

Additional Prayers

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Picture on front cover:
Knapweed with hoverfly by Judith Allinson

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Prayer guide for the care of creation

August 2015



“He has made everything beautiful in its time,
He has also set eternity in the hearts of men;
yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.
I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live.
That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil
–this is the gift of God.
I know that everything God does will endure for ever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it.
God does it so that men will revere him.”

Ecclesiastes 3. 11-14

“The most important prayer in the world is just two words long:
Thank you.”

Meister Eckhart

Saturday 1st August

The annual State of the Climate 2014 report based on the research of 413 scientists from 58 countries finds that ocean warming was at its highest rate since records began, leading to global sea levels reaching a record high. “The consequences of warming oceans will be felt for centuries to come – even if there were immediate efforts to cut the carbon emissions fuelling changes in the oceans.” Greg Johnson of the National Center for Environmental Information said: “I think of it more like a freight train. It takes a big push to get it going, but it is moving now and will continue to move long after we pushed it.”

Sunday 2nd August

Father God, we thank you for the wonder and beauty of your creation. Forgive us that we have so ruthlessly exploited it in so many ways contrary to your will. Teach us how to tread lightly on your world, so that our love for you is faithfully mirrored in our love for your creation.

Monday 3rd August

A report from the UK Foreign Office called “Climate Change: A Risk Assessment” warms policy-makers of the catastrophic effects of worst-case

scenarios for climate change. “The systemic risks include spiralling crop failures leading to a tripling of food prices and widespread shortages. The capacity of the international community for humanitarian assistance could be overwhelmed. The risks of state failure could rise significantly, even threatening those that are currently considered developed and stable. However, political leadership can significantly change the trajectory of any country’s emissions in the short term, while accelerating the rate of technological innovation should be a priority. Small changes in the finance system, such as carbon pricing, can produce big results.”

Tuesday 4th August

The Chancellor’s Productivity Plan, launched last month, proposes scrapping of the commitment for new homes to meet zero-carbon standards from 2016. More than 200 businesses including Aldersgate Group, E.ON, Whitbread and the UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) have pointed out that the weakening of standards will mean our future homes will be more costly to run, locking future residents into high energy bills. Mike Roberts of HAB housing said: “It may not have

The implication that climate change is primarily about economic security seems disingenuous when it should concern all areas of government including food production, population growth, national defence and quality of life. Surely it is time for the Prime Minister to draw together the threads of government and to insist that economics should not be the sole determinant of Government policies

Sunday 30th August

Lord Jesus Christ, through whom and for whom this universe was created, we mourn with you the death of forests, the fruitful lands that have become deserts, the plants and animals threatened with extinction, people turned off their land and left homeless. As the earth cries out for liberation, we confess our part in bringing it to the brink of catastrophe. Through ignorance, but also wilfully, we thought we could serve both God and mammon, unable to resist the temptation to spend and acquire more and more possessions, with no thought of the consequences for future generations. Saviour of the world, you call us to repentance; to be transformed by your love, to deny ourselves, to take up our crosses and to follow your way.

(Maureen Edwards).

Monday 31st August

Millions of tonnes of plastic waste end up in our oceans. In Britain, almost 70,000 tonnes of plastic bags are used each year, and the amount rose by 2.4% in 2014. Wales saw its plastic bag use plummet by 78.2% since 2010 due to the introduction of a 5p. charge per carrier bag. Scotland introduced a carrier bag charge last October and plastic bag use dropped from an average of 12.6 per consumer per month in 2010 to 10.3 in 2014. Many Scottish retailers pass on the 5p. charge to charities. England will join the rest of the UK this October in setting a charge for each carrier bag.

Sources:

The Environment magazine (CIWEM)
www.edie.net

connected with two additional turbines.

Thursday 27th August

Germany is Europe's biggest energy user, representing 19.3% of Europe's energy use, and has the highest energy prices in Europe except for Denmark. It aims to reduce its carbon emissions by 2050 by 80% of 1990 values and to increase the share of energy from renewables to 60%. However, even in 2050, fossil fuels will still provide 40% of its energy, while 60% of all energy supplies have to be imported, including coal – the most carbon-intensive fuel.

After the decision to close its nuclear plants, the choice lay between expanding its use of coal or exploiting its estimated 3 trillion cubic metres of shale gas, which could provide 20% of its demand for gas for up to 100 years. Natural gas has a carbon footprint 41-47% lower than coal. Shale gas, if properly regulated, could work in tandem with renewables, helping to reduce Germany's carbon emissions and meet its climate change targets. Britain, by contrast, has all the advantages of strong winds and tides. Will we put these natural advantages to their best use? Or will we strew the path with short-term political detritus?

Friday 28th August

The Conservative election manifesto included a pledge to deliver energy efficiency upgrades to 1 million households by 2020. The Energy Secretary, Amber Rudd, has said that energy efficiency is the most effective way to reduce carbon emissions and reduce bills. Until last month, the Green Deal and the plan for Zero Waste homes were the means to achieve this. Both have now been scrapped without any sign of alternative policies. Meanwhile, the energy efficiency industry is likely to be decimated while politicians go back to the drawing board. This country surely deserves something better from the people elected to serve us.

Saturday 29th August

In her first major speech on climate change, the Energy Secretary said: "Climate action is about economic security. The economic impact of unchecked climate change would be profound. Lower growth, higher prices, a lower quality of life . . . The bottom line is this – if we are acting on climate change to preserve our economic prosperity, we have to make sure that climate change action is pro-growth and pro-business."

been perfect, but the zero-carbon policy was an attempt to provide confidence to the construction sector, setting out future standards with enough notice for industry to be able to deliver. Scrapping the policy sends a terrible message to the industry and undermines all those who have put time and energy into making it work."

Wednesday 5th August

Catherine Mitchell, Professor of Energy Policy at Exeter University and lead author of the IPCC's latest report, has said that Britain should drop its focus on nuclear power and carbon capture and storage and re-focus spending on optimising renewables and energy efficiency. "The first step to decarbonisation is reducing the amount of energy needed in the first place, through fully insulating houses, and managing the demand side, so that the maximum demand, and therefore the maximum capacity needed, could fall." She also suggested ways to optimise renewables so that we don't waste or dump the energy we do produce. Her suggestions include more interconnectors with other countries and investment in energy storage including batteries and pumped hydro.

Thursday 6th August

The Green Investment Bank, part-owned by the Government, has invested more than £2 billion in new projects, the latest being a 6.5 MW combined heat and power (CHP) facility in Sheffield, with the capacity to serve more than 6,700 properties and to save CO2 emissions of 12,700 tonnes a year. Now the Government plans to sell about 70% of its majority stake in the Bank. Friends of the Earth has called for these shares to be sold to members of the public rather than to the highest bidder.

Friday 7th August

The Government has announced the removal of renewable energy from exemption from the Climate Change Levy (CCL), which allowed businesses and public sector bodies to save £5.50 per kWh on their renewable energy investments. Drax had planned to convert its coal-fired power station to biomass, which would have been exempt from CCL, but now expects its profits to drop by £30 million this year and £60 million next. The CEO of ABDA, the anaerobic digestion industry body, said: "The UK needs renewable energy to keep the lights on and meet climate change targets. We are deeply disappointed that the

industry was not consulted on this decision and remain concerned about the Government's real support for the green economy."

Saturday 8th August

"Jubilee for Creation: Why the whole of Creation needs a Sabbath Rest" is the title of a week's course at Lee Abbey, Devon, beginning today. This A Rocha family week focuses on a gentle exploration of the biblical idea of jubilee in the context of the environment. David Nussbaum of WWF-UK and Andy Lester of A Rocha UK will lead the exploration, which will include a dramatic performance of *The Last Cuckoo* by Andy Harrison. A range of rooms is available for the week. Ring 01598 752621 for details.

Sunday 9th August

Forgive us, loving Father, for the damage we have done to your earth.

Forgive us that the rivers and seas have been polluted by the waste of our 'civilisation'.

Forgive us that the air has been fouled by our emissions of pollutants.

Forgive us that plants and animals have been made extinct through our relentless invasion of their homes.

Forgive us that we have so often valued profit more than the quality of the environment in which people live. Help us to see the links between our lifestyle and the damage to your creation.

May repentance lead to change, and change set a pattern for others to follow.

Monday 10th August

The General Synod of the Church of England has voted overwhelmingly for a new policy on climate change, whereby it will divest from companies deriving more than 10% of their revenue from the extraction of coal and tar sands oil. Other new initiatives will alert church members to the forthcoming climate talks in Paris, while clergy training will henceforth include 'ecotheology'. The Bishop of Salisbury said: "Climate change disproportionately affects the poorest. They are most vulnerable to increased storms, rising sea level, changing patterns of rainfall, floods and droughts. We live interconnected lives. What is bad for our neighbours is bad for us." Archbishop Justin Welby said: "Symbolic actions such as the use of paper at General Synod, the amount we travel, and disinvestments or the tackling and engagement with

systems of 5 MW and below from next April. A separate consultation proposes to stop 'pre-accreditation' – which gives renewable energy generators a guaranteed tariff level in advance of commissioning their installation. Previously the Levy Control Framework guaranteed clean energy subsidies through to 2020/21. Energy Secretary Amber Rudd explained: "Our support has driven down the cost of renewable energy significantly. As costs continue to fall, it becomes easier for parts of the renewables industry to survive without subsidies. We're taking action to protect consumers, whilst protecting existing investment." Critics fear that consumers in future will have to pay more for clean energy, or investment in renewables will simply dry up. Either way, it seems a curious response to the legal requirement to cut our carbon emissions.

Tuesday 25th August

42% of UK CO2 emissions come from buildings, so making new buildings as well insulated as possible makes good sense. Hitherto, fumed silica has been used for insulation panels, requiring temperatures of up to 3000 degrees C. for their manufacture. Now Kingspan Insulation has developed

vacuum insulation panels which use perlite – a substance manufactured at less than 1000 degrees C. from volcanic ore. They are said to be 5-8 times more effective than rockwool or solid foam. The new technology, used in a warehouse of 5,000 sq. metres, was found to save 14% on its annual energy demand. However, the recent postponement of the requirement for zero-carbon homes by the end of 2016 has undermined business confidence, throwing doubt on the viability of plans to introduce the new technology.

Wednesday 26th August

The little fishing town of Ploubazlanee in Brittany is an unlikely site for two OpenHydro ocean turbines each 16 metres in diameter, which will be connected this summer to a subsea converter to transform the electric current into high voltage direct current, so as to provide 1 megawatt of power. This will be transmitted to an onshore station and fed into the national grid. The turbines are placed directly onto the seabed and require no lubricants, seals or gearboxes. It is designed by GE Power Conversions to provide continuous power generation over 5 years and can, if needed, be

that air pollution was responsible for 9,500 deaths in London during 2010 – the most recent year for which data was available.

Friday 21st August

Energy storage firm Moixa has raised £100,000 for its Maslow system, which stores spare solar or night electricity to reduce peak demand and costs for customers. The Maslow comes in three sizes, with models up to 6 kWh. The 2 kw. standard model, priced at £2,000, is suitable for a small home. The project has 250 pilot sites under a DECC contract worth £1.5 million. Other systems, pioneered by Powervault and Tesla, are competing for the market. Energy experts have hailed the arrival of home energy storage systems as “a nail in the coffin of conventional utilities”.

Saturday 22nd August

The Task Force on Shale Gas claims that shale drilling is safe provided it is subject to rigorous regulation and monitoring, with full disclosure of the chemicals being used and an industry commitment to the highest standards of construction, safety and transparency. Two further reports will cover the potential impact of shale gas on climate change and its economics.

FoE comments: “Tougher rules can only make fracking safer, not safe. This dangerous technology will always carry risks for the local environment and people’s health, as well as adding to climate change – so no amount of regulation or industry-funded task forces will make people embrace fracking.” Cuadrilla has appealed against Lancashire County Council’s decision to refuse permission to drill for shale gas in the Fylde district. There may now be a public enquiry, followed by a final decision by the Communities Secretary. Local people are once again to be by-passed.

Sunday 23rd August

Father, we pray that when the interests and aspirations of nations conflict with each other over natural resources, particularly water supplies, their leaders may not turn to war, but together seek a just and acceptable way forward, so that suspicions may be allayed, misunderstandings clarified, violence averted and peace preserved. This we ask in the name of Christ our Lord. (L. Cumings)

Monday 24th August

A new announcement from the Department of Energy heralds the end of financial support for solar PV

companies in certain areas, such as Arctic drilling, are equally important.”

Tuesday 11th August

Figures from solar market analyst Wild-Solar show that the UK has more than doubled its solar capacity to 4 gigawatts, making it third only to the USA and China. Up to 1 MW. of rooftop solar can now be installed without planning permission. On July 3rd it was estimated that solar provided more than 15% of UK electricity used. However, withdrawal of the exemption of renewable energy from the Climate Change Levy puts a big question mark over the future expansion of solar energy.

Wednesday 12th August

New planning guidance has thrown into confusion plans for onshore wind turbines where the local authority has failed to identify areas suitable for wind turbines - that is 332 out of the total of 400 local planning authorities. The planning officers of Mid Devon DC and North West Leicestershire DC have said they have to refuse any new applications as they have no areas identified as suitable for wind energy. Yet the Communities Secretary has made a commitment to give local

people the final say over onshore wind applications.

A group of wind energy companies have written to him saying: “It should not be forgotten that the National Planning Policy Framework stipulates that Local Planning Authorities should be in favour of renewables. It is imperative that the Department recognises and reinstates the right of farmers and rural communities to deploy small-scale clean technologies that are appropriate to the location.” It remains to be seen whether this decision is challenged in the courts.

Thursday 13th August

On July 12th, an unusually windy day, Denmark derived 116% of its electricity needs from wind turbines – three-quarters of which were onshore windfarms. The surplus electricity was exported to Norway, which can store it in hydropower systems, and to Germany and Sweden. Some 1.5 GW. of new offshore windfarms will be built in the next 5 years, more than doubling Denmark’s capacity. This represents a year-on-year 18% growth in wind electricity. Oliver Joy of the European Wind Energy Association said: “If we want to see this happening on a European scale, we must upgrade the continent’s ageing grid

infrastructure, ensure that countries open up borders, increase interconnection and trade electricity on a single market.”

Friday 14th August

Figures from the Office of National Statistics show that transport is the only sector of the economy that has seen increased CO2 emissions since 1870, growing from 72 million tonnes to 117 million tonnes in 2014. The proportion of UK emissions arising from transport has risen to 28%, largely due to the spiralling number of cars – though since 2008 this has been slightly mitigated by more efficient car engines and the rising number of hybrid vehicles. A further report from the ONS shows that renewables accounted for 5.2% of total energy consumed in 2013, compared with 1.5% in 2000.

Saturday 15th August

Network Rail has announced a partnership with recyclers Bio-bean to recycle waste coffee grounds from London’s six mainline stations and convert them into enough biofuel to power 1,000 homes for a year, so saving more than 5,000 tonnes of CO2 from landfill emissions. The CEO of Bio-bean said: “The UK generates

over 500,000 tonnes of waste coffee grounds each year, costing the coffee industry almost £80 million in waste disposal fees. We recycle waste coffee grounds into advanced biofuels on an industrial scale, creating local sustainable green energy as an alternative to fossil fuels.”

Sunday 16th August

Lord, increase the sense of community that binds us one to another. Bless the work of your Church, that it may provide:

- A sense of identity where there is none
- A refuge to those who feel threatened by lawlessness or polluted surroundings
- A place of belonging where people know they are welcomed, remembered by name and valued as individuals
- A faith that, in your Word, proclaims that we are forgiven and accepted, in the name of your dear Son, Jesus Christ.

Monday 17th August

China’s new climate plan commits the country to a peak of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, when it will have increased its proportion of low-carbon

electricity to 20%. China will enhance co-operation among developing countries by establishing a South-South Co-operation on Climate Change Fund as a new source of finance to help vulnerable countries with their climate change plans. WWF comments: “We are still waiting for developed countries to show how they will deliver their commitment of \$100 billion per year in climate finance by 2020. The offer by China should give them an incentive to start delivering.”

Tuesday 18th August

The 3rd International Conference on Financing for Development concluded at Addis Ababa with progress towards an agreement that recognises the connection between economic prosperity, social development and environmental protection, though it was silent on the question of eliminating harmful subsidies for fossil fuels, transport and agriculture. This was the first of three major conferences to pave the way for implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals in late September and the Paris conference in December to agree a new climate deal.

Wednesday 19th August

A report from National Grid titled “Future Energy Trends” describes four credible scenarios, in only one of which the UK achieves its decarbonisation targets. In the worst case scenario, characterised by “inconsistent political statements and lack of focus”, just 11% of UK energy comes from renewables by 2030. Under the best scenario, characterised by long-term policy certainty and moderate economic growth, renewable energy supplies 30% of demand by the mid 2030s, and the UK becomes a net exporter of energy, thanks to its 17.7 GW of interconnected capacity. Heat pumps become the largest source of heat by 2050, and electric vehicles make an important contribution to the transport sector.

Thursday 20th August

Transport for London has announced that 51 all-electric buses will be entering service from autumn 2016. The Mayor has pledged £700 million to ensure that by 2020 all 300 single-deck buses will be zero-emission (electric or hydrogen-driven) and all 3,000 double-deck buses will be hybrid electric. The announcement comes as the Mayor’s office reveals