

---

## Prayer guide for the care of creation



# February 2015

“The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers, the heavens languish with the earth. The earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant.”

(Isaiah 24.4-5)

“I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them.

I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth.

These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them.

But those who trust in idols, who say to images, ‘You are our gods’, will be turned back in utter shame.”

(Isaiah 42.16-17)

“Our Christian stewardship demands that we care for the whole of God’s creation, and especially for our poorer neighbours wherever they may be, remembering the words of Jesus at the end of his parable about stewardship in Luke 12.48: *From him to whom much is given, much will be required.*”

(Sir John Houghton)

### **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February**

Creator God, you have called us to be keepers of your Earth. Through greed we have established an economy that destroys the web of life. We have changed our climate and are drowning in despair. Let oceans of justice flow. May we learn to sustain and renew the life of our Mother Earth. We pray for our leaders, custodians of Mother Earth, as they prepare to gather in Paris at the climate talks. May they negotiate with wisdom and fairness. May they act with compassion and courage, and lead us in the path of justice for the sake of our children and our children's children.

(Archbishop Desmond Tutu)

### **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February**

According to UN climate scientists, the earth is on a pathway to global warming well beyond the 2 degrees C. internationally agreed as the maximum possible rise if we are to avoid cataclysmic climate change. Poor communities in vulnerable regions will be most affected – people least responsible for causing climate change and least able to adapt to it. Large-scale population displacement will follow and future generations will suffer cumulative effects. How can

Christians hear what the scientists are telling us and then do nothing towards re-aligning investment strategies to secure a sustainable future?

### **Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February**

Jonathon Porritt, when chair of Forum for the Future, spent years working on sustainable projects with Shell and BP. He now says: "We came to the conclusion that it was impossible for today's oil and gas majors to adapt in a timely and intelligent way to the imperative of radical decarbonisation. We felt we had no option but to end our long-standing partnerships with both Shell and BP."

### **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February**

In 2012 Church of England equity funds had over £60 million invested in major fossil fuel companies, while the Methodist Church's UK Equity Fund had £58 million so invested. The Church of England policy according to one of the Church Commissioners is "to get stuck in on ethical issues and try to have a positive influence." However, Porritt believes the time for that has long passed: "I so badly wanted to believe that the combination of reason, rigorous science and good people would enable elegant transition strategies to emerge in those

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by email (free), please email :

[prayer-guide@greenchristian.org.uk](mailto:prayer-guide@greenchristian.org.uk)

For further information and requests for prayer, please write or email:

Philip Clarkson Webb,  
15 Valley View,  
Southborough,  
Tunbridge Wells TN4 0SY

Email: [pcw@greenchristian.org.uk](mailto:pcw@greenchristian.org.uk)

Website: [www.greenchristian.org.uk](http://www.greenchristian.org.uk)

Picture on front cover: Langcliffe snowdrops by Judith Allinson

Green Christian is a Trading name of Christian Ecology Link Ltd.

Correspondence Office:  
97 Plumpton Avenue, Hornchurch,  
RM12 6BB

Company Registration No. 2445198

Registered Charity No. 328744.

tel: +44 (0) 845 4598460

[info@greenchristian.org.uk](mailto:info@greenchristian.org.uk)

fodder, the animals remain healthier and grow better. The chair of Vitens said: "Thanks to the use of humic acid, we are able to reduce the use of artificial fertiliser and phosphates in agriculture and horticulture. This will improve the groundwater used to produce drinking water and the growth of crops, as well as being better for the environment."

### **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February**

Boeing engineers have successfully flown a propeller aircraft powered by a hybrid electric system. The petrol engine and electric motor work together when maximum power is required during take-off and climbing, after which the electric motor is switched to generator mode to either recharge the batteries or to be used in motor assist mode to minimise fuel consumption. According to Dr Paul Robertson of Cambridge University's Department of Engineering, the improved lithium-polymer batteries similar to those used in a laptop computer are light enough to be used in aircraft. However, if a modern jetliner were to be powered by these batteries, it would be airborne for only ten minutes.

### **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February**

Network Rail has put Britain's first battery-powered train into regular service between Harwich International and Manningtree. The modified Class 379 Electrostar train is part of a project to roll out a fleet of quieter, more efficient battery-powered trains where diesel or electrified services are not suitable. They are part of a Network Rail commitment to improve sustainability, reduce its environmental impact and save 20% of the cost of running the railways within five years.

#### **Sources:**

Resurgence & Ecologist  
"This Changes Everything"  
by Naomi Klein (Allen Lane)  
[www.edie.net](http://www.edie.net)

#### **Additional Prayers**

companies. But we learn as we go. And go those companies surely will, if not in the near future."

### **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February**

Humanity's capacity to damage our environment has grown in the last 200 years with every generation. Whereas previous generations did not know the harm they were causing, today we do. Yet Christ's love extends not just to our generation, but to future generations also. If we do not act now, in effect we are asking future generations to sacrifice their well-being so that we can continue to live in carbon-dependent comfort. Operation Noah's Ash Wednesday Declaration, signed by senior church leaders, acknowledges that runaway global warming would undermine food security, accelerate species extinctions and make human life impossible in many parts of the world. It declares that continuing to pollute the atmosphere when we know its dangers goes against God's purposes, and repentance means finding immediate ways to address the dangers.

### **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February**

If anyone believes that a major fall in the value of fossil fuel companies

could never occur, ratings agency Standard & Poor responds that 'oil firms could soon be facing credit downgrades . . . financial models that only rely on past performance and creditworthiness are an insufficient guide.' Economist Nicholas Stern comments: "The market has either not thought hard enough about the issue or thinks that governments will not do very much – or somewhere between the two. Honesty and transparency require that this contradiction and the implied risk to the balance sheets of large companies – or to the planet, or both – should be recognised and tackled."

### **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February**

For churches and individuals seeking alternatives to fossil fuel investments, new options are developing all the time. Without implying any endorsement or recommendation, such examples include: investment in specific renewable energy generation projects. This can be done directly or via organisations such as Abundance which lists schemes seeking investors. Shares in community energy schemes are often formed as Industrial Provident Societies or Community Interest Companies;

Investment in renewable energy companies such as Triodos Renewables plc. which invests in a range of sustainable energy projects.

### **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February**

Dear Lord and Father. We cry out to you to protect your creation, to defend the work of your hands. Save our generation from our addiction to fossil fuels. Wash our hands of their clutch on dirty energy. Clean our hearts of our desire for more and more. Turn our souls way from materialism and our habits of taking and taking from your sacred, finite world. Give us a vision of the blessings we will receive if we turn away from idolatry of the economy and bow to wisdom and truth. Show us that a kinder, simpler lifestyle will allow us to see your glory more clearly. Let your glory shine throughout your kingdom.

(Ruth Jarman)

### **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February**

NASA has revealed that 2014 was globally the hottest year on record. Every year since 1976 annual temperatures have been above the 20<sup>th</sup> century average. Seven of the ten

costliest 'weather events' since 1980 have occurred in the last twelve years. The 2013 UK floods alone cost insurers over £1 billion. World Resources Institute director Manish Bapna said: "Opponents (of climate adaptation measures) have a long history of styling climate action, including putting a price on carbon, as bad for the economy or costing jobs. Yet the New Climate Economy Report shows that this is simply wrong and that climate action can bring economic benefits. By urging governments to enact responsible policies on climate, corporations can help shift public perceptions away from the false dichotomy of 'environment v. economy' and create the political conditions for progress."

### **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February**

The New Climate Economy Report from the Global Commission on the Economy & Climate outlines 10 steps to tackle climate change while promoting economic growth:

1. Businesses must report on the environmental impact of their business model
2. Governments should agree a medium term (eg 2025) goal for national greenhouse gas emissions, with a global goal of

'invisible hand' of the marketplace reaches out to all corners of the globe, steals ideas, innovations and images, rips out large chunks of the planet's surface, magicks it into money, monuments and munificence, holds the key to the chains that enslave thousands, snaps its fingers at suitors and beggars and raises its fist against any challenge."

### **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February**

Carton packaging has long been a challenge to proponents of recycling. Now Finnish dairy company Valio is marketing Tetra Pak cartons derived entirely from plants and FSC-certified paperboard. There are no aluminium layers in the packs and all the bio-based cartons can be recycled. Low-density polyethylene for the carton plus high-density polyethylene for the cap are all derived from sugar cane imported from Brazil. Free milk cartons are being trialled across Finland, then extended more broadly across Valio's chilled product range.

### **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February**

For every five houses now being built, enough waste is generated to build one extra house. Eco-architect Kevin McCloud and students of City College, Brighton & Hove, have completed a

Brighton Waste House using materials such as old vinyl banners and posters, discarded bricks, plywood sheets and offcuts of timber from other construction projects. Old plastic razors, denim jeans, CDs, DVDs and video cassettes have been slotted into wall cavities to help with insulation. Caroline Lucas MP said: "The housing industry is decades behind in best practice. The real challenge of this Waste House is for it not to be seen as a one-off example, but actually to be paving the way to what has to be mainstream. This is how we are going to have to build in the future if we are serious about living within the resources of One Planet Earth."

### **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February**

During water treatment, humic acid is discharged as a waste product during the blanching process. Now Dutch water firm Vitens has developed a way of turning humic acid into a valuable fertiliser, and plans to bring this circular process to the UK, Ireland and Scandinavia. One Dutch water-processing company, dealing with 25 million cu. metres of water a year, is producing enough humic acid to satisfy all the fertiliser needs of Dutch agriculture. Studies have shown that when humic acid is added to piglet

carbon assets and causing a major economic crash. The London Assembly Economic Committee is asking the Mayor and the London Enterprise Panel (LEP) whether they are doing enough to support London's business through the challenges and opportunities ahead. In particular: Have they identified opportunities in the climate change adaptation sector? How are they incorporating climate change risks in their economic strategy for London? How can London address the shortage of skills needed for climate change adaptation?

### **Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February**

Over 300,000 medical facilities – often in rural Africa and Asia – have no power back-up when the lights suddenly go out or power fails for life-saving equipment. Solar energy can be a great solution, but most hospitals cannot afford the upfront costs. Non-profit organisation SunFarmer offers a rent-to-own package, providing up to 80% of the costs, which are raised from charitable donations. The health facility finances the remaining 20% with rental payments over an 8-year period until it owns the system. SunFarmer oversees the installation and is responsible for its maintenance.

The rental repayments are recycled into new solar projects. SunFarmer has installed six solar systems in Nepalese health clinics and plans to install twenty more this year and another 250 globally within five years.

### **Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February**

Loving Father, who sent your Son to share the suffering of humanity, come close to all who have lost loved ones in typhoons, hurricanes, floods and other weather-related events, and all who have become refugees as a result of war or civil strife. Uphold those who minister to their needs and help us to remember that in serving the least of your brothers and sisters we are serving you.

### **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February**

The late David Nicholson-Lord described an interview with oil company executives when he presented an idea to generate money from re-forestation. They liked the idea and wanted to give the money, but thought it was, in the last analysis, a little radical. "We are not pioneers," they said. "Thus", writes David, "have emperors throughout the ages sat on their bums, their wealth and their workers and hoped the future would never arrive. Thus Adam Smith's

near-zero in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the century

3. Phase out subsidies for fossil fuels and agricultural inputs. In 2012 fossil fuel subsidies totalled \$544 billion while subsidies for renewables were \$101 billion. These incentives are stifling change.
4. Introduce strong, predictable and rising prices for carbon
5. Reduce capital costs for low-carbon infrastructure investments
6. Scale up innovation in low-carbon and climate-resilient technologies
7. Create networks of sustainable cities to share best practice in sustainable transport and resource-efficient service delivery
8. Halt the destruction of natural forests by 2030
9. Restore at least 500 million ha. of lost or degraded forests and agricultural land by 2030 to generate additional farm incomes of \$206 billion and feed up to 200 million people while storing 1.3 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> by 2030
10. Accelerate the shift away from polluting coal-fired power stations.

### **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February**

In 2013 56% of UK gas supplies and 79% of our coal was imported.

However, wind power reduced our need for coal by around 4.9 million tonnes and gas by 1.4 billion cu.metres, saving us more than £579 million in import costs. Decreasing UK gas supplies could require increasing imports by £3.1 billion of gas in 2020 and £7.4 billion in 2030. However, according to Cambridge Econometrics, "Wind power is already helping us manage fuel price instability, and industry is confident that by 2020 onshore wind will be the cheapest way of generating any form of energy. As the cost of wind is predictable, using a greater amount of it to generate electricity amounts to investing an insurance premium against the uncertain cost of gas."

### **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February**

Commenting on the forthcoming Paris conference, Dr Jeremy Leggett, retiring chairman of SolarCentury, predicted that 2015 would see at least one of the oil majors turn its back on fossil fuels. "One of the oil companies will break ranks and this time it is going to stick. The industry is facing plunging commodity prices and mounting costs at risky projects in the Arctic, deepwater Brazil and elsewhere. Oil companies are also realising that it is no longer morally

defensible to ignore the consequences of climate change.”

### **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February**

Last June crude oil costs \$115 a barrel. In January this year it stood at \$48 a barrel and some oil companies are facing collapse. According to Bloomberg New Energy Finance analyst Michael Liebreich, this could be good news for renewables because

1. renewables, particularly onshore wind, can already compete with oil on price for electricity generation
2. price stability and widespread Government support for renewables makes them attractive to investors looking for alternatives to oil and gas
3. The UK has no control over global oil and gas prices, but when you plan and build a wind farm, you know exactly what the upfront costs are, while the fuel itself is free.

However, lower oil prices will hit the biofuels sector, which competes with oil for transport fuel. They could also slow the uptake of electric cars.

### **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February**

A study from the University of Utrecht finds that biofuels grown with a low or

zero risk to Indirect Land Use Change (ILUC) could help significantly to achieve EU targets for transport fuel. ILUC occurs when land previously used to grow food is converted to growing fuel crops. ILUC is mitigated when biofuels are grown as a result of increasing agricultural crop yields in under-utilised land. “There is massive potential in Europe to produce sustainable biofuels with little or no ILUC impacts, but we need to realise these benefits – more jobs, better resource efficiency and reduced greenhouse gas emissions from transport.”

### **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February**

Father, forgive us for the folly, blindness and greed with which we have pursued material gains at the expense of future generations, oblivious to the grievous cost to your creation. Help us to pursue a vision of your world which husbands all its resources, so that humankind can live together at peace without damaging the world that you have given us to enjoy.

### **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February**

Naomi Klein, author of “This Changes Everything, suggests that the climate movement has yet to find its full moral

voice on the world stage, though some of the voices of moral clarity are coming from the very young, who are calling on the streets, and increasingly in the courts, for justice between the generations.

### **Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February**

A multi-faith project called [ourvoices.net](http://ourvoices.net) is supporting island nations that are threatened by rising sea levels and extreme weather. Its leaders include Hindus, Muslims, Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics and Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, chair of the Anglican Bishops’ Committee on Climate Change. They are calling on those of religious or spiritual faith to speak up so loudly that they put the moral case for action at the heart of climate talks, because climate change is not just an environmental problem: it is a humanitarian and development emergency and, as such, is a deeply moral issue.

### **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February**

Naomi Klein calls for a grand coalition of movements – not just climate campaigners, but people fighting so-called free trade, opposing austerity programmes, affected by fossil fuel exploitation, fracking, oil refineries etc.

“Only a broad-based movement can take on the fossil fuel lobby and win.” What we need above all is a unifying rallying call to draw all the separate strands of climate activism into one irresistible force.

### **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February**

The UK National Infrastructure Plan 2012 has been updated. While planned expenditure on renewables has been downgraded by £11.3 billion in 2014-15 and £9.3 billion in 2015-2020, investment in fossil fuel energy infrastructure has been revised upwards from 8% of total expenditure on energy infrastructure to 61% for the current year. Matthew Spencer of Green Alliance said: “It appears that a series of short-term tactical decisions to promote road building, demote renewables and offer tax breaks for oil and gas extraction have reversed what was an encouraging picture for UK infrastructure. It means that this is likely to lock us into greater fossil fuel dependency and narrow UK options for halving its carbon emissions by 2025.”

### **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February**

The Bank of England has opened an enquiry into the risk of a ‘carbon bubble’ resulting from overvalued