



## **Tips for a more Eco-friendly Christmas**

With approximately \$75 billion spent on Christmas gifts, 1.9 billion cards sent and 20.8 million Christmas trees cut in the U.S. alone, the impact of this one holiday is immense.

The most important thing we can do to create a green Christmas is to make it one we can enjoy by connecting to the meaning of Christmas...full of magic, wonder, connection with others and with a Jesus-focused celebration.

Some things to ponder:

1. Less is more. Forgo an excess of “stuff” that will end up in next summer’s yard sale. Purchase gifts that have a purpose and meaning.
2. Choose sustainable materials....cotton, silk, wool and natural fibers.
3. Give experiential gifts such as:
  - Tickets to movies, plays, sporting events, etc.
  - Share your talent and give Cooking, craft, yoga or music lessons.
  - Dinner out or prepare dinner for 2 or 4.
  - A massage, pedicure or spa experience.
  - Online paper or magazine subscription.
4. The gift of charity i.e: Homeless shelters, Foodshare, environmental organizations such as the Sierra Club or Nature Conservancy, organizations that help impoverished women start small businesses such as Women to Women.
5. Have a gift exchange with baked goods, craft items, art work etc.
6. Avoid gift wrap and opt for reusable gift bags or buy fabric wrap (Website Etsy has several options).
- 7.If your strings of Christmas lights are older than 10 years it will be more efficient to replace them with newer LED lights. They can save up to 90% of power costs.
8. Choose meaningful decorations and ornaments made from wood, metal or cloth. Decorate with pinecones, boughs, berries, twigs and bark.
9. In lieu of Christmas cards, send a group email to friends stating that a donation to (name a charity) will be made to honor their friendship or send e-cards.
10. Look to resale shops for gifts and decorations.

It can be difficult to start a new tradition, but it just may give others the permission to follow your lead and join the effort to be more sustainable, less “frenzied”and focus on the real reason we are celebrating.

Wishing each of you the JOY that comes freely given from the manger.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS!**  
**Your Environmental Action Committee**