

Made in the Image of God

Guide and Toolkit for People of Faith Healthy Spa Workshop

So God created humankind in his image, In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. *Genesis 1:27*

We are made in the image of God, and we reflect God's creativity. Yet, enhancing personal appearance and wearing adornments is present in almost all human cultures. We often strive to make ourselves beautiful as a daily ritual. Our personal grooming should reflect the care in which God made us and should not pose dangers to our body's health. In all of our personal care activities, we should remember that our lives are centered on God and we should strive to preserve our and others' health and well-being.

Physically, the largest health risk associated with personal appearance comes from toxic chemicals in everyday personal care items, categorized as "cosmetics," such as shampoo, lipstick, moisturizing lotion, baby wipes, and shaving cream. These products are virtually unregulated in the United States. Many of them contain known or suspected neurotoxins, respiratory irritants, and skin irritants. They may also contain chemicals that cause reproductive harm or affect when and how much of a hormone is released. Other chemicals have been linked to birth defects, obesity, cancer, or other permanent harm. Many of them persist in the environment or bioaccumulate up the food chain, spreading through the ecosystems upon which life on Earth depends.

There are things we can do today to ensure that we can care for our bodies and Creation. This *Healthy Spa Workshop Guide and Toolkit for People of Faith* will help congregations understand and mitigate these risks. We invite you and your

faith community to host a Healthy Spa workshop to learn more about environmental health and toxics in personal care products and to take steps to remove them from our everyday lives. A workshop gathering is an opportunity to come together to witness and respond to a threat to God's Earth and God's people. You can also use this guidebook and toolkit for use at home to create your own personal care products that are toxic free.

The first section of this guide describes how to host a Healthy Spa event in your church. The second section of this guide describes actions that people of faith can take to reduce toxic chemicals in their personal care products. In the back of the guide and toolkit you will find some helpful recipes to use during a workshop or at home.



HEALTHY SPA DAY

A Healthy Spa Day event or workshop can be for as little as an hour or as long as a half day. During the Healthy Spa event, attendees to the workshop will learn more about toxics found in personal care products. They will also, in small groups, make their own safe alternative spa “products” such as toners, bubble bath, and facial scrubs.

HOW TO HOST A HEALTHY SPA DAY

Step 1 Pick a date and time for your event

Step 2 Set up agenda/format for your Healthy Spa Day

- See the sample agenda on pages 4 and 5 of this guide. Feel free to use this agenda or modify it to meet the parameters of your time, space, and group.
- Touch base with your church and church leadership team about availability and interest.
- Think about when your friends and neighbors are most available.
- Decide if you want to ask a friend or neighbor to be a co-host with you.
- Find a suitable location and make sure it is available for the date and time you want.
- Let NCC Eco-Justice staff know your plans so that we can help support the event. Contact the NCC Eco-Justice Program at 202-544-2350 or info@ncecojustice.org.

Step 3 Invite your guests

- Make a guest list. You should invite three times as many people as you want to show up. Think first of inviting those in your church community, and other churches in your area. Then, consider inviting neighbors, coworkers, and friends from clubs, organizations or the community around your church—this is a great opportunity for witness and outreach. You’ll quickly have a long list.
- Make the announcement at your church—whether from the pulpit, in the bulletin, on an announcement screen, or in the church newsletter.

- Send an email or snail-mail invitation to your guest list four to eight weeks before the party date. Evite.com is another option. It is an online invitation program where you can design the invitation and email it to your contacts.
- If you are working with a youth group, consider using Facebook or sending a viral text message.

Step 4 Follow-up invitation

- Call your guests to invite them personally—nothing works better than personal communication. Do this within one week of sending out the invitations. Ask a friend, family member, or co-host to help with the calls.
- Keep an RSVP list going, and update it as people reply. Also keep track of friends who can’t make it to the Healthy Spa Day event but are interested in learning more.
- A personal email reminder to your invitees is also a great touch and will turn more people out to your event.



- Ask each person to bring one or two personal care products that they use daily to the spa workshop, so that they can learn more about the contents and possible risks.

Step 5 Prep the Spa Day Event

- Determine which spa “products” you want to make during the workshop (e.g., sugar scrub, lemon toner, etc.) We recommend making no more than three “products” during a one-hour workshop session. Note that the location of the workshop and whether or not it has a sink, stove, or oven will determine what spa “products” you can easily make with a group.
- Purchase or obtain the proper containers and supplies to make the products during the workshop. A listing of supplies needed accompanies each recipe (located in the Appendix)
- Decide if you want to serve snacks or beverages.
- In addition to food or beverages and supplies to make personal care products, you’ll need:
 - Pens (for sign-in sheet)
 - sign up sheet
 - NCC cosmetics fliers (available online at www.ncccojustice.org under resources)
- Enlist a friend or two to help you out the night of the event. Roles include:
 - Working the sign-in table to make sure everyone signs in
 - Setting up the meeting room
 - Leading the opening and/or closing prayer
 - Serving refreshments

Step 6 Time to gather

- Arrive early
- Set up the room to meet the needs of your gathering. Depending upon which “products” you are going to have the group make will determine how you set up the chairs and tables in the room. We recommend that you set up the room so that you can easily divide a larger group into small groups of six or less. Make sure that you set up the supplies to make the spa “products” so that they are easily accessible to the attendees when they make their spa “products.”
- Make sure to include a welcome table with resources for further study, and/or copies of the spa “recipes.”
- Welcome your guests and thank them for coming.
- Make sure everyone signs in with legible and complete contact information.



- Follow your agenda (included in this kit).
- Open in prayer or song.
- Have fun!

Step 7 Healthy Spa Day Event follow-up

- Thank your guests for coming with an email, handwritten note, or phone call.
- Thank your helpers and volunteers.
- Help us record how successful your event was by mailing, emailing, or faxing us information about your event.

Materials Checklist:

- Copies of *Made in the Image of God* cosmetics flier from NCC Eco-Justice Program office available on the NCC resources page at www.ncccojustice.org/resources/.
- If you are doing the “Health and Beauty Collage” you will need old magazines, scissors, construction paper, and tape.
- Ingredients and implements for making the spa “products.” We have chosen fairly simple recipes in order to keep this manageable. Please check the supplies of the recipes you choose and get these items together well in advance. You will also need containers for each spa “product.” Containers can be found in discount stores, co-op stores, grocery stores, craft stores, and beauty supply stores.
- Examples of personal care items.

AGENDA *(1.5-2 hour event)*

Welcome and Opening Prayer (20 minutes)

Toxic Cosmetics: Beauty and the Beastly (25 Mins)

Hands On Beauty (40 Mins)

Going Forth and Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

I. WELCOME *(20 minutes)*

Ask your guests to sign in, prepare themselves a name tag, and make themselves at home. Start on time by welcoming everyone and inviting people to take a seat or stand in a circle for prayer. We have a few suggested prayers, but you may wish to do one of your own, or sing a song. You can also use a prayer out of the *Mindful Living* education and worship resource available online under Environmental Health Resources at www.ncecojustice.org/resources/.

Prayer (or use another prayer)

Creator God, we are awed by the beauty of your Creation, and the complexity of the systems that support Life. We are concerned because we hear increasingly about threats to the Eden that you have called 'Very Good.' Toxic chemicals in our air, water, land, toys, furniture, and cosmetics threaten our health and the health of others who are vulnerable. In our church and in our families are those who are struggling with cancer, type II diabetes, learning disorders, and other challenges. We pray for their well being and for the well being of all Creation. Be with us as we study and learn. Amen.

Next, introduce yourself. Thank everyone for coming. Review the purpose of coming together. A sample introduction might be:

“Welcome! My name is Susan. Thank you for coming out to learn more about toxic chemicals in personal care products. We are going to learn more about these toxic chemicals. We’ll consider why this is a matter of faith. Finally, we will learn what we can do to protect God’s Earth and the health of our families and make our own toxic free personal care products.”

Next, review the agenda with the group. For example, “We will start with introductions. After that, we will do an overview of chemicals of concern and check out products we ourselves use. We will then make some safe cosmetic alternatives.”

Take time to do a round of introductions *(10-15 minutes)*. Below are some possible ideas for introductions:

What called you to join this conversation?

Gather everybody in a circle. Ask each person to introduce him or herself (name, congregation, town) and describe in a sentence one reason he or she came to this event.

Healthy choices

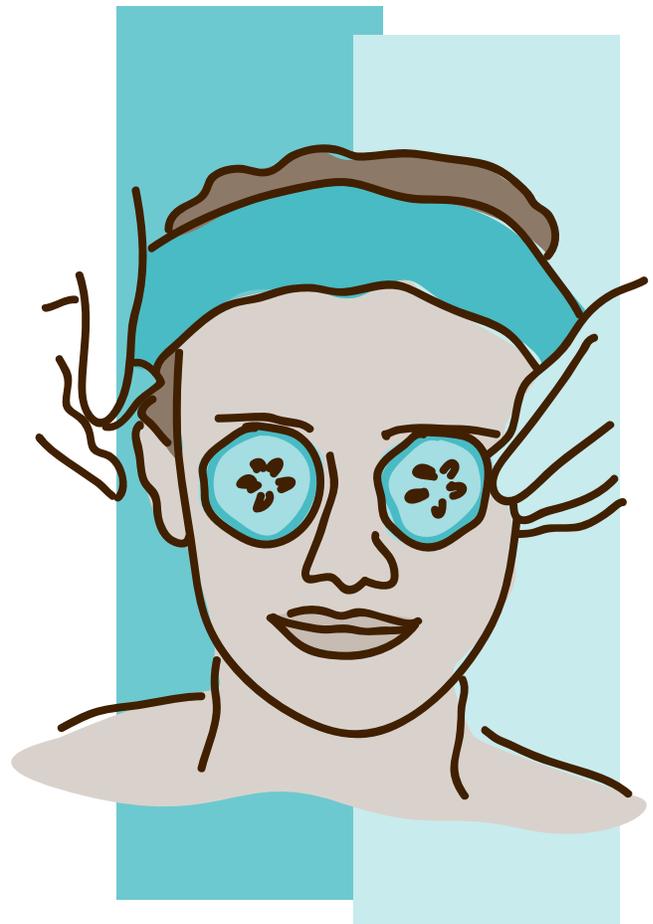
Gather everybody in a circle. Ask each person to introduce him or herself (name, congregation, town) and describe one healthy choice she or he has made in the last year.

Health and Beauty Quick Collage

Materials: Old magazines, scissors (optional), and tape (optional).

Ahead of time, gather a few magazines.

Ask everyone to look through the magazines, tearing out images that speak to the themes of “beauty,” “health,” and the “image of God.” After five minutes of looking for images, ask people to share their names, where they are from, and one image that they selected and why.



II. TOXIC COSMETICS: BEAUTY AND THE BEASTLY (25 Mins)

Have someone read:

Every day we use personal care products such as soap, lotion, shampoo, deodorant, shaving products, cologne, or makeup. These products often contain toxic chemicals. Cosmetics—a category that includes all personal care products including those used by men and on babies—are virtually unregulated by the federal government. Products we use every day such as shampoo, baby wipes, deodorant, shaving cream, lotions and make-up can contain chemicals linked to cancer, birth defects, reproductive problems, and learning disabilities.

There are over 12,500 ingredients in cosmetics. The European Union has banned more than 1,100 harmful chemicals from cosmetic products. In the U.S., only ten chemicals are restricted. The industry argues that there is nothing to worry about because personal care products contain just small amounts of toxic chemicals. However, on an average day, women use twelve products and men use six. Each of these products can contain multiple ingredients or chemical additives. Scientific research shows that even tiny doses of chemicals can disrupt hormones, interfere with development, and cause disease, especially when exposures occur during critical times of growth such as pregnancy, infancy, and puberty.

Our skin is highly permeable. Chemicals pass through it, especially tiny nanoparticles used in sunscreens and other cosmetics. Toxics in cosmetics are also inhaled (like toluene in nail polish), or ingested (like lead in lipstick). Some chemicals are used to increase penetration of a product into the skin and blood stream. One safe cosmetics advocate uses the guideline that we shouldn't use any cosmetic that we can't safely eat.

Small Groups

Prepare to break up into small groups of four or five. Be sure that each group has a copy of the *Made in the Image of God* cosmetics flier. Instruct them that they will be using the “Less is More” section on the back of the flier to determine the safety of the products’ listed ingredients they have brought with them or that you have supplied. They may also want to look for parabens, sodium laureth sulfate, coal tar, and “fragrance,” which often contain toxic ingredients. After they have examined the ingredients of their products, assemble them back into the large group and have each small group describe what they found in their products. If your group has internet access, look up a few of the products on the online Skin Deep database (www.cosmeticsdatabase.com). This database tests and rates cosmetics based

on their safety from one to ten. Invite each group to share how they felt about learning this information.

III. HANDS ON BEAUTY! (40 Mins)

Read: *The Bible mentions cosmetics such as oil, nard, frankincense, myrrh, milk, and honey. In Exodus 30:22-30 Moses is instructed to make an anointing oil of liquid myrrh, cinnamon, cane, cassia, and olive oil, which he used to anoint the holy objects as well as Aaron and his sons, the priests. Following in these same footsteps, it is easy to make safe, non-toxic personal care products in your own kitchen.*

Tell the group that they will now make their own alternative toxic-free spa “products.” Describe the products that they will make and post the recipes for each product (note: this is best done ahead of time) on butcher paper, a chalk board, or flip chart paper so that the group can easily read each recipe. Tell the group that these natural cosmetics are much less expensive than most commercial preparations. Instruct the group where you have placed the ingredients and supplies (measuring cups, mixing bowls, etc.). Divide the group into small groups and have them follow the posted recipes to make their own spa “products.”

For a list of possible spa “products,” see the recipe section in the back of this guidebook and toolkit. You may wish to have multiple supplies of each ingredient to speed up the process of making each “product,” especially if you have a large group.

IV. GOING FORTH AND CLOSING PRAYER

Gather the group together. Remind them that they can find more information and get involved with efforts to make cosmetics safer through the National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Program (www.ncccecojustice.org/health/cosmetics.php). Thank them for coming, for sharing, and for taking action to help the world better reflect God’s love and care for Creation, including humanity.

Prayer (or you may use another prayer):

Loving Creator, we are grateful to have been made in your image. We recognize that true beauty can always be seen in one who has dedicated their life to you. The magnificence of your Creation inspires us to tread lightly upon the Earth. The love of your son, Jesus Christ, is a healing balm to us as he loves us in all of our imperfections. We are grateful for this opportunity to come together, and bear witness to your love for the Earth and your people. Amen.

RECIPES

Making your own cosmetics is not only a fun and rewarding experience, it is also a great way to save money and contribute to an Earth-friendly environment. Homemade cosmetics can be placed in recycled containers, they do not contain harmful chemicals or preservatives, which are often used in commercial products, and you can develop them to suit your own skin care needs. Homemade cosmetics also make great gifts for Christmas and other special occasions.

A note of caution: there are no preservatives in these recipes so take precautions to avoid contamination by bacteria or spoilage.



HONEY TONIC

• Apply 1-2 drops of honey onto a wet palm and massage onto face. Do not rinse. Pat dry. Honey is not only good to eat, it was prized in the Biblical days and even used as an offering to the Lord. Today we know that honey is a healthy choice for sweetening, and many skin care experts believe it can nourish the skin and plump up fine lines. The secret is to use only 1-2 drops, on a very wet palm, and pat delicately onto your skin.

EYE MAKEUP REMOVER

- 1 tbsp castor oil
- 1 tbsp light olive oil
- 2 tsp. Canola oil

Blend the above ingredients together. Apply with tissue or cottonball to remove makeup around the eyes.

PINE TONER

- 2 cup fresh pine needles
- 1 cup distilled water
- 1/2 cup witch hazel

Place pine needles in small saucepan with distilled water. Bring water to boil. Allow water to cool completely then remove pine needles. Pine needles can be thrown away. Add witch hazel and stir well. Pour into a clean bottle or other container. Apply to skin with a cotton ball. Store in a cool dark place.

LEMON TONER

- 1/2 cup lemon juice
- 1 cup distilled water
- 2/3 cup witch hazel

Blend the above ingredients together. Apply with tissue or cottonball.



LIP BALM

Note: This recipe needs to be made on a stove and may not be suitable for all workshop locations.

- 3 tsp. grated unbleached beeswax
- 5 tsp. carrier oil (sunflower, castor, or jojoba)
- 6 or 7 drops essential oil (such as lime, lemon, tangerine, grapefruit, or peppermint)
- 1 tsp. honey, for flavor

Melt the beeswax and carrier oil together in the top of a double boiler, stirring to combine. Remove from heat; add honey and essential oil. Mix thoroughly so the honey does not clump. To add a little color, stir in a tiny dab of non-toxic lipstick. Pour the mixture into containers; let sit 20 minutes before covering or moving. For glossier lip balm, use 2 teaspoons wax and 8 teaspoons carrier oil.

CHOCOLATE FACIAL MASK

This decadent mask is actually an excellent moisturizer—it leaves your skin baby soft. Recommended for normal skin. Note that this product should be used shortly after making and kept refrigerated since it contains ingredients that spoil.

- 1/3 cup cocoa
- 3 tbsp. heavy cream
- 2 tsp. cottage cheese
- 1/4 cup honey
- 3 tsp. oatmeal powder

Mix all ingredients together and smooth onto face. Relax for ten 10 minutes, then wash off with warm water.



AVOCADO CARROT CREAM MASK

This mask combines avocados, which are rich in Vitamin E, with carrots, which are high in beta-carotene and antioxidants, and cream, which is high in calcium and protein. These ingredients will rebuild skin collagen, improve tone and texture, and fade age spots. Note that this product should be used shortly after making and kept refrigerated since it contains ingredients that spoil.

- 1 avocado, mashed
- 1 carrot, cooked and mashed
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1 egg, beaten
- 3 tablespoons honey

Combine all ingredients in a bowl until smooth. Spread gently over your face and neck, and leave in place 10-15 minutes. Rinse with cool water and follow with your favorite toner.

STRAWBERRY HAND AND FOOT EXFOLIANT

Note that this product should be used shortly after making and kept refrigerated since it contains ingredients that spoil.

- 8-10 strawberries
- 2 tablespoons apricot oil (you may substitute olive oil)
- 1 teaspoon of coarse salt, such as kosher salt, or sea salt

Mix together all ingredients, massage into hands and feet, rinse, and pat dry. Strawberries contain a natural fruit acid, which aids in exfoliation.

ORANGE GINGER WARMING FOOT SCRUB

This warming foot scrub is great for the winter, and leaves your feet feeling soft and relaxed.

- 1/4 cup sugar (white or brown)
- 1/4 cup sweet almond oil
- 6 drops orange essential oil
- 2 drops ginger essential oil
- 2 teaspoons cayenne pepper

In a plastic bowl, mix together the sugar and oil. Add the essential oil and stir. Add the cayenne pepper last and stir well to mix. To use, sit comfortably in the tub or over a pan of water and/or a large towel to catch the sugar scrub as it is applied. Scoop up a handful of the scrub for each foot and massage vigorously yet with care over heels, ankles, toes, arches and the balls of your feet. Be sure to scrub any rough areas especially well. (Don't forget to rinse the tub well—you don't want to take bath in cayenne pepper!)

COFFEE BODY SCRUB

- 2 cups of coarsely ground coffee
- 1/2 cup raw sugar or sea salt
- 2-3 T massage oil

Mix all ingredients together. Take a hot shower to moisten your skin and open your pores. Using wide, circular motions, rub the coffee exfoliant onto your skin with strong, even pressure. Shower off, pat skin dry, and apply a thin layer of your favorite body lotion. For a milder scrub, substitute white sugar for the raw sugar or sea salt.

GRAPEFRUIT SUGAR SCRUB

- 1-1/2 cups white table sugar
- 8 drops grapefruit essential oil
- 2 drops red food coloring (optional)
- 1/4 cup jojoba oil
- 1/4 cup liquid castile soap

Place sugar into a large bowl and stir to break up any clumps. Add the essential oil. Add one or two drops of red food coloring if you'd like it pink. Mix very well to make sure the color is evenly dispersed. Add the jojoba oil and castile soap next, a little at a time, stirring after each addition. Mix well and the pour into clean container. To use, stand in the tub or shower and massage the sugar scrub onto your skin from head to toe. Rinse.

SOFTENING BODY OIL

Before taking a shower, brush your skin gently. This exfoliating will stimulate blood circulation and aid in skin absorption. For best absorption, apply the body oil while your skin is still moist. This combination is ideal for skin that has been exposed to too much sun or for extra dry areas, such as heels and elbows.

- 1 cup (237 ml) sweet almond oil
- 1/2 cup (118 ml) jojoba or hazelnut oil (or combination of the two)
- 2 tablespoons (30 ml) apricot kernel oil
- Essential oil (optional)

Combine the oils in a sealed bottle and gently turn it several times to mix. Apply as needed.

CHOCOLATE BUBBLE BATH

Note: This recipe needs to be made on a stove and may not be suitable for all workshop locations. This product should be used shortly after making and kept refrigerated since it contains ingredients that spoil.

- 1 cup of unscented bubble bath
- 1/3 cup of unsweetened soy milk
- 3 oz. of grated or powdered dark chocolate

Heat the soy milk and add in the grated or powdered chocolate. Stir well until melted and blended, but do not boil. Allow to cool. Mix well again just before adding to your bath.

Or, try this:

- 1 cup of fragrance free bubble bath
- 1/2 cup of dried milk powder or soy milk
- 3 oz. of powdered unsweetened chocolate

Mix the powdered milk and chocolate well, until blended. Stir into bubble bath until well mixed. Add to your bath in the amount desired.

Other Resources for Cosmetic Recipes and Safe Cosmetics

Visit www.ncecojustice.org/health/cosmetics.php for additional recipes and ideas. There are also many books with recipes for natural, healthy, homemade beauty products that are widely available, including:

- *Natural Beauty at Home: More Than 250 Easy to Use Recipes for Body, Bath, and Hair*, by Janice Cox
- *Natural Beauty From The Garden: More Than 200 Do-It-Yourself Beauty Recipes & Garden Ideas*, by Janice Cox
- *Natural Beauty Basics: Create Your Own Cosmetics and Body Care Products*, by Dories Byers
- *Herbal Body Book: The Herbal Way to Natural Beauty & Health for Men & Women*, by Jeanne Rose
- *Not Just a Pretty Face: The Ugly Side of the Beauty Industry*, by Stacy Malkan
- *Beauty Secrets of the Bible: The Ancient Arts of Beauty & Fragrance*, by Ginger Garret
- *How It All Vegan* by Tanya Barnard and Sarah Kramer

Appendix

Timeline to host a Healthy Spa Workshop Event

Get started eight to ten weeks before the event.

Set a date and time for your workshop: _____, _____, 200____ a.m./p.m. to _____ a.m./p.m.

Set a goal for attendance. Invite 3 times as many people as you want to come:

_____ x 3 = _____
(# of people you want to come) (# of people you should invite)

Set a date and time for your gathering: _____, _____, 200____ a.m./p.m. to _____ a.m./p.m.

Build your guest list. Think about:

- Church Members Family
- Other faith communities/groups
- Friends
- Neighbors Coworkers/Colleague
- Members of local clubs and organizations

Four to Eight weeks before the event

- Mail/Email the invitation to your guest list.
- Announce the event in church
- Check with your church. See what the building's availability is, and touch base with the pastor and relevant committees to get them all involved

Three weeks before the event

- Call your guests. Nothing works better than a personal invitation. When you call, emphasize why this is important to you and why you want them to come. You can start building your RSVP list by asking, "Can I count on you to come?"

Two weeks or 10 days before the event

- Send a reminder email to your entire guest list.
- Gather all the materials and supplies needed to make the spa "products."

Three days before the event

- Call all your guests to confirm their attendance and get them excited about the party. This can be just a quick reminder, or a message on their voicemail.
- Make sure you've got all the food you want to serve (snacks, beverages, etc.) and a place to serve it.
- Gather together any handouts you need (prayers, flyers, discussion questions).
- Make sure your helpers know their assignments and are ready.

Day of the event

- Set up a welcome table with nametags, sign-in sheets, and a few pens.
- Arrive early so that you have plenty of time to set up, greet guests that may arrive early, and attend to anything you may have forgotten in the process.
- Arrange the room to your liking.
- Set up food/refreshment table
- Welcome your guests!
- Follow the agenda

After the event

Thank your guests for coming with an email, handwritten note, or phone call.

Tips for success

1. **Personally invite your guests.** Email is a great tool for getting the word out, but a phone-call or in-person invitation really makes a difference.
2. **Leave yourself plenty of time.** Make sure you have plenty of time for planning, promoting, and putting together the details of your gathering.
3. **Engage.** Make sure you take the time to engage your guests in the issue—bring them into discussion, and use the time for fellowship.
4. **Worship!** Remember, you are there to celebrate God and God's Creation.

NEXT STEPS

Ideas for Action

Here are a few suggestions for actions you can take beyond making your own safe personal care products:

- Have your congregation hold a worship service on environmental health issues. For resources on hosting a worship service on environmental health, visit www.nccecojustice.org and download the resource *Mindful Living* under the Environmental Health resources section at www.nccecojustice.org/resources/.
- Host a viewing of *Caring for Children, Caring for Creation* a DVD on children's environmental health. For tips on hosting the DVD viewing, download the *Mindful Living* Gathering Guide (for a copy of the DVD or the guidebook, visit the environmental health resources section at www.nccecojustice.org/resources/).
- Write your state and federal representatives to educate them about toxic chemicals in personal care products. For sample letters, visit www.nccecojustice.org/health/cosmetics.php.
- Was one of your personal care products particularly toxic? Do you have a favorite that could be improved? Write to the company that makes the product, asking them to clean up their act so that you can continue to be a customer. Alternatively, take a collection of products from one company and send them back with a letter. Ask them to join the Compact for Safe Cosmetics, a pledge to remove chemicals linked to adverse health impacts from personal care products and replace them with safe alternatives. Visit www.nccecojustice.org/health/cosmetics.php for sample letters to companies or to learn more about particular corporate campaigns.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local paper. Explain how, as a person of faith, you are concerned about the lack of regulation in cosmetics in the United States. Keep it short and personal for the greatest likelihood of being published. Visit www.nccecojustice.org/health/cosmetics.php for sample letters to the editor.
- Write to your local retailer. Tell them of your concerns. Encourage them to stock safe cosmetics and phase out toxic ones. They might even develop standards for the safety of their products, as Whole Foods Markets has done.