

## Additional Prayers

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Picture on front cover: Wild Fennel by Poppy Pickard, Two Tree Island, Essex

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# Prayer guide for the care of creation

## June 2011



“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)

“The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.”

(Romans 8.19)

“One foot in Eden still, I stand

And look across the other land.

The world’s great day is growing late,

Yet strange these fields that we have planted

So long with crops of love and hate.

Time’s handiwork by time are haunted,

And nothing now can separate

The corn and tares compactly grown . . .

Evil and good stand thick around

In the fields of charity and sin

Where we shall lead our harvest in.” (Edwin Muir)



### Wednesday 1st June

A year ago we were promised “The Greenest Government ever”, but many of the measures in the Coalition Agreement have yet to appear. In particular, the Green Investment Bank designed to fund investment in green infrastructure is still on the drawing board, but the Treasury has vetoed any borrowing powers before 2015, claiming that its liabilities would appear as part of government debt.

### Thursday 2nd June

The Coalition Agreement promised reforms to the way aviation is taxed, but the Spring Budget abandoned this pledge, scrapped any rise in Air Passenger Duty and continued the system of taxing passengers rather than flights, so allowing aircraft to run empty while continuing to emit greenhouse gases.

### Friday 3rd June

The Government’s commitment to lifting the burden of regulation off businesses (the “Red Tape Challenge”) astonishingly includes under review 278 environmental laws including the Clean Air Act, the Wildlife & Countryside Act and the

Climate Change Act. According to the Cabinet Office “The default assumption will be that burdensome regulation will go. If Ministers want to keep them, they must make a very good case for them to stay.” The proposed “one in, one out” test seems to mean that no regulation will be taken forward until an existing regulation is struck out. This would be comical if it were not seriously proposed.

### Saturday 4th June

The Coalition Agreement pledged measures to encourage marine energy. The Carbon Trust has shown that this sector could be worth £76 billion to the economy by 2050, supporting 68,000 jobs. This could provide a quarter of the world’s marine power market and could be one of the UK’s biggest export earners. Yet it has been decided to scrap the £42 million Marine Renewables Development Fund, which would have been the seed corn for marine energy.

### Sunday 5th June.

#### Environment Sunday.

Lord Jesus, our teacher and example, lift up and enlighten the fallen minds of

The reality is that the risks of ‘fracking’ are unknown and the greenhouse gas emissions may be worse than coal. Rather than extract every last cubic foot of gas from the ground, whatever the environmental consequences, the Government should move away from fossil fuels in favour of genuinely clean and sustainable renewable energy.”

### Wednesday 29th June

The Government has accepted advice from the Committee on Climate Change setting targets for cuts in UK climate emissions, but the inclusion of a “get-out” clause if the EU does not deliver similar cuts creates uncertainty for industry and for everyone involved in long-term planning. FoE urges the Government to accept other recommendations of the Committee including:

1. Setting an emissions reduction target of 60% below 1990 levels by 2030
2. Tightening the carbon budget for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> five-year period
3. Confirming that “cuts” will mean cuts in the UK rather than purchasing carbon credits overseas.

### Thursday 30th June

Pollution from soot, also known as black carbon, kills at least 1.6 million people a year and is the next biggest contributor to global warming after CO<sub>2</sub>. The \$75,000 St. Andrew’s Prize offered by the University and by ConocoPhillips has been awarded for a \$20 stove designed by US firm Biolite which not only cuts black carbon emissions by 90% but generates enough electricity to charge mobile phones and to provide light for children to study in the evenings. The award will be used to make a thousand of these stoves and to test them on the ground.

#### Sources:

CIWEM Business News  
Green Futures  
[www.edie.net](http://www.edie.net)

be living in Britain by 2033. It has no proposals for migration controls or encouragement of a lower birth rate, despite successful examples of such policies in Thailand, Korea, Iran and many other countries. Population Matters (formerly Optimum Population Trust) comments: "It is absurd to pretend that 10 million more people will not require significantly more food, water and energy, and produce more waste and pollution. As long as our numbers keep growing, we are simply running to stand still. As Kofi Annan said: "Population stabilisation should be a priority for sustainable development."

### **Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> June**

Father, we sometimes feel overwhelmed by the scale and complexity 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 27<sup>th</sup> June**

80% of UK building stock will still be standing in 2050. No action can achieve more towards meeting our carbon targets than to retrofit these

buildings to modern energy-saving standards. The green retrofit is worth £10 billion a year to the UK alone. Construction giant Skanska and architects Arup are combining their skills in architectural, engineering and financial risk analysis to help property owners spot the opportunities, meet legislative requirements and improve performance. A separate partnership between Skanska and advanced technology company GE will offer occupiers a similar service.

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

Extraction of shale gas is set to go ahead in Britain using the technique of hydraulic fracturing of rocks ('fracking') by injecting chemicals, water and sand into shale rock under pressure.

The US Chesapeake Energy Co. has just been fined \$1,088,000 for contaminating water supplies at its shale gas drilling sites. It was also fined after condensate separator tanks caught fire at another site, injuring 3 men and causing wastewater to flow into a nearby creek. Recently the French National Assembly has voted to ban 'fracking' altogether. WWF comments: "Some industry players are trying to present shale gas as the solution to all our energy problems.

mankind. Help us to assess the benefits of technology in relation to its inseparable risks. Let us not plan on earth what we would not wish to admit to you in heaven. Let not neglect – or the blindness of the busy – threaten the destruction of this beautiful world. For the sake of all, those who care and those who don't, we ask this in your Name. Amen.

(Ted Burge)

### **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June**

"The Climate Crisis: Why is nothing happening?" is the title of today's meeting of Operation Noah at Friends' Meeting House, London NW1 2BJ. The main speaker will be Professor Lynn McDonald, Director of the Climate Action Network of Canada and co-founder of JustEarth, a coalition for environmental justice addressing obstacles to action on climate change, lobbying MPs and publishing political material with an action-oriented message. For more details and to register attendance ring Natalie Hall on 0780 405 9426 or email [admin@operationnoah.org](mailto:admin@operationnoah.org) website: [www.justearth.org](http://www.justearth.org)

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WWF has resigned from the Zero Carbon Taskforce in protest.

### **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> June**

The Government's Localism Bill contains nothing to ensure that national and international targets on climate change are translated into local action. An FoE survey has shown that only 22 of the 354 local councils in England have the climate change policies needed to meet the

### **Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June**

Last year the Government pledged to uphold Labour's Zero Carbon Homes policy, meaning that all new homes would be zero carbon by 2016. Now the requirement has been limited to emissions covered by existing building regulations on conservation of heat and power, so excluding emissions from appliances. The UK Building Council estimates that only two-thirds of annual emissions will now be reduced. Its Chief Executive comments: "Low carbon construction has been one of the few sectors showing genuine green shoots of growth. This U-turn will result in loss of confidence leading to lower investment, less innovation, fewer green jobs and fewer carbon reductions."

40% emissions reductions required by 2020. Yet there is no reason why an ambitious Localism Bill should not be made compatible with sustainable development. Urgent action is needed to get the Bill revised.

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

The Government's decentralising agenda throws doubt on the Coalition agreement to ensure that, in the drive to cut emissions, the public sector should lead by example. Its own figures show that in 2008/9 local authorities were responsible for 20% of public sector emissions, the NHS for 24%, state schools for 21% and central government for just 3%.

Yet the Government's Carbon Plan merely offers a loan scheme for energy efficient projects if pay-back can be guaranteed within 5 years. It seems that the Government has the will to make massive cuts in public expenditure, yet it cannot or will not impose conditions on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

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

In just over a year's time, the Rio + 20 Conference will throw a spotlight on Britain's progress (or lack of it)

towards sustainable development. Yet the Government's position on deregulation and shrinking the state makes it significantly harder to deliver on its pledge of being "the Greenest Government ever", let alone putting sustainable development at the heart of government.

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

The Oxford Energy Futures conference today at Rewley House, Oxford, brings together practitioners, students and experts on subjects such as Buildings & Heating, Carbon Capture & Geo-engineering, Transport and Low Carbon Technology. For more details go to:

[www.conted.ox.ac.uk/eny](http://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/eny) and  
[www.futureenergy.ox.ac.uk](http://www.futureenergy.ox.ac.uk)

Fee: £90, but £45 for students. For details and booking email Gaye Walker at: [climate@conted.ox.ac.uk](mailto:climate@conted.ox.ac.uk)

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

"The Approaching Perfect Storm" is the title of today's environmental conference from 10 to 4 at Carlisle Cathedral. Addressing climate change, peak oil, energy security, threats to wildlife, the economy etc. the conference asks: "Will this be a

elsewhere shows that the MSC concept is readily transferable.

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

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

Britain's largest electricity generator is the 4 GW Drax power station which provides 7% of the country's electricity, but emits more CO<sub>2</sub> than any other source. However, 12.5% of its fuel comes from forest and crop waste and there are plans to build three new biomass plants, each of 290 MW capacity. Additionally, one of its six coal-fired units will be converted to run entirely on biomass. Even if all its biomass were imported – an unlikely scenario – it would still achieve emissions reductions of 70% compared to coal.

With forestry in its current depressed state, there is ample waste wood to provide feedstock for many years. A team from the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change has concluded that 5% of the UK total energy demand (electricity, heat and transport) could be met sustainably through the use of biomass.

#### **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June**

The aim of the Government's "Future of Food & Farming" report is "to identify the decisions that policymakers need to make to ensure that a global population rising to 9 billion or more can be fed sustainably and equitably." It emphasises the key role of women in raising agricultural productivity and recommends the "eradication of gender-based discrimination such as land ownership and user rights", but ignores other kinds of discrimination against women, such as the right to manage their fertility, access to contraception and improved reproductive health care. The idea that food security and continuing population growth bear no relation to each other is a fatal flaw in the report and reinforces the view that population is largely a taboo subject.

#### **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June**

The final report of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution entitled "Demographic Change and the Environment" notes the effects of an ageing population, changing household size and rising affluence, but ignores the effects of the 10 million extra people projected by the Office of National Statistics to

climate change knowledge and IT skills set them apart from the present generation of farmers. 68% considered their role might include using the social media to build better relations with the public. A student at the Royal Agricultural College remarked: "We really need to bridge the gap between consumers and farmers. The media has so much power to influence the public, and we need to show consumers that we aren't as bad as is sometimes made out. They can forget the fact that farming is not just a job, but a livelihood."

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

Trees provide vital ecosystem services – cleaning the air, managing rainfall, storing carbon, reducing noise pollution and stabilising temperatures. Torbay's Arboricultural Services team, using I-Tree Eco software has partnered Forest Research and Natural England to measure the environmental services and financial value of local trees in saving energy, storing carbon and reducing pollution. The figures suggest that Torbay's 818,000 trees have a value of about £218 million. They store carbon at a rate of 4,200 tonnes a year – a service worth nearly £1.5 million. A similar

study of New York's trees has valued their ecosystem services at \$122 million a year, prompting Mayor Bloomberg to back the planting of an additional 1 million trees over the next 10 years.

### **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June**

Four years ago much of the Dutch fishing industry was in deep trouble. Fuel costs were rising and the expense of lugging heavy beam trawls around the North Sea was driving many to decommission their boats. Then, under pressure from WWF and Greenpeace, the food retailers drew up a plan for sustainable seafood which included a commitment that, by the end of 2011, the only wild fish caught would carry the label of the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). The Dutch Parliament co-operated with a grant of 1.5 million euros to aid fishermen seeking MSC certification. Now six fisheries are MSC certified, including plaice (which was once red-listed by WWF), and five more are under assessment. 800 seafood products now carry the MSC label and last year 40% of Dutch shoppers recognised the MSC logo. Progress with certification and labelling in Japan, Vietnam, South Africa and

time for collapse or regeneration of our society and creation?" Keynote speakers: Paul Allen of the Centre for Alternative Technology and Professor Michael Northcott of Edinburgh University and Operation Noah. Fee £5 (students £3). For details contact Judy Morris on [judy\\_m\\_morris@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:judy_m_morris@yahoo.co.uk) or ring 01539 535 735.

### **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June**

Lord Jesus Christ, who was lifted up on the cross to draw all men unto you, look in mercy on your world. Send out your light and truth that they may lead us into paths of fellowship and peace. Break down all barriers of contention and strife, and grant that, seeking first your kingdom and righteousness, we may live together in brotherly unity and concord, to your glory and the welfare of the world that you have created.

### **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June**

Less than 60% of the food we eat is grown here, leaving us vulnerable to supply and demand shocks, while rising temperatures are expected to reduce yields of many staple crops. The International Food Policy Research Institute believes that a

temperature rise of only 1<sup>o</sup> C. could reduce global cereal production by 3-8% just when rising populations increase the demand. In addition, rock phosphate, an essential fertiliser, has doubled in cost since 2006, leading some to predict 'peak phosphorus' by 2033. Without phosphates, wheat yields could halve by 2100.

### **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June**

According to the UN Food & Agriculture Organisation the index of global food prices last peaked at 213.5 points in 2008. It is now 231 points. In 1960 there were 0.5 hectares of arable land per person in the world. Today that figure is 0.2 hectares. The price of wheat has risen 87% in the last 12 months. In 1995 China produced and consumed 14 million tonnes of soya. Today it produces the same amount, but consumes 70 million tonnes, partly for extra livestock needed to feed the increasing demand for meat. Ian Price of Triodos Bank comments: "50 years ago we spent 35% of our income on food: now it's only 20%. We've driven down the price of food to the point where we're not paying the true price in terms of water use, mineral depletion etc." Factors driving food prices up include;

1. Increasing population and demand for meat
2. The need to keep farmers in business so as to avoid future shortages
3. Financial speculation on future price rises.

In 2008 there were food riots in many countries. What are the prospects for 2012?

### Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> June

In 2008 the chairman of Nestle warned: "With the way water is managed, we will run out of water before we run out of fuel." A 2009 McKinsey report said: "We expect water to grow from being a marginal issue to one that is central to all parts of the economy."

Unilever is turning to drip irrigation (where water drips slowly through holes in pipes laid alongside plants) in order to ensure its tomato supply. The Environment Agency is encouraging the concept of water abstraction groups (WAGs) to share water scarcity in a sustainable manner. The Broadland Agricultural WAG has 180 members in Norfolk with abstraction licences for 13 cu. metres of water. BAWAG has succeeded in turning one of its abstraction areas from over-

abstraction (where the amount of water used is unsustainable) to over-licensing (where the amount of water licensed is not taken.).

### Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> June

The Feed-In Tariffs (FITs) introduced a year ago for supporting local renewable energy projects have galvanised farmers into considering generating energy from wind turbines, solar PV and anaerobic digesters, though recent restrictions on large systems have slowed down the uptake. Anaerobic digesters are particularly suited to farms where they can shift the slurry from cattle, or the silage from crop waste, and turn it into biogas. The remaining solids, a mixture of nitrogen, phosphate and potassium, can go straight back on the land. Cheshire tomato growers A. Pearson & Sons have a digester designed to fit the volume of disposable waste. Instead of paying the landfill tax, they have a home-brewed fertiliser for their tomatoes. The CO<sub>2</sub> is blown into a combined heat & power plant to heat the glasshouses and power the packhouses. Any excess electricity goes into the grid.

### Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June

The best crops for growing energy are fast-growing willows, harvested every 3 years, then burnt in anything from domestic stoves to local power stations. One hectare can produce at least 3 tonnes of carbon-neutral fuel selling at £110 a tonne. A belt of willows can sequester carbon, filter pollutants out of wastewater, help to prevent the spread of disease between neighbouring herds and, between harvests, provide a habitat for wildlife.

### Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June

Healthy ecosystems are essential to our food security. Birds and other predators keep pests at bay, bees pollinate one-third of all our food crops, microbes and earthworms fertilise and aerate our soils. Yet the UN reports that two-thirds of all ecosystem services, including food production and pollination, are in decline.

In Sichuan, China, bees for 3,000 years have pollinated the fruit trees – until the introduction of chemical pesticides, which devastated the bee population. Now villagers trawl through the trees with bottles of pollen, into which they dip brushes

made of chicken feathers and cigarette filters, applying them to millions of blossoms.

### Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June

Almighty God, you have inspired philosophers and scientists down the ages to search out the mysteries of your creation and to benefit humankind in so many fields. Send down your Holy Spirit now, in this our time of need, that he may reveal the path we must now follow if we are to fulfil your purposes on earth. Remove all prejudice, special pleading and vested interests from our society, that we may truly seek your will and find the courage to surmount all obstacles. Amen.

### Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June

DEFRA's Food Strategy for 2030 states that consumers' demand for healthy, sustainable food will be met by "profitable, competitive, highly-skilled and resilient farming, fishing and food businesses, supported by first-class research and development. Claire Wyatt of Farming Futures asks: "Will farmers have the skills to function in this brave new world?" In a survey of agricultural students and young farmers, many felt that open minds,