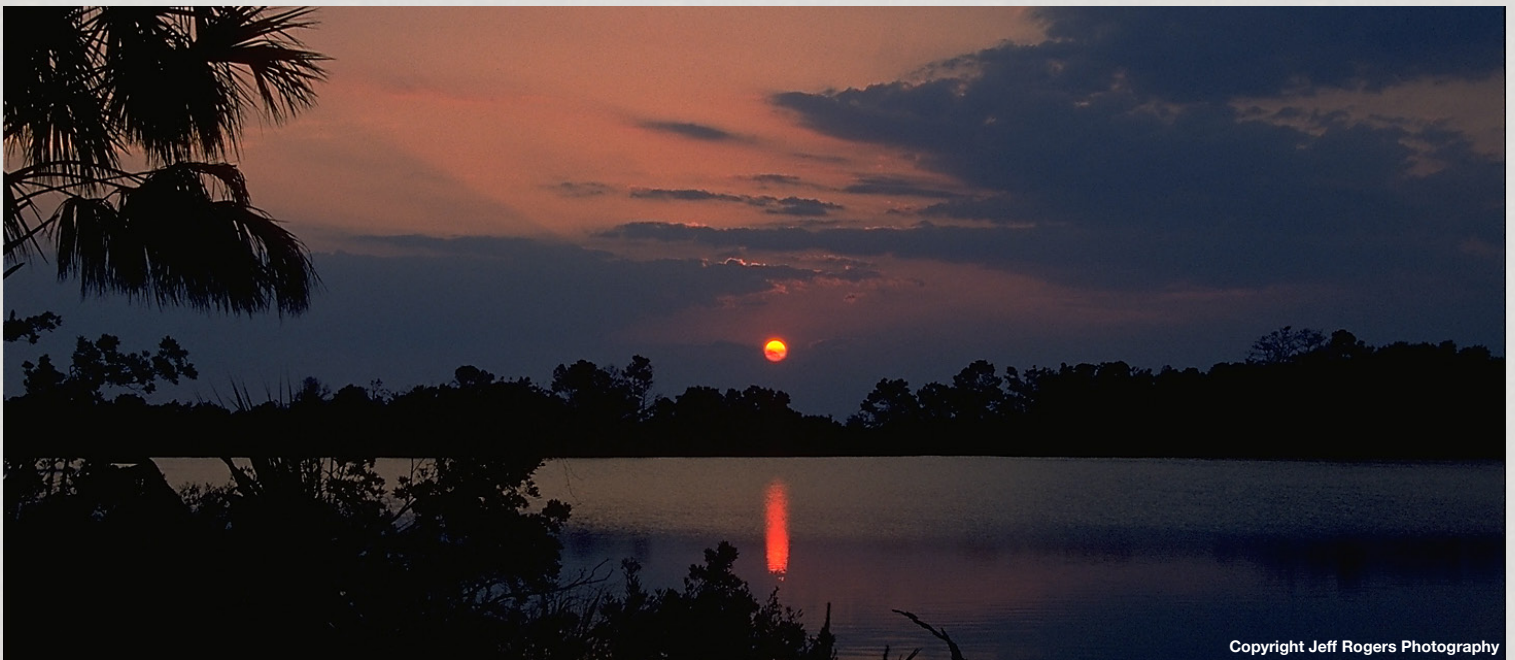
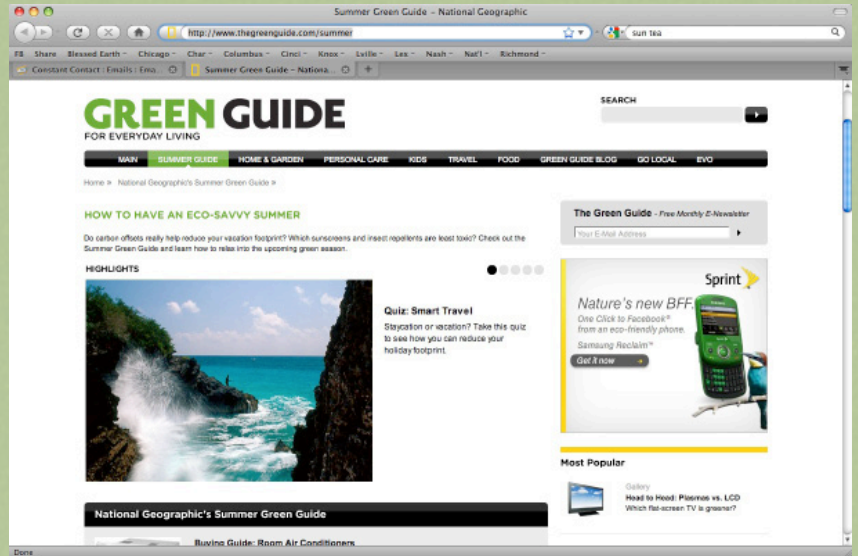


National Geographic Online has always been innovative with providing practical strategies for taking better care of all creation -- from plants and animals to the air and water.

For the summer, the official Summer Green Guide on the National Geographic Web site provides answers to the most commonplace questions. You can even take quizzes to find out how you, your family and your friends can reduce your impact on the environment while participating in summer activities.

In addition to unique information and tips, the Summer Green Guide even offers step-by-step practical guides for summer projects that will save money *and* the earth. Check it out today!

[www.thegreenguide.com/summer](http://www.thegreenguide.com/summer)



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## OUR MISSION

*Blessed Earth is an educational nonprofit that inspires and equips faith communities to become better stewards of the earth. Through outreach to churches, campuses and media we build bridges that promote measurable environmental change and meaningful spiritual growth.*

Web: [www.BLESSEDEARTH.org](http://www.BLESSEDEARTH.org)  
E-mail: [contact@blessedearth.org](mailto:contact@blessedearth.org)  
Twitter: [www.twitter.com/blessedearth](http://www.twitter.com/blessedearth)

Blessed Earth  
PO Box 227  
Wilmore, KY 40390

