

Our Awakening Universe: the New Cosmic Story and the Meaning of Faith.' Next Sunday June 2nd he will speak at St. James's Church, Piccadilly, London W1J 9LL on 'Christian Faith and Ecology in an Unfinished Universe'. To book a place at either event, please email: petragriffiths@livingspirit.co.uk

Thursday 30th May

A study by Dr Helen Harwatt of Harvard University finds that the UK could feed itself if part of the land now used for animal grazing and feed crops were returned to forest. New forests could soak up 12 years-worth of UK carbon emissions. For every 100 calories we feed to domestic animals, we receive only 12 calories back from the food and milk that we consume. Nearly half of all land in the UK is currently used for farm animals, providing us with little nutrition compared to the feedstock that we feed them with.

Friday 31st May

The UK imports 90% of its fruit and vegetables, while we grow only 50% of the food we eat. Pulses such as beans are suitable crops for growing in Britain, and as they have nutritional and environmental benefits, they could be grown in place of animal feed in addition to a range of fruits and vegetables. Addressing the Grow Green Conference in London, Dr Harwatt warned that the UK food system is far from that required for compliance with the Paris Agreement targets. A key way to meet those targets is to return pasture and animal feed crops to forest, which will then soak up excessive CO₂ emissions. See <https://theecologist.org/2019/apr/17/converting-animal-farmland-forest>

Sources:

The Environment (CIWEM)
BusinessGreen
Population Matters

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by email (free), please email: 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
Website: www.greenchristian.org.uk

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Green Christian is a Trading name of Christian Ecology Link Ltd. Correspondence Office: 10 Kiln Gardens, Hartley Wintney, Hampshire, RG27 8RG, UK. Company Registration No. 2445198 Registered Charity No. 328744.

Tel: +44 (0) 345 4598460
info@greenchristian.org.uk

Prayer guide for the care of creation

May 2019



“God saw everything that he made and, behold, it was very good”
(Genesis 1.31).

“The Lord answered Job out of the storm and said: 'Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge? . . . Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations? Tell me if you understand. who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line along it? On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone – while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?’
(Job 38.1-7)

“The world made specially for the uses of man? Certainly not. No dogma taught by the present civilisation forms so inoperable an obstacle to a right understanding of the relations which human culture sustains to wildness. Yet it is taught from century to century as something ever new and precious, and in the resulting darkness the enormous conceit is allowed to go unchallenged.”
(John Muir)

Wednesday 1st May

Extinction Rebellion (XR), launched last October in Britain, now has 206 groups in 26 countries representing over 1 million people. Its aim is to challenge governments around the world through mass civil disobedience. In the UK its key demands are:

- 1) That the Government declare a climate emergency and repeal laws that are inconsistent with the reality of climate change
- 2) In line with climate scientists, to reduce UK carbon emissions to net-zero by 2025.
- 3) To establish a citizens' assembly to create a democracy capable of protecting people and nature.

Thursday 2nd May

XR is working with activists in Bangladesh, Mongolia and the Caribbean to provide media training, funding for secure communications and support for joint actions in the developing world. Ghana XR activists have held a meeting calling for action on the Climate and Ecological Emergency in Africa in solidarity with everyone in the Global South. They highlighted excessive plastic pollution in their seas, deforestation and the devastation caused by flooding and droughts plus the pollution of their drinking water with toxic chemicals.

Friday 3rd May

As XR enters into negotiations with the Mayor of London and the Metropolitan Police, voters in the May elections will be deciding how they can best bring pressure on government and industry to act decisively on climate change. Last October the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned that the world has just 12 years (now 11) to bring about net-zero

carbon emissions. Since then the UK government and the media have been largely occupied with other issues. Yet scientists warn that feedback mechanisms, such as the warming of oceans that results from melting ice may have already brought us to the point of no return.

Saturday 4th May

Next Saturday a meeting takes place at St Mark's Myddleton Square Meditation Centre in London EC1R 1XX from 10.30 to 4 to address the question "What does hope look like in the uncertainty and despair of climate breakdown?" Hosted by the World Community for Christian Meditation, the meeting will explore the contribution of prayer and meditation to climate change activism and the contribution of climate change awareness to our prayers for the world. To book a place, go to: <https://io-wccm.org/civicrm/event/info?id=239&reset=1> Cost £30. Concessions £20. Bring a packed lunch.

Sunday 5th May

Entrusted with an earthly home
Our minds did not create or build,
We live as visitors and guests
Until our years have been fulfilled.
Through centuries, without concern
For all the grandeur and the grace,
We've taken beauty from the earth
And left it poor – a barren place.
Our carelessness has clogged the streams,
which once were clear and sparkling strands,
Our industries have blacked the skies,
and left a smog on all our lands.
O God, we've been ungrateful guests,
upon this earth which you designed;

Friday 24th May

Tata Chemicals has joined forces with Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners and FCC Environmental to build a £480 million rubbish-fuelled power plant near Northwich, Cheshire. The steam generated from the plant will drive nearby manufacturing operations and supply Briskarb sodium bicarbonate to clean emissions from the plant's flue. From 2023, the plant will burn about 600,000 tons of waste a year and provide enough electricity to power 125,000 homes. Tata has two further waste-to-energy projects in the pipeline, one of which, near Edinburgh, will begin producing power this year.

Saturday 25th May

Carbon offsetting has been unfairly likened to the medieval practice of selling indulgences for sins committed. But many travellers have little option but to fly. Now Climate Stewards provides a calculator to assess the cost of each flight to the climate in terms of carbon emissions. The money that travellers pay to offset their emissions then goes to support community forestry, water filters and cookstove projects in Uganda, Mexico and Ghana.

Sunday 26th May

Dear Father, you know that listening is hard for us. We are so action-orientated, so product-driven, that doing is easier for us than being. Help us to be still and to listen. We want to learn how to rest in the light of your presence until we can be comfortable in that light. Help us, dear Father, to try now.
(Richard Foster)

Monday 27th May

Charcoal and other biomass is still the main fuel used in 70% of Sub-Saharan Africa, but its use is estimated to kill 4.3 million people annually, mainly women and children exposed to smoke from cooking indoors with charcoal, so causing respiratory illnesses, cataracts, heart disease and cancer. Charcoal production severely impacts ecosystems such as soil and water retention, carbon sequestration and wildlife habitats, while greenhouse gas emissions from producing charcoal in the tropics are estimated at 103.7 million tons of CO₂ equivalent a year. Charcoal is a top driver of tropical forest loss, and rapid population growth and urbanisation are likely to increase that pressure.

Tuesday 28th May

Charcoal bans in Malawi, Kenya and Chad simply force poor households to burn furniture and cow dung for alternative fuels. However, improved cookstoves can vastly improve efficiency over conventional stoves, though there has been only limited uptake so far. Solar PV has abundant potential to provide clean, renewable energy, and the upfront costs can be financed by pay-as-you-go meters. Solar water heating can provide a cheap and simple alternative to charcoal, and switching to solar-heated water is a simple technology as heaters can be made using local materials. For more details, go to: <https://theecologist.org/2019/mar/21/step-away-charcoal>

Wednesday 29th May

At 6.30 today in Winchester University, Sparkford Road, Winchester SO22 4NR, Professor John F. Haught of Georgetown University will give a free lecture called 'Inside

tirelessly for the growth of your Kingdom on earth. Amen.

Monday 20th May

When hydrogen is produced by electricity generated from wind or solar, it has zero carbon emissions. Hydrogen fuel cells are already used in forklifts, back-up power and increasingly in buses and lorries. In Japan, 42,000 micro combined heat and power systems using fuel cells have been in operation since 2017 and hydrogen will be used to power the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. A recent McKinsey report concluded that, at scale, hydrogen could meet 18% of the world's energy demand, create 30 million jobs and generate \$2.5 trillion in sales, while reducing CO₂ emissions by 6 gigatons annually. This would help us to achieve the Paris Agreement 2°C. climate target by 2050.

Tuesday 21st May

UK water consumption has soared from around 85 litres per person per day in the 1960s to an average today of 141 litres per person per day. However, the UK loses 22% of its water supply to leakage. OFWAT urges water companies to cut leakage by 15%, so saving 170 billion litres a year – enough to supply 3.1 million people or the combined demand of Cardiff, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester. Blueprint for Water, a wildlife and conservation charity, has analysed plans to cut leakage across the country and finds that, of the combined water and sewerage companies, Yorkshire Water and Anglian Water did the best while, of the water-only companies, Bristol and South Staffordshire fared best. But these are only proposals. We wait to see how the water companies rise to the challenge of delivering

the leakage reductions to which they are committed.

Wednesday 22nd May

The biggest challenge with water wastage is detecting leaks in plastic water pipes which don't transmit noise when they leak. Anglian Water has adapted naval hydrophone technology and invested £5 million in Noise Loggers, which are permanently attached at intervals along plastic pipes and take readings every night, when noise from leaks can be heard more clearly. This means that their technicians will no longer have to work at night and there will be fewer prolonged excavations and supply disruptions.

Thursday 23rd May

While the UK government seems focussed on Brexit, other parts of the UK are developing plans to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The Welsh Government has financed a £5 research department at Cardiff University to explore how people and government can achieve rapid reductions in emissions. Its plans include:

- Making buses and taxis zero-emission by 2025;
- Reviewing building regulations to set higher energy-efficiency standards for new homes
- Developing a rapid-charging network to promote electric cars;
- Commissioning a report on carbon capture and storage;
- Planting 2,000 hectares with trees, rising to 4,000 hectares as rapidly as possible;
- Providing Uganda's Mount Elgon region with fruit and fuel trees by 2030.

Within our time, help us restore our blighted world for all mankind
(Jean Carriott)

Monday 6th May

Last month the UN Commission on Population and Development met to review progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Unfortunately, since 2016, many of them have receded into the future, largely because development efforts are not keeping pace with our rapidly increasing numbers. According to the UN Deputy Secretary-General: "While the percentage of affected persons may be declining, their number is still rising. It's time for the world to show greater ambition and urgency around SDG implementation." Nor has humanity's onslaught on nature shown any signs of slowing, with resource use, greenhouse gas emissions and loss of species at a higher rate than ever before. Insufficient progress towards gender equality means that women and girls continue to suffer from violence and discrimination. To end child marriage by 2030, progress needs to be 12 times faster than it is now.

Tuesday 7th May

A report from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) titled 'Unfinished Business: the pursuit of rights and choices for all' gives data on women's ability to make decisions in three areas: health care, contraception and sexual intercourse with their partner. Across 57 countries, only an average of 57% of women who are in a relationship are able to make their own choices over all three areas. In Mali, Niger and Senegal the percentage drops to 7%. However, the percentage of women dying from pregnancy-related causes

has dropped from 369 per 100,000 live births to 216 today.

Wednesday 8th May

Today, more than 200,000 women who want to use modern contraceptives have no access to them. In 1969, the world population was 3.6 billion. It has now more than doubled to 7.7 billion, putting immense pressure on the environment. The link between women's rights and the environment has been often neglected. Empowered women have smaller families and create happier societies and a healthier planet. We desperately need to boost funding and political effort to achieve gender equality everywhere. This is also one of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Thursday 9th May

Since January, when President Bolsonaro came to power in Brazil, armed invaders have descended on indigenous peoples' lands in co-ordinated land grabs. Forty five percent of rural Brazil is owned by less than 1% of land holders and they largely represent the agribusiness sector. Responsibility for setting indigenous land boundaries has been transferred from the national foundation FUNAI to the government's ministry of agriculture. In the first month of the new presidency, deforestation rose 54% above the same month in 2018.

Friday 10th May

The EU is Brazil's 2nd largest trading partner, accounting for 18.3% of its trade. In 2017 Brazil supplied 42% of EU beef imports, while soy products accounted for one-third of Brazilian exports to the EU. Currently the EU is negotiating a trade deal with the Mercosur trading bloc, of which Brazil is the biggest

member. Indigenous groups are calling for a boycott of companies which source their material from conflict areas. The EU should require EU companies to trace and publish their supply chains fully. No agreement should be signed without providing binding guarantees for indigenous peoples' land rights.

Saturday 11th May

Ninety one percent of the world's population live in places where air quality fails to reach World Health Organisation ([WHO](#)) safe limits. The UK is no exception. Plume Labs has launched a pocket-sized monitor called FLOW which detects concentrations of NO₂, volatile organic compounds, PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ particles and measures the results against the Air Quality Index. A UNICEF report called 'Healthy Air for Every Child' concludes that London's filthy air makes chronic illnesses worse, shortens life expectancy and damages lung development in children. However, London drivers whose engines exceed NO₂ and PM emission limits must pay a daily charge to enter an Ultra Low-Emission Zone and, from 2021, the zone will cover all postcodes between the North and South Circular roads.

Sunday 12th May

Give us, dear Father, a deeper understanding of your purposes for our lives, that we may be steadfast amid the turmoil of our times. May our faith never fail, nor our love grow cold, nor our hope become faint. so may we look up and lift our heads as we wait for the coming of your Kingdom here on earth. Amen.

Monday 13th May

The Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) has issued a report titled 'This is a crisis:

Facing up to the age of environmental breakdown' in which it outlines some of the threats facing the UK, among them:

- The UK loses 2 million tonnes of topsoil every year to erosion, and more than 17% of its arable land shows signs of erosion.
- East Anglia has lost nearly 85% of its fertile peat topsoil since 1850 and is on course to lose the remainder within 30-60 years.

Tuesday 14th May

Particular threats outlined by the IPPR report include;

- Biodiversity loss: since 1970: the world has lost 60% of its vertebrate animal species.
- Biochemical flows: phosphorus and nitrogen from farms is entering our waters as run-off, creating dead zones which have too little oxygen to support life.
- Land use: 75% of the world's land suffers from soil erosion and other degradation, leading to a drop in crop yields.
- Ocean acidification: CO₂ absorption is increasing acidity at an accelerating rate, damaging marine life.
- Pollution: we face multiple threats from industrial and transport emissions, dust from farming and pesticides, radioactive materials, plastics and other pollutants

However, the ozone layer gives us a rare example of the world mustering the political will to reverse damage to a natural system

by agreeing to ban CFC chemicals that were wearing a hole in the protective ozone layer.

Wednesday 15th May

'Christians, Climate and Our Culture' is the title of a free lecture to be given today by Professor Katharine Hayhoe of Texas Tech University at 6 pm at the Old Divinity School, St. John's Street, Cambridge CB2 1TP. "At its core, climate change is profoundly unjust. It exacerbates hunger, poverty and even political instability, disproportionately impacting the most vulnerable people in the world, the very ones we Christians are called to love and care for." Professor Hayhoe highlights the key role our faith and values play in shaping our attitudes and actions on this crucial topic. For tickets, go to: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/christians-climate-and-our-culture-tickets-59519023000?>

Thursday 16th May

West Sussex Council has launched a £40 million green energy hub to integrate a range of energy technologies such as electric vehicles, heating and power storage to help cut bills for homes and businesses. Eight green tech firms, supported by the Government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, have joined the project to show how power, heating and transport technologies can together boost efficiency while slashing bills and CO₂ emissions. The first stage involves energy storage specialist Moixa creating a virtual power plant linking solar panels, batteries and electric vehicles in hundreds of homes, schools and council buildings.

Friday 17th May

Orkney has more than 50 gigawatts of wind, wave and tidal capacity – far more than it needs for its own use. Now, community-owned wind farms on Eday and Shapinsay will supply energy to produce and store hydrogen for use as a vehicle fuel and to heat local school and community buildings and, later in 2021 to power the world's first hydrogen-fuelled ferry. The Scottish Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Association is developing a training base in Kirkwall to enable the use of hydrogen on land and sea, and to create jobs.

Saturday 18th May

Despite generating more electricity than they can use, Orcadians have a high rate of fuel poverty. The limited capacity of the two cables connecting them to the national grid means that excess renewable energy generation has to be stopped to prevent the grid shutting down. In her book 'Energy at the End of the World' Laura Watts takes readers on a journey through a tale of adversity and hardship to the more recent past when Orcadians learnt how to retrofit cars to run on electricity, down to the present-day marine energy industry with its multiple challenges and its message of hope for a climate-stressed world.

Sunday 19th May

"To clasp the hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world." (Karl Barth)

Dear Lord, how desperately we need to learn to pray. Yet we are distracted, stubborn and self-centred. In your mercy, dear Lord, help us to love what you desire for us, to desire what you have promised, and to work