

# THE UP CYCLE

Messiah University's Office of Sustainability  
Official Newsletter

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## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### ***Library Bingo***

Feb 7 | Murray Library

### ***Valentines Card Making***

Feb 13 | Sustainability Office



## Holiday Environmental Impact

By: Danielle Leppert, Waste Coordinator



The holiday season is a time to come together and celebrate, but it is also a time where our environmental footprint begins to grow. While in the midst of celebrating, it is easy to overlook the impact of our choices. Fortunately, small adjustments can help us have a more sustainable holiday.

Start by swapping traditional holiday lights for energy-efficient LEDs, or get creative with natural decorations like pinecones, wreaths, and dried orange slices. Or you can try decorating your tree by making popcorn strings like we did at our Energy Pop Up event in December.

For gift giving, consider practical items like high-quality kitchen supplies, cleaning products, or experiences rather than things that might go unused. Shopping at thrift -->

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-stores is also a great way to find unique, secondhand gifts that can be given a second life. When wrapping gifts, choose eco-friendly options like fabric or newspaper, and make it a habit to reuse boxes and bags each year. In December, Messiah Earthkeepers had a Sustainable Gift Wrap event where they made their own wrapping paper out of recycled materials.

Food waste is another big issue during the holidays. Plan meals with seasonal and locally sourced ingredients, and find ways to reuse food scraps creatively, like making soup from uneaten vegetables. Composting food waste is also a sustainable choice. Be sure to bring reusable containers to family gatherings to take leftovers home and reduce waste.

Transportation is a significant part of holiday travel. To minimize emissions, consider carpooling or using public transportation. If flying, book direct flights rather than connecting flights. As we welcome the new year, try setting sustainability goals for yourself. This can be reducing single-use plastics, starting a compost pile, or switching to a renewable energy source.

*By making mindful choices this holiday season, we can embrace the spirit of giving without compromising the health of our planet. Happy Holidays!*



Earthkeepers Club - Sustainable Gift Wrap Event





# Winter Around the World

By: Melody Pha, Communications Coordinator

How can it be 40 or 50 degrees one winter day, then drop to 19 the next? Is this what climate change looks like? It's not just Central Pennsylvania experiencing this kind of wild weather swing. Winters around the globe are changing, and it's all because of climate change. Temperatures are rising, which means warmer winters—and that's happening pretty much everywhere. The big culprit? Carbon pollution from burning fossil fuels like coal, oil, and natural gas. These emissions are warming the planet and driving these unpredictable shifts in climate.



Winter in South Korea

In fact, winters are warming faster than any other season in many parts of the world. In the U.S., winters have warmed by nearly 3°F on average over the last 50 years, according to Climate Central. And in northern states like Alaska, Minnesota, Vermont, and Wisconsin, the temperature increase is even more dramatic, with winter warming averaging over 5°F.



Winter in Paris

Along with warmer temperatures, we're also seeing more extreme weather events. Major winter storms, lake-effect snow, and heavy snowfalls are becoming more frequent as a result of climate change. Why? Because a warmer planet evaporates more water into the atmosphere. More moisture means heavier precipitation—whether it's in the form of intense snowstorms or heavy rainfall.

As winters continue to warm, we can expect more unpredictable weather and extreme events to become the new normal. While the changes may seem subtle at first, the long-term effects of climate change are already reshaping our seasons. To slow this trend and stabilize our climate, it's crucial to reduce carbon emissions and shift toward more sustainable energy sources. The weather's already giving us a wake-up call—now it's up to each of us to make choices that can help turn things around before it's too late.



# Campus Race to Zero!

By: Danielle Leppert, Waste Coordinator

Campus Race to Zero Waste is an annual 8-week competition from February to March that all college campuses have the opportunity to compete in. This competition focuses on encouraging universities to reduce waste and be mindful of their environmental impact. We track the campus' trash and recycling tonnage and how much compost we accumulate every week and compare our week-to-week data to see how much waste we accumulate.

Each week we will host different sustainability related events to help encourage sustainable actions on campus. Here are this year's events:

- **February 7 Library Bingo** at Murray Library (7pm - 8pm)
- **February 14 Compost & Coffee** at the ECC lobby (2pm - 3:30pm)
- **February 13 Valentine's Day Card Making** at the Office of Sustainability (ECC 159) (1pm-3pm)
- **February 19 Plant Giveaway** at the ECC lobby (4pm-5pm)
- **February 21 & 22 Lost Films: The Lorax** at Parmer Cinema (Friday - 8 pm; Saturday - 5 pm & 8 pm)
- **February 28** 6pm-8pm at the Foreman Restoration House: The Lorax Movie Night
- **March 5** 3pm-5pm at the Fishbowl: Kitchen Swap
- **March 20** 3pm-5pm at the Fishbowl: Book Swap
- **March 28** 3pm-5pm at the Fishbowl: Swap N' Mend
- **March 31:** Scavenger Hunt due

*Keep an eye out for Campus Race to Zero Waste related events on our Instagram @messiah.sustainability. We hope to see you at some of these events!*



Swap N' Mend 2024



Plant Giveaway 2024

