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# Prayer guide for the care of creation

## June 2012



“He has shown you, O man, what is good.  
And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”  
(Micah 6.8)

“Be on you guard against all kinds of greed: a man’s life does not consist in  
the abundance of his possessions.”  
(Luke 12.15)

“The majority in some nations seem to care less about the moral integrity  
of their leaders than about the state of the economy. We cannot have a  
sound society unless we have a sufficient number of men and women who  
cannot be bought . . .

Christ can produce such people and wants to produce them even if he has  
to allure them into the desert to achieve this.”  
(Selwyn Hughes)

“A man there was, they called him mad.  
The more he gave, the more he had.”

(John Bunyan)



### Friday 1st June

While summer ice in the Arctic shrinks to its lowest level for 8,000 years, corporations and governments see this as a business opportunity rather than a call for action on climate change. Oil companies compete to see that their oil rigs are the ones to exploit the opening gaps between the icebergs. Shipping companies look with hopeful anticipation at the new transport routes opening up in the North. Industrial fleets are going further north than ever before into Arctic waters hitherto protected from exploitation by the sea ice. Politicians talk openly about the benefits of the melting ice and the opportunities it brings for industrial development in the Arctic. The Greeks called this “hubris”. When will humanity learn its lessons?

### Saturday 2nd June

The Arctic ice functions as a giant cooling system, reflecting sunlight back into space. As the ice melts, more heat is absorbed by the dark ocean, warming both the water and the air above it, and thus the entire planet. Oil stored below the Arctic is estimated to meet current demand for just three years.

### Sunday 3rd June

Father, we praise and bless you for the wonderful example of our Queen over her 60-year reign. We thank you for the stability she has given our nation and its leaders over these turbulent years. Grant her many more years of selfless service to our country. May she enjoy those years, secure of her legacy and of the lasting example she will leave to those who follow her.

### Monday 4th June

When, thirty years ago, oil and minerals were found under the Antarctic ice, and governments and corporations were preparing to prospect for them, Greenpeace joined other organisations in lobbying for Antarctica to be declared a World Park, protected from exploitation for 50 years. That period expires in 2041. Greenpeace is preparing a campaign to protect the Arctic in a similar way and will need massive support if it to achieve this aim.

### Tuesday 5th June

Ecuador, Nicaragua, Venezuela and several West Indian states have followed Bolivia in passing “laws of

### Sources:

CIWEM Business Briefing  
Greenpeace Connect  
Resurgence  
[www.edie.net](http://www.edie.net)

### Additional Prayers

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by [email](mailto:prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk) (free), please email [prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk](mailto:prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk)

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Picture on front cover: Dicentra spectabilis taken by Philip Webb

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## Friday 29th June

For generations, farmers have been free to save their own seed and use it to improve or exchange their stock. Without seed sovereignty, there is no food sovereignty. Yet, increasingly, legislation is forcing farmers to pay royalties to seed companies such as Monsanto. In France, 600 varieties, representing 99% of seeds commonly grown by farmers, are now protected by certificate holders, i.e. seed companies, on the grounds that “a fee is paid to sustain funding of research and efforts to improve genetic resources.”

In India, a new Seed Act would require farmers to register their own seeds and take licences to grow them. But the organisation Seed Satyagraha has handed hundreds of petitions to the prime minister to stop this becoming law, despite pressure on the Government from Monsanto to gain intellectual property rights on all genetic sources.

## Saturday 30th June

The Barracks Lane Community Garden in London has transformed a derelict garage site into a thriving green oasis and community hub with over 4,000 visits a year. It has decided

to instal a compost toilet for several reasons:

- A link to the sewerage system was not affordable
- For a low-cost, low-energy project, utility bills were not wanted
- It was desired to demonstrate the latest sustainable technology
- It was desired to increase the fertility of the soil.

The compost toilet finally installed by NatSol is of a “twin chamber” model. It takes 1-2 years for human waste to be transformed into safe, odourless compost. It can then be spread around fruit bushes and trees (though not vegetables). Some systems add friendly bacteria to speed up the process, or heating it to ensure sterilisation. The Findhorn Community grows flowers on their waterborne system, while neighbouring farmer Craig Dickson has created a “flat pack” compost toilet kit to use at events and festivals. For more details, visit: [www.thenatureeffect.co.uk](http://www.thenatureeffect.co.uk) or [www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk](http://www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk)

Mother Earth” to protect their lands from over-exploitation. Confusion of “dominion” with “domination” in the book of Genesis has too often led Christians to exploit the earth for profit, eliminating any reverence for God’s creation. Tony Highton observes that God’s covenant, made after the Flood, was not just with Noah and his descendants, but “with every creature that is with you” (Gen.9.8-17). It is also worth noting that God’s command to be fruitful and multiply was first given to the birds and all marine life. (Gen. 1.22)

Our use of the oceans as a dumping-ground for our waste therefore has no justification.

## Wednesday 6th June

The 2012 WWF Living Planet report finds that the global marine fish catch rose fivefold from 1950 to 2005, while we continue to consume each year 1.5 times the amount that the planet produces. Population Matters comments: “Many resources are being grossly over-exploited. We can only preserve our environment and create the headroom for the poorest of the world to improve their living standards if we improve resource efficiency, rein in excessive consumption AND take steps to slow and reverse the growth

in human numbers. As we approach Rio+20 and consider the emerging discussion on Sustainable Development Goals, we should be including strategies for population reduction in our discussions.”

## Thursday 7th June

Livestock produces high levels of greenhouse gases and between 1980 and 2010 the global population of farm animals increased by 23% to 4.3 billion according to the Worldwatch Institute. The UN FAO estimates that 80% of this growth came from concentrated animal feed operations (CAFOs), i.e. industrial production systems which produce high levels of

waste, use huge amounts of water and land, contribute to the spread of human and animal diseases and play a role in biodiversity loss. CAFOs are increasingly prevalent in developing regions such as East and South-East Asia. The report stresses that, to prevent serious human and environmental costs, policymakers need to strengthen production regulations around the world.

## Friday 8th June

A report from Compassion in World Farming finds that 25% of all global

freshwater use is for animal production. Grain-based animal feeds use 43 times more irrigation water per kilo of feed than is needed for grass-based feeds, since extensive farm animals can graze and forage, so requiring less water. CWF comments: “The sheer scale of current intensive farming is outstripping our resources. We must reverse the current drive to industrialise and expand meat production, for the sake of our water environment as well as for our animals . . . Supporting grass-based extensive farming over grain-fed intensive farming will benefit both our water environment and our animals.”

#### **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June**

A Save the Children report forecasts that 500 million children could grow up physically and mentally stunted over the next 15 years because they do not have enough to eat. Population Matters comments: “This report indicates the human cost of the current lack of family planning provision. Resource prices including food are rising, driven by growing human numbers and global industrialisation. This will increasingly put pressure on the world’s poorest. Governments and the international community should put reproductive

health at the heart of their development and sustainability programmes. According to the Guttmacher Institute, there are currently 215 million women with an unmet need for family planning.”

#### **Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June**

Lord Jesus, our teacher and example, lift and enlighten the fallen minds of mankind. Help us to assess rightly the benefits of technology in relation to its inseparable risks. Let us not plan on earth what we would not wish to admit in heaven. Let not neglect, or the blindness of the busy, threaten the destruction of this beautiful world. This we ask in your Name.  
(Ted Burge – adapted)

#### **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> June**

Key findings from the Living Planet Report 2012 are:

- It takes 18 months for the earth to absorb the CO2 produced by human activity over the previous 12 months
- 2.7 billion people live in areas that experience water shortage for at least one month each year
- The UK has risen four places in the global ranking of ecological footprint per person

economic activity through investment in a ‘global green deal’, then Rio might – just might – avoid the usual outcomes of international summity: either a major bustup or a ‘damp squib’.

#### **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> June**

A report from the Environmental Audit Committee on the green economy calls on Government to show leadership rather than viewing environmental measures as a barrier to economic growth. It cites the recent DEFRA review of the EU Habitats Regulations, demonstrating that, far from blocking economic development, protection of important wildlife and habitats contributes a significant amount to the economy in valuable goods and services including tourism. WWF commented: “The call is now coming from across parties, from inside government and from business to stop the Treasury blocking green growth and get on with policies that our economic competitors have been doing for years. . . . Leading businesses are crying out for measures such as mandatory carbon reporting and policy certainty for the development of the renewable energy sector.” WWF supported EAC’s call to quantify the environmental limits most affected by

economic activity in the UK and to build these into a green economic strategy, led by the Treasury.

#### **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> June**

A report from the EAC on Sustainable Food failed to define what exactly is a sustainable diet. WWF comments: “Around the world we’re seeing early warning signs of a global food crisis, what the Government’s Chief Scientific Adviser calls ‘a perfect storm’ of food shortages, scarce water and insufficient energy resources. How we produce and consume food is at the heart of key environmental and social challenges that we face today. A food system in which 1.5 billion people are overweight or obese while another billion people suffer from malnutrition and hunger, and at least 30% of all food grown across the globe is wasted, that system is clearly broken. . . . There is a need to look at how livestock is produced and consumed, and to ensure that it is truly sustainable. In addition, Government should promote the production of temperate fruit and vegetables that are suited to our climate, and invest much more in the UK horticultural industry.”

Wonderbag which, based on the principle of the haybox, can finish cooking food that has been brought to the boil on a conventional stove. Rice is boiled for 2 minutes on a stove and cooked for one hour in the

Wonderbag, using no extra fuel. The fully-insulated Wonderbag is made of recycled polystyrene and fabric and can reduce fuel use by 30%, so alleviating poverty and exposure to toxic smoke from wood-burning stoves. The process earns credits under the UN Clean Development Mechanism, so keeping the price affordable. "Eco-cooking with Wonderbags makes revolutionary change simple" says Sarah. "Our goal is to save 8 million tonnes of carbon emissions globally within five years." [www.nb-wonderbag.com](http://www.nb-wonderbag.com)

### **Sunday 24th June**

Almighty God, who alone can govern the hearts of frail and sinful humans, send your Holy Spirit among the leaders of the world now gathered at Rio, that he may reveal the path that we must all now take if we are to fulfil your purposes on earth. Remove all prejudice, special pleading and vested interests from those gathered at Rio, that they may truly seek your will and find the courage to make the radical

decisions that the world now needs. This we beg in the Name of your dear Son, Jesus Christ.

### **Monday 25th June**

The annual gathering of Operation Noah takes place today in Wesley Memorial Church Hall, New Inn Hall Street, Oxford OX1 2DH, beginning at 10.30. Speakers include Bishop David Atkinson, Operation Noah ambassador Paul Bodenham and comedian Paul Karenza. For more details, email: [admin@operationnoah.org](mailto:admin@operationnoah.org)

### **Tuesday 26th June**

The Rio+20 Summit has been set two objectives:

1. To boost the green economy
2. To bolster the institutions needed for sustainable development.

Nick Robins, a trustee of Resurgence, comments: "If we don't change the way we perceive the metabolism of that most important of human institutions – the global market – then our hopes for ecological renewal will be dashed. But if we bring together the imperative of financial repair with this great opportunity to revive

- Declines in biodiversity are highest in low income countries, demonstrating how the poorest and most vulnerable nations are suffering the impacts of the lifestyles of wealthier countries.

### **Tuesday 12th June**

The Rio+20 Earth Summit meets from June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Tearfund has organised a series of meetings around the country this week headed "Whose Earth?" to examine Christian responses to environmental issues including

- The Bible basis for our response
- The science behind the issues
- The part we can all play in calling on decision-makers to eradicate poverty in a way that protects the environment.

Today's meeting is at Highfield Church, Southampton, beginning at 7.30 pm. Speakers include Ruth Valerio and Andy Lester, both from A Rocha, and Paul Cook from Tearfund. For details of all meetings, visit: [www.tearfund.org/rio](http://www.tearfund.org/rio)

### **Wednesday 13th June**

The Chartered Institution of Water & Environmental Management (CIWEM) believes that the world won't wait for humanity to respond to the deepening

environmental crisis. Its director, Nick Reeves, writes: "One thing we can be sure of is that life on Earth will continue in some form or other, with or without humanity. We have the opportunity to adapt our value systems and behaviour in order to prolong our stay on this planet, but we are running out of time to do so. . . . The big NGOs and others must rediscover the radicalism of their youth and engage more concertedly with the conjoined issues that make them uneasy, such as population and consumption growth."

### **Thursday 14th June**

The Worldwatch Institute's latest Vital Signs report gives a record \$380 billion as the monetary loss resulting from natural catastrophes in 2011, surpassing the previous record of \$220 billion set in 2005. The deadliest weather disasters are droughts followed by famines, particularly in Africa. From October 2010 to September 2011, a severe drought in the Horn of Africa caused widespread famine and migrations, particularly in Somalia and Kenya. Around 80% of the livestock of Somalia's nomadic population died, some 13 million people required humanitarian aid and around 50,000 people lost their lives.

But because human agency played a large role in this catastrophe, it was not included in the analysis of 2011 natural disasters.

### **Friday 15<sup>th</sup> June**

At the Camp David Summit, G8 and African leaders launched a New Alliance for Food Security & Nutrition – a shared commitment to achieve sustainable and inclusive agricultural and raise 50 million people out of poverty over the next 10 years.

Professor Pinstrup-Anderson of Cornell University, a 2001 World Food Prize laureate, commented: “Inflow of foreign capital is critically important, but the ongoing land grabbing by multinational corporations and foreign countries in many parts of Africa is pushing poor, small landholders off their properties with disastrous food security consequences. International rules are urgently needed to protect the rural poor and their food security in areas subject to land grabbing.”

### **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June**

The Alternative Rio+20 Conference meets today and tomorrow in central London to explore the radical solutions needed to tackle the ecological crisis and to provide a forum for people who

cannot make it to Rio. Speakers include John McDonnell MP, Jean Lambert MEP, Stephen Tindale, Oliver Tickell, Mayer Hillman and John Lanchberry (RSPB). Tony Emerson from Christian Ecology Link will be leading a workshop on “Do values need to change before we get effective climate action?” For more information, visit:

[www.campaigncc.org/altsummit](http://www.campaigncc.org/altsummit)

### **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> June**

Father, we sometimes feel overwhelmed by the scale and complication of the environmental problems we face. Help us to see how we may respond in our daily lives to the challenges that face us, and teach us to see that where we lead, others may follow.

### **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June**

Mackie's of Scotland, with help from Edinburgh Napier University, has devised a 25 kw. anaerobic digestion plant to use the slurry from its 400-strong herd of cows to produce methane biogas, which can then be used to generate electricity. Its three 800 kw. wind turbines already supply 70% of its energy needs, allowing 62% of this output to be exported to

the grid. Mackie's business is to produce luxury ice creams, but its ambition is to become the greenest company in Britain.

### **Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June**

Earthtest Energy, Yorkshire's foremost green energy company, has achieved an A+ Energy Performance Certificate for its Old Corn Mill at Bullhouse Mill, where its use of geothermal energy by means of ground source heat pumps is offering savings of up to 85% on heating bills, with high levels of insulation without compromising ventilation. Geothermal energy schemes are eligible for the Government's Renewable Heat Incentive, which gives financial incentives year after year.

### **Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> June**

One of this year's finalists for the Ashden Awards is Parity Projects, which helps householders and social housing providers around London to gear up for the forthcoming Green Deal. The team visits properties to take measurements etc. and uses the data to project costs and savings for different retrofitting options. It has advised over 700 households and 17 social housing providers, covering

240,000 homes as well as training over 500 people in retrofit.

### **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> June**

The People's Supermarket in Bristol is a local response to a lost battle against a new Tesco store. Founder member Claire Milne said:

“Supermarkets cut every possible social and environmental corner in order to sell food cheaply. This makes it virtually impossible for ethical retailers to compete, but we are determined to sell locally-sourced, sustainable food at affordable prices, and our People's Supermarket is also committed to raising awareness of the real costs of food.” Members contribute £4 plus 4 hours per month, or £16 without the hours. On the council are local farmers and shopkeepers, people on low incomes and representatives of the Afro-Caribbean and Polish communities. It is hoped to set a precedent for other communities to replicate the model.

[www.bristolpeoplesupermarket.org](http://www.bristolpeoplesupermarket.org)

### **Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June**

Over 3 billion families cook using polluting fossil fuels. In South Africa, Sarah Collins has produced and distributed to 150,000 homes the new