

Additional Prayers

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Prayer guide for the care of creation



February 2017

“Your wealth and all your treasures I will give away as plunder . . . because of sin throughout your country . . . But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when the heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”

(Jeremiah 17. 3,7 & 8)

“Isaiah was called (ch.6) not to results or success, but to obedience. He is to preach to a people who will not listen, to offer healing that will not be accepted, but he is to carry on 'until the cities lie ruined and without inhabitant, until the houses are left desolate and the fields ruined and ravaged' (v.11) Who wants a ministry like that? But that is exactly what we've been called to. Whether the occupant of the White House is sympathetic or not, whether the church at large understands or not, our task is to continue to proclaim this truth: that God loves his creation, and he has given us the task of caring for it.”

(Ed Brown of the Lausanne Creation Care Movement)



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Wednesday 1st February

11 years ago Stephen Tindale, then director of Greenpeace, warned: "The news from the natural world over the last year has been unremittingly bad: the oceans acidifying and less able to absorb carbon, the permafrost melting and giving up its methane ...All these things suggest that positive feedbacks may have kicked in, We may have crossed the threshold, but we can't be certain, and so we can't give up the fight while there is hope that catastrophe may be averted. We have a moral duty to keep trying. I believe that if governments take emergency action, climate change can still be controlled. So let's get on with it and pray that we aren't too late." Christians can draw strength from the stance of prophets such as Jeremiah who foresaw disaster for the land and people of Israel, yet trusted that God's deeper purposes can never fail.

Thursday 2nd February

Today from 7.30 to 9.30 pm at St. Swithun's Church, Gervis Road,

Bournemouth, the diocese of Winchester is holding a workshop called "Ecochurch – Tools for Transformation². It is designed for all or any who want to help their church engage with environmental issues. Dr. Ruth Valerio of A Rocha, author of "Just Living" will introduce the new Ecochurch scheme and the Big Church Switch and we shall hear about local church projects and share experiences. To book a place, go to: www.winchester.anglican.org/events/ecochurch-tools-transformations-3

Friday 3rd February

Professor Tim Jackson of Surrey University, author of "Prosperity Without Growth", has been awarded the 2016 Hillary Laureate for his research into the economics of sustainability. He said: " If capitalism cannot change, then capitalism is lost. We have to reconceive investment so that it's not about the relentless and mindless pursuit of consumption growth. We must invest in the idea of a meaningful prosperity, providing capabilities

Saturday 25th February

The Government-owned Green Investment Bank is to be sold off and the Australian bank Macquarie is the Government's preferred bidder. However concerns have been raised that Macquarie would like to dismember the GIB and sell off its assets, which include wind farms and biomass energy schemes. Now an investment fund called Sustainable Development Capital is putting in a bid which would delay the sale of the assets for 2-3 years so that the Government and taxpayers could reap more value from the bank's future growth. By that time the GIB's earnings would have increased from investment of its remaining portfolio and cost efficiencies through economies of scale.

Sunday 26th 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.

(Archbishop Desmond Tutu)

Monday 27th February

A crack in the Larsen C ice shelf on the Antarctic Peninsula has recently extended to more than 50 miles. Scientists say that it only needs to extend another 12 miles before some 1,930 square miles of ice breaks off into the ocean, so raising sea levels around the world.

Tuesday 28th February

On March 18th the annual conference of the John Ray Institute takes place at Bournville College, Birmingham from 9.30 to 4.30 under the title "Nature in the Balance: can we put a value on the environment, and should we?" Keynote speakers are Dr. Darren Evans on "Ecosystem Services", Professor Richard Bauckham on "Why do other creatures matter?" and Rev. Dave Bookless on "Biblical wisdom for Nature Conservation". For more details go to: www.jri.org.uk

cereals and pulses the fat is highly saturated, with low levels of polyunsaturates. By contrast, when they are fed on pasture alone, their fat contains much more omega-3 and omega-6 polyunsaturates in roughly equal parts – just what the human body needs. Therefore, he says, grass-fed beef and sheep should be positively beneficial.

Thursday 23rd February

Every winter weekday between 3 and 8 pm in Britain there is an upward surge in electricity consumption, peaking at around 7 gigawatts. This is largely created by domestic consumers returning from work and switching on water heating and drying appliances such as washing machines, tumble driers and immersion heaters.. The 3.2 gigawatt Hinkley C power station would be unnecessary if we, the householders, changed our habits so that heavy use of electricity was shifted to off-peak periods. Industry and large commercial users are already penalised for using electricity at

peak times. If each of the 30 million UK householders that use electricity reduced their peak consumption by just 250 watts – or 3 old-fashioned light bulbs – the peak would disappear. Tax incentives are not needed. Peer pressure alone could achieve this.

Friday 24th February

About 70% of Iceland's electricity comes from hydropower through glacial run-off. Most of this is sold cheaply to its three aluminium smelters, but for some of the year the excess energy is simply wasted. Investors including Siemens are looking at the possibility of 800-mile undersea cables carrying this surplus energy to Britain by high-voltage direct current. Hydropower from Iceland could provide the UK with 1 gigawatt of stable baseload electricity and could plug much of the gap left when, in Britain, the wind fails to blow and the sun fails to shine.

for people to flourish. Prosperity goes beyond material concerns – it has social and psychological aims – family, friendship, commitment, society. Ultimately investment in the new economy has to protect the ecological assets on which our futures depend.”

Saturday 4th February

NASA and the UK Met Office have published data showing that 2016 was the hottest year on record – for the 3rd year in succession. Parts of India reached 51 degrees C. in May and Mitribah in Kuwait recorded 54 degrees C. in July. Warming oceans saw coral mortality of up to 50% in parts of the Great Barrier Reef and bleaching of 75% of Japan's biggest reef. Earth's temperatures have now risen 1.1 degree C, above pre-industrial levels – perilously close to the 1.5 degrees C. target agreed in Paris just over a year ago. CO2 is still being emitted into the atmosphere at record levels and so causing the

planet to warm further until emissions are back to near zero.

Sunday 5th February

Loving Father, you sent your Son to be a light to those who walk in darkness. May we who brought your world to the edge of darkness see clearly the new paths that we must follow if we are to restore your world in accordance with the commands you have given us in your Word.

Monday 6th February

Local councils have about £230 billion of investments in their pension funds. The London Borough of Waltham Forest has a pension fund worth £735 million of which 23.9 million is invested in fossil fuels. Last September all parties supported a resolution to 'exclude fossil fuels from its strategy over the next 5 years', It becomes the first UK pension fund to fully divest from fossil fuels. In addition, the council agreed to invest particularly in wind energy. Local council elections are due in May. It is an opportunity to

persuade other councils to follow this example.

Tuesday 7th February

During a 4-day period over Christmas, over 100% of Scotland's electricity was generated from wind energy. On Christmas Eve 74,042 MWh of wind-generated electricity was sent to the National Grid, i.e. 132% of Scotland's total electricity needs. WWF Scotland commented: "Given these figures, now is the time for serious consideration to be given to using this excess renewable electricity to help de-carbonise other areas of society, such as powering electric vehicles or heating our homes and businesses using non-fossil fuel technologies."

Wednesday 8th February

A £250,000 pilot project in Barnsley will see 40 of its council homes fitted with solar panels plus storage batteries, so enabling solar-generated electricity to be stored on site instead of being exported to the grid. The CEO of

energy storage specialists Moixa said: "By managing clusters of home batteries in a virtual power plant and allowing homeowners to use more of their solar energy, thereby exporting less, we believe we can significantly reduce peak solar generation output into the network. This will allow more homeowners to go solar without imposing new costs on network operators. In addition, the technology will provide balancing services to grid operators, reducing the need for carbon-intensive back-up power from coal, gas and oil. As part of the trial, residents will receive a share of income from Moixa for these grid services."

Thursday 9th February

The Government's Green Deal was closed for new loans in 2015. However, the idea that homeowners can use loans to enhance the energy efficiency of their homes, and then repay the loans from the resulting energy savings, is far from dead. Greenstone Finance has bought

from grasses which, if successful, could meet the gas needs of 97% of UK homes by 2035. Its first green gas plant is under construction at Sparsholt College, Hampshire. Four other plants are at the planning stage- some on sites where fracking has been proposed. www.ecotricity.co.uk/our-green-energy/our-green-gas

Tuesday 21st February

Last year France became the first country to ban supermarkets from throwing away unwanted food, introducing fines of up to 75,000 euros if shops refused to send food to charities. Italy too has made it easier for companies and farmers to donate food to charities and encourages the use of 'doggy bags' in restaurants. In the UK, according to WRAP, households throw away more than 7 million tonnes of food each year worth an average of £700 per household. Sainsbury's has now scrapped its multi-buy promotions and substituted a lower price structure. It has announced a £1 million fund for its 'waste less, save more'

strategy after a successful trial at Swadlincote, Derbyshire, where there were community events, school programmes and new technologies for households. All supermarkets agree that 'best before' and 'use by' labels can be misleading, but Waitrose suggests that such labels on fresh produce help them to rotate stock properly so as to give the best product to consumers.

Wednesday 22nd February

Graham Harvey, in a new book called "Grass-fed Nation: Getting Back the Food We Deserve" argues that since the 1970s we have been told that too much animal fat is bad for us, that it makes us fat and cause cholesterol-based plaques to build up in the arteries, which leads to coronary heart disease (CHD). However, back in the 1950s Sir Hugh Sinclair showed that polyunsaturated fats of the kind found in vegetables and fish oils reduce plaque, and hence the risk of CHD. Now it turns out that in cattle fed on concentrates of

Advisory Group on Contraception, to one-third of English local authorities cutting, or considering cutting, the number of GP practices able to provide methods such as coils and implants, and that 25% of councils have closed or may close some of their contraception services. Campaigners have warned that the cuts risk an increase in unwanted pregnancies and abortions.

Saturday 18th February

The Swedish Government, in a bid to encourage people to repair their possessions rather than buying new ones, is introducing tax incentives to achieve this. VAT on repairs to bicycles, clothes and shoes will be reduced by more than half. Also, half the labour cost of repairs to larger household appliances can be claimed as a tax deduction. Since repairing goods often requires more labour than producing new ones, the changes can create jobs. Said Per Bolund, the deputy finance minister: "I want Sweden to tackle

climate change by investing and acting in a sustainable way."

Sunday 19th February

Father, we pray for all in authority, for heads of governments, for leaders in industry and financial institutions everywhere, that through them we can all learn to husband our God-given resources, so that all may enjoy the natural and spiritual blessings which you have bestowed on all your children, and that we may live together in peace, without contending over the finite resources which we all share.

Monday 20th February

Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil producer, has launched a massive renewable energy programme to spend around \$40 billion by 2023 to help reduce its dependency on oil. Renewable electricity is spreading fast throughout the world. Yet renewable heat – which produces CO2 emissions also – is far less advanced. Now green energy firm Ecotricity is pioneering 'green gas'

the original loan book and now intends to roll out a new package for home improvements across the country. It intends to focus on those facing the cost of installing a new boiler and other essential work, those who want to enhance the value of their home by improving its energy efficiency or installing renewable technologies, and landlords facing a legal requirement from April 2018 to meet new energy efficiency standards. However, some have warned that without attractive incentives or robust regulations, it will be difficult to encourage large numbers of households to take out loans that can take years to pay off and can deliver relatively small savings.

Friday 10th February

Research commissioned by Population Matters and published in The Times finds that England's projected population growth of 10% by 2030 will have unforeseen results:

- The cost of traffic congestion per household could increase by 40%, i.e. £2,100 a year
- Road users could waste more than 12 hours per year more – a total of 136 hours – than in 2015 on average due to traffic congestion
- The number of cars on England's roads could increase by 20% to 31 million.

In 2015 road and rail congestion cost the economy around £15 billion. By 2030, as a result of surging population, the annual figure could reach 323.8 billion, an increase of 58%.

Saturday 11th February

A survey by Boston Common Assets Management of the world's leading banks including Barclays, HSBC and Citigroup has found that 80% of them are not integrating environmental stress-testing into their decisions. In addition, only 35% and 40% have set targets for energy efficiency financing and renewable energy financing respectively. A few, including Credit Suisse, are

revising their lending policies for coal mining and thermal generation. Bank lending to carbon-intensive sectors such as coal mining and Arctic oil drilling significantly exceeds green financing, BCAM's CEO said: "It makes little sense that bank financing in these carbon intensive sectors is outpacing green investments given the risks high carbon assets face."

Sunday 12th February

Loving Father, who sent your Son to share humanity's suffering, come close to all who have lost loved ones in natural disasters such as earthquakes, avalanches, floods and droughts, all who have become refugees and all who are suffering from the devastation of war. Uphold those who minister to their needs and help us all to remember that in serving the least of your children we are serving you. Amen.

Monday 13th February

HSBC, the UK's biggest bank, on its website declares that

"sustainability underpins our strategic priorities", and yet it funds companies such as the Salim and Noble Groups which have been filmed trashing virgin forests to make way for palm oil plantations. Habitat destruction is one of the main reasons for the decline of the Bornean orangutan. Many of us walk past one of HSBC's 700 UK branches every week. If thousands of us made our voices heard, we can ensure that they clean up their act.

Tuesday 14th February

The Norwegian Government has announced the setting-up of a \$400 million fund to cut tropical deforestation and support sustainable agriculture. Between 2000 and 2012 2.3 sq. kms. Of forest was destroyed for conversion into arable land to meet the growing global demand for food. The new fund aims to protect up to 5 million hectares of forest by working with agriculture to develop ways of boosting production on existing arable land and taking further steps to protect

endangered forests. The fund is largely supported by consumer groups such as Unilever, M & S, Carrefour and Nestle.

Wednesday 15th February

In his book "The Myth of Human Supremacy" environmental philosopher Derrick Jensen questions the assumption that humans are superior to and separate from every other living thing. We are taught that life is based on a hierarchy and those high in the hierarchy, such as humans, dominate those lower, either by right or by might. If we said that trees did not want to be cut down and made into timber, our sanity might be questioned. But few question the sanity of humans who believe that there can be endless economic or human population growth on a finite planet. Human supremacism, he believes, is killing the planet. "How can a species which considers itself the smartest on the planet do something as stupid as to destroy the planet we live on?"

Thursday 16th February

In 2005 Ethiopia introduced landmark legislation to ensure access to abortion. Last year it hosted an international conference where over 250 policymakers, experts and activists from all over Africa met to consider that more than 8 million African women a year have abortions, with 1.6 million of them being treated for complications. The conference ended with this declaration: "We pledge to come together as a community of experts who share the commitment to expand access to comprehensive and high-quality reproductive health care including safe abortion. We will trust the women and girls of Africa so that they can fully realise their reproductive rights and achieve their potential."

Friday 17th February

In the UK, contraceptive services are normally financed by local authorities, but a cut of £200 million in central government funding has led, according to the