

## Additional Prayers

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by [email](mailto:prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk) (free), please email [prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk](mailto:prayer-guide@christian-ecology.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@christian-ecology.org.uk](mailto:pcw@christian-ecology.org.uk)  
Website: [www.greenchristian.org.uk](http://www.greenchristian.org.uk)

Picture on front cover: Winter Cyclamen by Poppy Pickard.

Christian Ecology Link Ltd is a company registered in England and Wales. Administrative Office:  
10, Beech Hall Road,  
Highams Park, London, E4 9NX  
Company Registration No. 2445198  
Registered Charity No. 328744.  
tel: +44 (0) 845 4598460  
[info@christian-ecology.org.uk](mailto:info@christian-ecology.org.uk)

## Prayer guide for the care of creation



# February 2014

"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)

"The cultivation and expansion of needs is the antithesis of wisdom. It is also the antithesis of freedom and justice. Every increase of needs tends to increase one's dependence on outside forces over which one cannot have control, and therefore increases existential fear. Only by a reduction of needs can one promote a genuine reduction in those tensions which are the ultimate cause of strife and war."

(E.F. Schumacher)

### Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> February

“We have created new idols. The worship of the golden calf of old (Exodus 32) has found a new and heartless image in the cult of money and the dictatorship of an economy which is faceless and lacking any truly humane goal . . . There is a need for financial reform along ethical lines that would produce in its turn an economic reform to benefit everyone. This would nevertheless require a courageous change of attitude on the part of political leaders. I urge them to face this challenge with determination and farsightedness, taking account, naturally, of their particular situations.”  
(Pope Francis I)

### Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February

Give us, loving Father, the wisdom so to deal with the things we possess that they may never possess us. Deliver us from reliance on our own cleverness in science and technology as we face the challenges ahead. Help us to lay our talents at your feet, trusting in your grace to keep us always on the paths of justice and peace. We pray this in the name of your dear Son, who died to save us from our sins.

### Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February

Over 2000 years ago Aristotle worried about a tendency to turn every human activity into the end of making money. “Some men turn every quality or art into a means of getting wealth.” For example, doctors think only of their fee; soldiers fight only for pay; philosophers trade wisdom for gain. Things done primarily for profit and not for their own sake are liable to be done badly. In his view, this tendency reaches its climax with usury ‘which makes a gain out of money itself, and not from the natural object of it.’ In modern terms, if the business of General Motors is making money, not cars, discerning car lovers had better shop elsewhere.

### Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February

Another concern of the Greeks regarding the desire for money was its insatiability. ‘No bounds to riches have been fixed by man’ declared the lawgiver Solon. But the ancients only knew of insatiability as a personal vice. They had no inkling of the collective, politically-orchestrated insatiability that we call “economic growth”. This extension to public life would surely have struck them as moral and political madness.

Valley Energy Services Company (OVESCO) which is an Industrial & Provident Society delivering a range of energy-related projects to people and businesses in the Lewes district. By raising £350,000 in community shares it built the Lewes Community Solar Power Station and is exploring opportunities for other large-scale renewable projects, notably in the Chailey area. Chris Rowland, the founder of OVESCO, says: ““You can’t do it on your own. It’s all those other people around you who want it to happen. It’s also the connection with other possibilities. It might not just be about generating power, it could be about growing food locally etc. “

### Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) schemes are described by the Soil Association as “a partnership between farmers and the local community, in which the responsibilities, risks and rewards of farming are shared”. One such scheme is DE4 Food in the Matlock area of Derbyshire. It is a co-operative social enterprise, with over 200 members, made up of small-scale local food and drink producers and their customers. As there weren’t

enough organic growers to meet demand, they organised a ‘patchwork farm’ system, where people can grow produce on a back-garden scale to supply the scheme. It offers tips for growers and helps them to learn new skills and so create a local economy.  
[www.de4food.org.uk](http://www.de4food.org.uk)

### Sources:

“How Much is Enough?” by Robert and Edward Skidelsky

“People Money” by Margrit Kennedy, Bernard Lietaar and John Rogers

“The Power of Just Doing Stuff” by Rob Hopkins

[www.edie.net](http://www.edie.net)

[www.wwf.org.uk](http://www.wwf.org.uk)

dependent on cheap fossil fuels, building community connections with businesses and preventing losses to distant shareholders and offshore tax havens. Businesses can pay their council tax in Bristol Pounds and council staff can take their salary in the currency, as also do several large employers. Many hundreds of businesses now accept payment in Bristol Pounds. Over £180,000 has been converted to Bristol Pounds, which it is estimated will result in £1.8 million worth of economic activity.

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

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

“The best way to predict the future is to create it”. (Abraham Lincoln)

“Faith in governments, banks and corporations is being challenged as never before. Politicians seem impotent in the face of corporate and financial power. As the veil is lifted on hidden truths and deception on a global scale, long-established institutions have seen their reputations collapse in slow motion.” (“People Money: the Promise of Regional Currencies”, by Margrit Kennedy, Bernard Lietaar and John Rogers) The authors pointedly ask: “How will we justify to our children and

grandchildren that we couldn’t imagine using the information technologies available in our times to solve our monetary problems and that we opted instead to stick with our monopolistic monetary system?”

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

The Brixton Pound was started in 2009 to revitalise local businesses and make money go further. It is governed as a community interest company with sterling reserves held by the London Mutual Credit Union. This makes low-cost, ethical loans to local people on low incomes. Customers of 200 local businesses receive 11 B£s for every £10 they pay into an online account. There are 30,000 B£s in circulation. Brixton Pound is keen to co-produce public services in partnership with Lambeth Council and its population of 250,000.

There are many forms of regional currencies described in “People Money”, each of them tailored to local conditions.

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

A model for community energy generation is provided by the Ouse

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

To Aristotle and others the proper aim of existence was the “good life”, however that might be defined. The good life today is seldom discussed. Politicians argue their case in terms of choice, efficiency or the protection of rights. Private discussion tends to follow suit. If anyone brings up an ethical dimension, the answer is too often “That’s just a matter of opinion.”

As a consequence, the acquisitive instinct has been released from all bounds. If there is no such thing as a good life, then acquisition has no absolute goal – except to keep ahead of the others.

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

According to Stanley Resor, a US advertiser, writing in 1950: “Consumers don’t feel the need for a second car unless you remind them forcefully of the fact. This need has to be created in their minds and you have to make them realise the advantages a second car will bring. At times they are even hostile to the idea. I see advertising as the educative, activating force capable of bringing about the changes in demand that we need, so increasing consumption to a

level commensurate with our production.” According to Robert and Edward Skidelsky in “How Much is Enough?” “If advertising inflames our tendency to insatiability, there is a strong case for restricting it. Sweden and Norway prohibit advertising during children’s television. In Britain, however, the tendency has been to ease restrictions on advertising.”

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

The Worldwatch Institute’s report “State of the World 2013: Is Sustainability Still Possible?” maintains that moves to change individual behaviour can mask the need for business and political changes necessary to tackle unsustainable consumption. One of the authors, Annie Leonard of the “Story of Stuff” project, writes: “Describing today’s environmental problems as individual issues has a disempowering effect. Even if we decrease our driving, stop littering and refuse plastic bags, the broader impacts are still negligible. Society-wide, we need to implement new technologies, cultural norms, infrastructure, policies and laws. The good news is that we have everything

we need to make big changes in the years ahead.”

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

Sustainable bioplastics, made out of linen and natural resins, are set to replace plastic composites in 3-4 years, according to scientists in a EU-funded project. The head of engineering firm D’Appolonia said: “These materials are born out of by-products like cotton, linen or hemp, or resins made with sugar cane or other crops which are not aimed at the food market. These new eco-materials are fully tested and compared with those of carbon and other classic composites with tests including fracture toughness, elasticity and plasticity. The new composites could be used to equip cars, build construction panels or to assemble furniture and musical instruments.”

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

Loving Father, forgive us for the folly, blindness and greed with which we have pursued material gains, 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 10<sup>th</sup> February**

According to the BP Energy Outlook 2035 report, global carbon emissions are set to rise by 29% by 2035 as a result of a 41% increase in energy consumption. Virtually all (95%) of the projected growth is in non-OECD countries such as China and India, while in OECD countries the growth is 0.2% a year till 2030. Although natural gas has half the carbon emissions of coal, for China and India coal will continue to be the cheaper option. Carbon-free sources of energy (renewables, hydro and nuclear) will increase their share of power generation from 32% in 2012 to 37% by 2035. Renewables globally will increase by almost 7% a year, although by 2035 they will still account for only 7% of the global energy mix.

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

According to the latest Global Risk Report released by the World Economic Forum, water shortages are now among the highest global risks, along with the economy,

help existing businesses to thrive. Some key findings:

Up to £22 million leaves the Totnes food economy every year. Enabling just 10% if that to be spent with local businesses on local produce would bring £2.2 million into the local economy each year.

Making local homes more energy-efficient could be worth between £26 and £75 million, and meeting just 10% of this demand would be worth at least £2.6 million a year.

The local potential for renewable energy is worth £6.4 million a year. A shift to harnessing 10% of this potential would be worth £600,000 for the local economy.

A concerted push for this 10% target could provide a £5.5 million boost to the struggling local economy, creating many skilled jobs.

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

Anyone wishing to give or receive services without any money passing has the option of using the Timebank system. This is an international network involving 26,000 people in the UK alone and, since 1998, generating over 1.3 million hours of support for

each other. When participants provide an hour for somebody, they automatically bank an hour where they can have somebody to do something for them. They can also pass their banked hours to someone else via the national timebank network. The system brings together the generations, e.g. older people with a lifetime of childcare experience can swap those skills with younger people, fit and agile, who can do their shopping or tend their garden.

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

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

Give us, dear Father, a deeper sense of companionship with fellow followers of Christ, and a greater boldness in taking up our cross and standing against the forces of evil in your world. This we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

A key ingredient of attempts to establish thriving local economies has often been the introduction of a local currency. One example is the Bristol Pound. It does not replace sterling, but acts as a powerful tool for building shorter supply chains that are less

Areas covered include fair trade (CafeDirect), renewable energy (Good Energy), poverty alleviation, community shops and pubs, sustainable forestry, green transport and organic food and farming. 700 businesses have so far benefited. "People have lost trust in banks and money managers and are looking for ways to invest directly, as evidenced by the rapid growth of crowd-funding."

[www.ethex.org.uk](http://www.ethex.org.uk)

### Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February

The Funding Network (TFN) enables individuals to join together to crowd-fund social change projects. This community of givers has together raised over £5.5 million for over 800 diverse local, national and international projects through TFN groups in London, Bristol, Leeds, Oxford, Devon, Norfolk, Kent and Toronto. At each funding event 4-6 charities selected by TFN's selection panel present their work and say what they would do with £5,000. The presenters then leave and a pledging session follows. Finally, the totals are announced and everyone celebrates over a drink. A year later, the presenters come back to tell attendees about the impact of their

funding.  
[www.thefundingnetwork.org.uk](http://www.thefundingnetwork.org.uk)

### Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February

The Transition Network has established a website ([www.reconomy.org](http://www.reconomy.org)) listing socially-orientated enterprises based around local, independent businesses and supply chains designed to meet basic needs including food, energy, transport and housing. They are all sustainable, offering social benefits and with shared ownership, providing jobs for local people as well as volunteering opportunities. The enterprises listed have a combined turnover of £3.5 million and provide paid employment for more than 100 people. They show that viable business models are already in place and highly replicable.

### Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February

The "Totnes & District Local Economic Blueprint" was described by the local MP as "a milestone in the efforts to identify the economic benefit of localising businesses and supply chains." The report identifies a multi-million pound opportunity to create new jobs, grow new enterprises and

unemployment, food shortages and extreme weather. Increasing water risks are a result of "mismanagement and increased competition" for already scarce water resources due to economic activity and population growth. Nestle Group chairman Peter Brabeck-Letmathe, who said in 2012 that the world would run out of water before it ran out of oil, now says: "I have already expressed my concern about the possible impact of water shortage on food production, leading to a risk of up to 30% shortfalls in global cereal production by 2030 due to shortage of freshwater. With other factors involved (policies subsidising the use of food for fuel, slowdown in the growth of per-hectare productivity etc.) the risk of a food crisis is also ranked very highly among the threats to our future."

### Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February

An RSA report "A New Agenda on Climate Change: Facing up to Stealth Denial and Winding Down on Fossil Fuels" finds that human response to climate change is unfolding as a political tragedy because scientific knowledge and economic power are pointing in opposite directions. The climate problem is being mis-

characterised as an exclusively environmental problem rather than a broader threat to the global financial system, public health and national security. Britain can take a leading role in addressing the global climate problem, but only if it draws up a new agenda that faces up to pervasive "stealth denial" and the need to focus on keeping fossil fuels in the ground. John Ashton, special representative for the UK Government on climate change 2006-2012, said: "Not one of the UK's big national parties is yet serious about climate change. It's not that they don't have policies, even some good ones, but they haven't built up a conversation with the country about what climate change means in relation to their values, in the context of our history and character, what it means for the choices we now face, where we are going and ultimately about who we think we are. . . British political will on climate change is flagging, and is not currently fit for purpose."

### Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February

The Prime Minister has told us he 'suspects' that climate change has something to do with extreme weather events such as the recent floods. The

global insurance industry has no such doubts. A report from the Geneva Association, a leading insurance thinktank, entitled “Warming of the Oceans and implications for the insurance industry” says that the world’s oceans have been warming significantly as the result of rising greenhouse gas emissions, and it is this warming that is the key driver of global extreme weather events. “Understanding the changes in ocean dynamics and the complex interactions between the ocean and the atmosphere is the key to understanding current changes in the distribution, frequency and intensity of global; extreme events relevant to the insurance industry – such as tropical cyclones, flash floods and extra-tropical storms.”

### Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February

The European Commission has affirmed EU-wide targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and generating renewable energy, but:

- Deferred setting any target for energy efficiency
- Deferred cancelling the massive over-supply of carbon under the Emissions Trading Scheme

- Deferred closing the gaps in EU shale gas legislation
- Deferred setting any requirements for EU states to meet targets for renewable energy.

The European Alliance to Save Energy comments: “We currently have an energy paradigm where we send billions of euros out of Europe rather than employing people in Europe to save energy. This was a chance to fix this by creating an energy and climate policy that started with the most cost-effective measures. Instead, the Commission has given into the intense lobbying efforts of the large energy providers and energy-intensive industries and what we have is a disaster – both for Europe’s climate and our competitiveness.”

### Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February

A report from the UK Green Building Council urges the Government to make household energy efficiency the UK’s top infrastructure priority. “Improving the energy efficiency of our cold and draughty homes is the only way to permanently cut householders’ spiralling energy bills and will be a major driver of economic growth. . . While the Green Deal is the

cornerstone of the UK’s retrofit policy, it has massively under-delivered. Government has to step in to create incentives that spur homeowners to action and to prioritise capital spending on energy efficiency. Underwriting the Green Deal, as Government has done with Help to Buy, would provide a huge shot in the arm for the retrofit industry.”

### Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February

Lord, give us a deeper understanding of your purposes, 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. Help us to fix our eyes on Jesus, who for the joy that was set before him endured the Cross, scorning its shame. Amen.

### Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February

The Pensions Minister, Steve Webb, speaking at the launch of ShareAction’s “Green Light Report”, warned pension funds of the risks associated with climate change. He welcomed the Law Commission’s ruling that “fiduciaries such as pension scheme trustees may take into account factors relevant to long-term

investment performance including environmental factors” and indeed they should actively consider whether doing so serves the best interests of their beneficiaries. The report argues that pension funds have a responsibility to protect the public and their pension savings from climate risks. David Nussbaum of WWF commented: “Investors need to play their part in recognising that continuing to invest in high-carbon assets stores up huge financial and economic risks. The successful businesses of the future will be the ones who value, manage and restore natural assets and limit their exposure to risks such as those posed by a changing climate.” Savers who wish to interview other savers already engaging with their pension fund on climate may contact Jen Glyn on 020 7183 2353 or email:

[jen@shareaction.org](mailto:jen@shareaction.org)

### Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February

Ethex is a not-for-profit organisation supported by six charities and bringing together investors and businesses working to make money do good. The public has to date invested over £1 million in positive investments that do good while offering a financial return.