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Picture on front cover: Mushroom

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Prayer guide for the care of creation



November 2014

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.” (Rev. 3.20)

“Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?
If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him?” (Matthew 7.9-11)

“Some people think of prayer as the means to get God to do things for us. That is not the primary purpose of prayer. The primary purpose is to bring the whole of life into the presence of God for cleansing and decision-making.” (Selwyn Hughes)

Saturday 1st November

Pray and Fast for the Climate is an initiative being launched today with services in London, Lancaster, Brighton and Church Stretton. The aim is to mobilise Christians of all denominations to pray and work for a meaningful and just climate agreement to be reached next month at the UN climate talks. The London service takes place at St. John's Church, Waterloo Road SE1 82Y, when the speaker will be the Revd Steve Chalke.

www.operationnoah.org/news-events/faith-climate-service

Sunday 2nd November

"The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend." (Exodus 33.11)

Gracious Father, help us to find a pattern for our prayer life that is right for us rather than one based on what others say or do. Drive home to each of us the truth that you are a God who delights to give what we need. Teach us how to be as much at ease with you as you are with us.

Monday 3rd November

A new report from the European Environment Agency highlights the bad effects on the world economy of

Europe's growing consumption of food, clothing and technology. Food. Meat consumption has doubled since 1995. To produce 1 kg. of beef requires 617 litres of water, while the beef industry produces 2.6 billion tonnes of CO2 annually. Solutions: Shorter supply chains would support small farms and put consumers more in touch with food production, so increasing awareness of environmental impacts and seasonal food.

Clothing. EU purchases of clothes have increased by 34% since 1990. In 2004, 33% of demand was met by imports. Now the figure is 87%. Cotton production involves much use of water and land resources with applications of pesticides. Solutions: Europeans could buy fewer, better-quality clothes from socially- and environmentally-friendly sources. New business models could encourage the sharing and leasing of clothes.

Technology. Growth in the number of European households and in the replacement cycles of electronics, combined with the deliberate designing of products to fail, have led to massive waste. Electronics manufacture uses up to 140 times more energy per kg. than plastics, so raising electricity consumption by 37%

Friday 28th November

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are seen as critical in the drive to build ocean resilience to climate change and to 're-seed' the wider oceans as healthy fish populations move beyond their boundaries. Lewis Pugh, a UN Patron of the Oceans, has undertaken seven long-distance swims in each of seven seas (Mediterranean, Adriatic, Aegean, Black, Red, Arabian and North Seas) to raise awareness of the need to conserve at least 10% of our seas in a network of well-managed MPAs. "We have done it on land – think of Yellowstone, the Serengeti and Kruger National Park – and now it's time to protect the seas."

www.lewispugh.com

Saturday 29th November

Today is Buy Nothing Day in the UK, when we lock up our wallets and purses, forget about our credit cards and abandon any idea of 'retail therapy'. It's a day when we challenge ourselves, our families and our friends to switch off from shopping and tune into life. Everything we buy has an impact on the environment. Buy Nothing Day highlights the environmental and ethical consequences of consumerism.

www.buynothingday.co.uk

Sunday 30th November

Lord Jesus, we see that during your life on earth you never hurried, never worried and were never flurried, yet you always had time for the essentials of each day. Teach us how to make time for the things that matter, time for prayer, time for caring for people both near and far, time for focussing on your will for us. Change us, dear Lord, that we may, in our turn, change the world.

(Selwyn Hughes – adapted)

Sources:

The Environment (CIWEM)
Organic Way (Garden Organic)
Resurgence
www.edie.net

Additional Prayers

Tuesday 25th November

Reviewing “The Burning Answer: a User’s Guide to the Solar Revolution” by Keith Barnham, Jonathon Porritt writes: “Barnham argues that the solar revolution is doable *right now*. That’s just the start. Digging deeper into the solar innovation pipeline, he reveals the extraordinary wealth of breakthroughs on materials, costs, efficiencies, integration, storage etc. that are now bearing down on bemused politicians and shell-shocked diehards in the fossil fuel and nuclear industries. . . . If politicians *really* understood the incomparably serious threat of accelerating climate change, we would be witnessing a dramatically different response from leaders today. Why do they commit billions of euros to researching nuclear fusion at Cadarache in France while knowing full well that nothing can come of this investment for at least 30 years – and yet can’t find the few million it would take to establish an international solar laboratory?”

Wednesday 26th November

In July the WCC representing 300 church organisations with a membership of 590 million voted in favour of divestment from fossil fuels. The Quakers set the ball rolling in

2011 and finished divesting their portfolio last Christmas. Now religious groups from the Anglican Church of New Zealand to the Diocese of California, from the Church of Scotland to the General Synod of the Church of England are busy doing the same. Campaigner Siobhan Grimes asks: “If churches make their decisions purely based on financial returns, then what makes a church a church if it’s not trying to live up to some gospel value? . . . The Bible says a lot about money. It’s at the heart of Christianity, and so I’m sure divestment will happen.”

Thursday 27th November

The 10,000 square miles of the Okavanga Delta have become the thousandth World Heritage Site. This area of permanent marshland and seasonally-flooded plains is home to a range of endangered mammals including cheetahs, white and black rhinoceros, African wild dogs and lions. The designation gives it international recognition and protection, ensuring its safety for generations to come.

www.wildernessfoundation.org.uk

since 1990. Solutions: The system could be made more sustainable with higher-quality appliances and a focus on sharing/leasing common products, making them more energy-efficient, increasing take-back and remanufacturing, and saving the more valuable materials from e-waste.

Tuesday 4th November

As part of Good Money Week last month, a campaign was launched calling for banks to stop funding fossil fuels and climate change, and giving the ‘Big Five’ British banks till the end of January to commit to divesting from fossil fuels, or customers will leave them. Campaigner Charlotte Webster said: “Fossil fuel investment has never been environmentally acceptable. It is now no longer socially acceptable. It is fast becoming economically unacceptable too. Investment groups like the Rockefeller Foundation have joined religious groups, universities, councils and cities committed to moving millions of pounds out of fossil fuels. Last month Glasgow University pledged to divest £18 million, joining the BMA, Oxford City council and the Quakers in moving away from fossil fuels.”

Wednesday 5th November

A new report from the Global Wind Energy Council finds that wind-generated electricity could supply up to 20% of the world’s needs by 2030, preventing more than 1 billion tonnes of CO2 emissions each year – equal to the combined emissions of Germany and Italy. By the end of this year, wind energy installations will reach 371 gigawatts. In the US, carbon emissions fell by 16% since 2007. 40% of the fall was due to a switch to renewables, 30% to improved energy efficiency and only 30% due to the shale gas boom.

Thursday 6th November

The Government’s Plug-in Car Grant, which reduces the price of Ultra-low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) by £5,000 for cars and £8,000 for vans, has subsidised 17,000 ULEVs since 2010 and in the last 3 months the rate of take-up has more than doubled. Transport Minister Baroness Hamer said: “Expanding this sector is creating thousands of jobs, contributing to Britain’s thriving automotive industry and encouraging more investment in the UK.”

The EU £31 million Hydrogen for Innovative Vehicles project has enabled Hyundai to start production of

a hydrogen fuel cell vehicle, one hundred of which are being sent for assessment to Copenhagen, Innsbruck, Munich, Stuttgart and London.

Friday 7th November

From next January, farmers using their fields for solar panels will lose payments for that land under the CAP – despite the conclusion of the All-Party Group for Beef and Lamb that “the land is still available for farming as the solar fixings only take up 5% of the land. As far as farm payments are concerned, solar should be treated in the same way as orchards or fields with trees, where animals continue to graze the land in between.” Explaining her decision, Environment Secretary Liz Truss said: “It makes my heart sink to see row upon row of solar panels where once there was a field of wheat or grassland for livestock to graze. Solar panels are best used on the 250,000 hectares of south-facing commercial rooftops where they will not compromise the success of our agricultural industry.” DEFRA claims that the change will save £2 million of taxpayers’ money each year.

Saturday 8th November

Solarcentury and Primrose Solar are constructing a 48 MW. solar farm on Grade 4 agricultural land at Southwick near Portsmouth. The development will include composting toilets, biodiesel generators (to cut carbon emissions) and a car-sharing scheme for staff. Solarcentury has committed to confining its developments to non-agricultural land or land of lower agricultural quality, minimising their visual impact, engaging with the local community and using its sites for educational purposes. The farm is expected to start generating electricity for the grid by the end of next March.

Sunday 9th November

Father God, help us always to approach your throne with a heart disposed to worship, and a desire to put your glory ahead of our needs. Forgive us that so often we are engaged in weighing, probing, seeking and asking. Help us to contemplate your glory, and so to reflect some of that glory to the world outside as we seek to meet its needs.

(Selwyn Hughes –adapted)

infrastructure which enables it, imperilling the pollinators, habitat engineers and natural pest controllers at the heart of a functioning ecosystem.” The report suggests that regulatory agencies should further tighten restrictions on neonicotinoids and fibronil and start planning a global phase-out of these insecticides.

Saturday 22nd November

The Annual Members’ Meeting of CEL takes place at 2 pm today in St. Aloysius Church, 20 Phoenix Road, Euston, London NW1 1TA. Ian Christie, research co-ordinator of the EU- and DEFRA-supported Sustainable Lifestyles Research Group, will present the findings of its 3-year research into what engages people in ‘green’ behaviour, including community innovation and catalysts for personal action. The doors open at 1 pm. Bring lunch.

Sunday 23rd November

Loving Father, teach us the art of listening to your voice. Establish a listening-post in our hearts, so that we can better detect your voice. We long to have a trained ear. Draw us closer to you, so that our minds and souls may become

more receptive to what you might be saying to us.

(Selwyn Hughes – adapted)

Monday 24th November

According to an Ecofys study approved by the European Commission, generating electricity from onshore wind is now cheaper than using gas, coal or nuclear. The figures are:

Gas:	£130 per MWh
Nuclear:	£105
Coal:	£128-184
Onshore wind:	£80
Offshore wind:	£147
Solar PV:	£171

The deputy CEO of the European Wind Energy Association said: “Renewables are regularly denigrated for being too expensive and a drain on the taxpayer. Not only does the commission’s report show the alarming cost of coal, but it also presents onshore wind as being both cheaper and more environmentally-friendly.” Coincidentally, Ecotricity and Skanska have announced a joint venture called ‘Skylark’ to build a series of wind farms that will together generate 350 MW.

young people to be leaders in their school communities now, and to be leaders in water conservation when they will be most needed.”

Wednesday 19th November

The DECC has produced a Water Source Heat Map which identifies 40 urban rivers with the greatest potential for deployment of water source heat pumps. This follows the opening last year of the Kingston Heights Open Water Heat Pump community heating system. The scheme harvests low-grade heat from the Thames and transfers it 200 metres to a 142-bed hotel and conference centre plus 137 apartments, where it provides all requirements for heating or cooling water. Mitsubishi’s advanced heat pump technology boosts the low-grade heat provided by solar energy naturally stored in every open body of water to the temperature required to provide heating and hot water for the flats and hotel. The system provides 2.3 MW. of thermal energy, while electricity is provided by Ecotricity’s wind turbines, making the entire installation Zero Carbon.

Thursday 20th November

Whole Foods Market has introduced a Responsibly Produced rating system

to assess the impact of farming practices on the environment and human health. It labels fruit, vegetables and flowers as ‘good’ ‘better’ or ‘best’ to help shoppers make informed choices in the produce and floral departments. It forbids the use of some neurotoxins still allowed in agriculture. To earn a ‘good’ rating, a farm must take 16 steps to protect air, soil, water and human health. A ‘best’ rating requires exceptional performance in 1) pest management, 2) farm worker welfare, 3) water conservation, 4) enhancing soil health, 5) ecosystems & biodiversity, 6) waste reduction & 7) air, energy and climate.

Friday 21st November

A report funded by Triodos Bank provides evidence that over 20 years the use of systemic insecticides has caused significant damage to a wide range of beneficial invertebrates and is a key factor in the decline of bees. Lead author Dr Jean-Marc Boumartin of the National Centre for Scientific Research in France said: “We are witnessing a threat to the productivity of our natural and farmed environment equivalent to that posed by organophosphates or DDT. Far from protecting food production, the use of neonics is threatening the very

Monday 10th November

EU leaders have agreed on the following:

- A 40% cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030;
- A 27% target for the market share of renewable energy by 2030, but with variability among member states;
- A 27% improvement in energy efficiency by 2030.

Samantha Smith, head of WWF Global Climate & Energy Initiative, comments: “These targets are thoroughly inadequate. We are facing what is likely to be the warmest year ever, heat waves and floods are already hitting Europe, and the developing world is experiencing even more dire impacts. European countries need to deliver targets that will drive a rapid and just transition out of fossil fuels and into renewables and energy efficiency. Until they have done so, they cannot claim to be climate leaders.”

Tuesday 11th November

“Warm homes, not warm words” is a WWF report which finds that just 2% of the UK demand for heating is met from low-carbon sources – a far cry from the 20% goal by 2020 outlined by the Government’s fourth carbon

budget. Heating accounts for 32% of UK greenhouse gas emissions and 44% of our energy use. To deliver sustainable and affordable low-carbon heat, the Government must: Publicly highlight the long-term economic, energy security and environmental benefits of low-carbon heat, providing both regulation and incentives, including extending the Renewable Heat Incentive to provide certainty to industry; Make energy efficiency a national priority, with legislation that sets a timeline for improvements; Elevate the roll-out of low-carbon heat networks to a national priority.

Wednesday 12th November

A new £20 million anaerobic digestion plant has been completed in Widnes by Britcon designed to recycle 90,000 tonnes of commercial and food waste a year and to generate biogas, which will be transported directly to the national gas grid to provide enough heat for 8,000 homes. It is the largest gas-to-grid AD plant in the UK and is set to be a blueprint for similar projects elsewhere.

Thursday 13th November

A new £48.5 million biomass power station on Speyside will supply

enough electricity for more than 20,000 homes and enough heat to produce steam for whisky distillation at the Macallan plant. The carbon saving equates to taking 18,000 cars off the road. The whisky industry employs over 10,000 people across Scotland. The project is funded by John Laing and the Green Investment Bank and is supported by a Treasury guarantee. Danny Alexander, the Chief Secretary, said: "Over £1 billion infrastructure projects have been brought forward as a result of the UK guarantees scheme and £36 billion worth of projects are pre-qualified. Our action is creating the conditions for more investment in our infrastructure and helping to build a stronger economy."

Friday 14th November

World coffee prices have fluctuated wildly in recent years, threatening the livelihoods of the 25 million people who cultivate this labour-intensive crop, many of them small-scale producers who derive little economic benefit compared with traders, roasters, distributors, retailers and investors. Major concerns include workers' rights, child labour, use of agrochemicals and deforestation. In Ethiopia, the Oroma Coffee Farmers Cooperative provides educational and

health benefits as well as insurance against crop loss. In Costa Rica and India cooperatives have become leaders in the production of carbon-neutral coffee. Other initiatives set standards in fair trade and organic production. Certified coffee could reach 20-25% of the market by 2015. In the Netherlands 40% of all coffee is certified sustainable. In the US the figure is 16%.

Saturday 15th November

The International Bar Association Task Force on Climate Change & Human Rights has produced a report on the challenges facing legal regimes which are poorly suited to provide legal remedies for people most affected by climate change. It recommends:

- Legal recognition of a universal human right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment;
- Creation of an International Court on the Environment to resolve disputes on climate change issues and, meanwhile, to recognise the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice and the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague;

- Greening of bilateral investment treaties to include an obligation to comply with environmental laws and provide precedence of such laws over conflicting trade measures;
 - New WTO guidelines to assure states that trade-related measures motivated by climate concerns do not fall foul of WTO trading rules.
- Through its 50-plus recommendations, the Task Force calls on world leaders, policymakers, lawyers, corporations, trade bodies, scientists and individuals to take joint, bold action to achieve climate change justice.

Sunday 16th November

Father God, you have given us so many good things. Give us also a thankful and praising heart. Forgive us that so often we cannot see the blessings that stare us in the face. Deepen in us the conviction that everything good in our lives comes from you, and that nothing, but nothing can ever happen to us that cannot be turned to your glory.

(Selwyn Hughes – adapted)

Monday 17th November

A report called "Dredging up Trouble" has been released by Blueprint for Water partners, a coalition of

organisations representing over 2 million members. Recent studies have shown that dredging rivers can sometimes make downstream flooding worse by moving water too quickly down rivers. In June new guidance from the Environment Agency appeared to prioritise dredging over other flood management options. "The Government must understand that (flood prevention) extends way beyond dredging and needs to encompass resilience, sustainable land use and other measures which are tried, tested and supported by the evidence."

Tuesday 18th November

HSBC and Global Action Plan have launched a Water Explorer Programme to enable 9,000 young people aged 8-14 from 11 countries to tackle water issues including water saving, cleanliness and better access. Students who complete the Water Explorer challenge will be awarded a UNEP certificate. GAP's manager, Andy Deacon, said: "We know that the impacts of climate change will most readily be felt in water scarcity and pollution – issues that will only become more urgent for the next generation. We're proud to be leading an international project to enable