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## Prayer guide for the care of creation

# January 2015



“Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also . . . Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.”  
(Matthew 6.20-21 & 33)

“I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation . . . whether living in plenty or in want.”  
(Philippians 4.12)

“Once we realise that we own absolutely nothing, we are enlightened, not only in the sense that our minds are flooded with light, but also in the sense that a weight is lifted from us and our hearts grow lighter.”  
(Donald Nicholl)

### **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> January**

Father God, who changes not in this your changing world, give us a sense of the direction you are leading us in the year to come.

Save us from allowing events to pull our idealism down to unworthy compromise or moral despair.

Help us to look forward with hope and determination and to use past failings to learn how utterly we need you. So, marching forward into the New Year, make us brave, serene and strong, so that we may be as lamps shining in the darkness, helping to light the path which humanity must tread, and guiding us into the way of peace.

Amen. (*Leslie Weatherhead –adapted*)

### **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> January**

“Put your money where your conscience leads you” is advice that few of us follow in detail, and the Christian churches face particularly difficult choices in regard to their investments in fossil fuels. Yet the World Council of Churches has voted in favour of divestment from fossil fuels and many other church groups have followed

Where else should the money go?

The New Testament is full of examples regarding the right use of money. Yet trusts and pensions fund

managers have an obligation to maximise returns for their beneficiaries. This is just one of many dilemmas to be resolved as we face choices between money values and the health of the planet.

### **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> January**

Former World Bank economist Herman Daly suggests that we should cap or tax fossil fuels, so raising their price and incentivising resource-saving technologies while distributing the tax or auction revenue among the fuel-poor.

His other main proposal is to stop banks creating ever more money out of nothing by requiring them to hold 100% reserves on all their deposits. So, every pound loaned would be a pound that someone had previously saved. The money supply would thus stop racing ahead of the natural capital on which our lives depend. With new investment limited to past savings, investors would be more selective, improving the quality of new investments while limiting their quantity.

### **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January**

Father, we pray for the scientific community throughout the world. We pray especially for those whose

including shops, post offices and even hairdressers. Mike Benner, a CPRE trustee and director of the Society of Independent Brewers has the details for anyone interested.

### **Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January**

The Hope for the Future campaign is running a Climate Ambassador Training Day from 10 to 5 today at St. Mark's Church, Broomfield, Sheffield for those wanting to know how to engage their church and community politically with the issues surrounding climate change. Talks by the Bishop of Sheffield, Paul Blomfield MP and a pastor from the Filipino United Society will be followed by sessions on the barriers to effective action and ways to overcome them. Entry is free but places are limited. To register, email: [hopeftf@gmail.com](mailto:hopeftf@gmail.com) A donation of £10 would help cover costs.

### **Sources:**

“This Changes Everything”  
by Naomi Klein (Allen Lane)  
[www.edie.net](http://www.edie.net)

### **Additional Prayers**

aims to become the world's first carbon-neutral capital by 2025.

### **Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January**

A report from the European Environment Agency finds that while car transport had declined since 2009, air transport has significantly increased. Pollution from car exhausts is still a major problem owing to continued growth in the number of diesel cars and the fact that only 0.5% of new car registrations are of electric or hybrid electric cars. This is a result of incentives such as scrappage schemes and company car arrangements, which favour petrol or diesel cars in most countries.

### **Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January**

The Building Research Establishment (BRE) while welcoming the Treasury's £2.3 million investment in flood defences, argues that flooding is inevitable as climate change and urbanisation have put more than 5.5 million homes at risk of flooding. "Urban development is growing apace, so surface water management needs to be embedded in new developments with things like sustainable urban drainage systems, green roofs to decrease water run-off as well as localised flood-resilient technologies."

### **Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January**

The International Energy Agency, in a new report, says that governments must accelerate the deployment of carbon capture technology, since demand for coal will reach the 9 billion tonne level by 2019. "We have heard many pledges and policies aimed at mitigating climate change, but they will mostly fail to arrest the growth in coal demand. Although the contribution coal makes to energy security is undeniable, we must emphasise once again that coal use in its current form is unsustainable. For this to change, we need to radically accelerate deployment of carbon capture and sequestration."

### **Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January**

British pubs provide a safe, regulated place for people to enjoy a drink and exchange ideas in a sociable environment, rather than in front of the TV. But, with pubs closing all around the country, their future is under threat. However, the idea of community ownership is offering a real alternative to closure. Some communities have purchased their pub under the 'community right to purchase' in the Localism Act. Many have diversified and offer services

research may produce results contrary to the expectations of those who commissioned it, that they might find ways to publish what they know to be true. We pray that the media may be responsible in the way they present scientific findings, and that certainty may not be claimed where there is none. We pray especially that the dangers, as well as the benefits, of scientific advances may never be overlooked or understated. This we pray in the Name of your Son, who was not afraid to overturn the tables of temple traders.

### **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January**

The USA and China have agreed to limit their CO2 emissions. The USA pledged to cut its carbon emissions by 26-28% of 2005 levels by 2025, more than doubling its present rate of reduction. China, which now burns half the world's coal, will install 800-1000 gigawatts of renewable and nuclear generating capacity by 2030 – more than all its existing coal-fired plants. Both countries agreed to reduce the use of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) which are a thousand times more potent as greenhouse gases than CO2. The US targets for 2050 are more demanding than Britain's, while China is on course to reduce its

emissions by more per unit of GDP than Britain. One question for Britain is: "Will we be left behind economically in this fast-moving low-carbon world?"

### **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January**

Under last month's agreement at Lima countries should report to the UN by March with pledges to cut greenhouse gas emissions after 2020 and the UN would determine whether the pledges were enough to limit warming to 2 degrees C. But the legal structure of a climate agreement remains undefined and decisions about the flow of finance to developing countries were deferred. In short, much remains to be done if the outlines agreed at Lima are to be followed by a comprehensive agreement in Paris next June.

### **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> January**

Last month the Government launched a £24 million Home Improvement Fund to encourage homeowners to instal energy efficiency improvements. Within 24 hours the fund was fully allocated and the scheme closed. Another Green Deal Home Improvement Fund, launched in June, closed in August because the money for a whole year was spent within 2 months. The UK Green Building Council commented: "This latest gold

rush has been exacerbated by the sudden closure of the previous funding over the summer. Government should learn from this debacle that we need long-term drivers for energy efficiency – such as linking Stamp Duty – to avoid this constant boom and bust.”

#### **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> January**

UNEP, in its Emissions Gap Report, stated that, if the world is to avoid a rise of 2 degrees C., we must keep to a carbon budget whereby emissions peak by 2024, are halved by 2050 and achieve carbon neutrality by mid to late century. Now a new 1 Gigaton Coalition is measuring and publishing figures for emissions reductions to provide evidence that energy efficiency works and to encourage the uptake of new renewable energy technologies.

The global economy could be \$181 million better off if we adopted energy efficiency as a first choice, while estimates of the savings in emissions vary from 2.5 to 6.8 gigatonnes of carbon per year by 2030

#### **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January**

The International Energy Agency reports that Australian scientists at the University of New South Wales

have set a record by converting to electricity more than 40% of the sunlight hitting solar panels. The key component is an ‘optical bypass filter’ which reflects certain wavelengths of light and transmits others. Other innovations include the use of heliostat mirror ‘power tower’ concentrators and high-efficiency PV cells. The Australian Renewable Energy Association commented: “We hope to move to pilot-scale demonstrations and, ultimately, more efficient commercial plants which make renewable energy cheaper.”

#### **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> January**

In the UK last summer, in the aftermath of Hurricane Bertha, wind-powered electricity generation exceeded coal power for the first time, providing 16% of energy output compared to coal’s 11.3%. Shortly afterwards EDF Energy was forced to shut down four of Britain’s nuclear reactors because of faults found in a boiler unit. Fortunately, energy demand was low at the time and Britain’s wind power was able to pick up the slack.

#### **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> January**

We give you thanks, Lord God, for the men and women who have given their

than hierarchy”. Writing in 1808, Thomas Clarkson described the battle over the slave trade: as “a contrast between those who felt deeply for the happiness and honour of their fellow-creatures and those who, through vicious custom and the impulse of avarice, had trampled underfoot the sacred rights of their nature.” The anti-slave trade campaigners were not afraid to speak of morality and of right and wrong. Nor should we.

#### **Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January**

“We will not win the battle for a stable climate,” writes Naomi Klein, “by arguing that it is more cost-effective to invest in emissions reductions now than to face disaster later. We will win by asserting that such calculations are morally monstrous, since they imply that there is an acceptable price for allowing entire countries to disappear, leaving untold millions to die on parched land, and for depriving today’s children of their right to live in a world teeming with the wonders and beauties of creation.”

#### **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January**

Lord, you have given us this beautiful world, with the ability to harvest its products for our nourishment. Yet in our greed we are robbing future

generations, polluting the oceans with our rubbish, consuming resources which can never be renewed and destroying many of your creatures. Help us to come to our senses, dear Lord, and to resolve to repair the damage we have wrought to your creation, knowing that we interfere with your world at our peril, for we are here as not as owners, but as stewards.

#### **Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January**

Just over half the human population now live in cities. Millions of people across Asia and Africa have moved from humble village dwellings, where they relied on biomass for heating and cooking, to high-rise city blocks, where they require a daily dose of fossil fuels and many other non-renewable resources. Yet cities are only appendages of living systems. Collectively they use the bulk of the world’s resources and are prime contributors to environmental damage, loss of biodiversity, pollution and climate change. Yet Copenhagen, a city of over 3 million people, has the largest inner-city pedestrian area in the world, its buildings combine high energy efficiency with community sources of heat and power and a circular waste management policy. It

the food chain. The smaller pieces are ingested by fish and then fed up the food chain all the way to humans. One researcher said: "Lots of things are used once and then not recycled. We need to improve our use of plastics and get policymakers to understand the problem. In Germany manufacturers are responsible for the waste they produce. If we put more responsibility on to the producer, that would be part of the solution."

### **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January**

The biggest obstacle to the wider uptake of wind and solar energy is the lack of adequate electricity storage capacity. Now Europe's biggest battery has been switched on at Leighton Buzzard capable of powering 6,000 homes for 90 minutes at peak times. The 6 MW. lithium-ion battery spans an area of three tennis courts. It can be charged up during off-peak hours and used for additional power at peak times. This prototype cost £18.7 million. But further examples could fall to £10 million, when they would earn £6 million by selling frequency management services to the National Grid. Storage technologies of this kind will be key to coping with intermittent power sources such as wind and solar.

### **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January**

Naomi Klein in "This Changes Everything" suggests that meeting the challenges of a changing climate will require breaking many rules – both national laws and trade agreements together with powerful unwritten rules that tell us that no government can raise taxes and stay in power or say no to corporate interests or contract those parts of the economy that endanger us all. Yet before emancipation, slaves in the USA represented 16% of the nation's wealth – roughly the same proportion as fossil fuel deposits represent in global wealth. Yet the slave system was abolished because it was out of place in a civilised society. "In the hot and stormy future we have already made inevitable through our past emissions, an unshakeable belief in the equal rights of all people and a capacity for deep compassion will be the only things standing between civilisation and barbarism."

### **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January**

"Besides alternative policies, we need an alternative worldview embedded in interdependence rather than hyper-individualism, reciprocity rather than dominance and cooperation rather

lives to the protection of your beautiful world. We pray that their labours and sacrifices may not be in vain, but that the torch they lit may be carried by the rest of us as long as it takes to free your world from pollution, degradation and the bitter harvest of human greed.

### **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January**

The Peel Watershed is a 16 million acre wilderness in Canada's Yukon province inhabited largely by First Nation communities. It is home to caribou, grizzlies and a host of other species. It is also rich in oil, gas, coal, uranium and gold. A year ago the Yukon government announced a plan to open up 70% of the watershed to industry and roads, ignoring a recommendation of the independent Peel Watershed Land Use Commission calling for 80% of the land to be protected. Now a coalition of the First Nations, Canadian Parks & Wilderness Society and Yukon Conservation Society has brought a legal case to uphold First Nation rights entrenched in the Canadian constitution. The case is likely to reach the Supreme Court of Canada, which will have to decide whether modern land treaties are to be upheld or merely paid lip service to by governments of the day.

### **Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January**

The Prime Minister once said: "The beauty of our landscape is a national treasure, to be cherished and protected for everyone's benefit. It's not enough for politicians just to say that – we need leaders who really understand it and feel it in their bones. I do."

We are told we need to build 200,000 more homes a year. CPRE asks: "Why only 200,000? Only why ruin the countryside by building them on the green belt and on green fields and open land? There are suitable brownfield sites for over a million homes. That way people can have roofs over their heads and England can be saved."

Former poet laureate Andrew Motion asks: "What happened, Prime Minister, to make you forget your beliefs? What is it, politicians of all parties, that makes you so willing to trash the heritage and traditions that form the foundation of the country you were elected to serve? Why can't you see that we can have the progress, and the houses we so desperately need, and an economy that benefits all of us, and still preserve the vital, fundamental things? As things stand, we are facing the ruination of England as we know it, and we are destroying

it not by accident or chance, but by design. In the words of Laurie Lee “It is a self-inflicted wound that not even time will heal.”

### **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January**

In Britain, as elsewhere, industries pour millions into political parties in return for opportunities to shape government policies. Why was the Prime Minister’s promise of minimum alcohol pricing quietly forgotten? Property developers make bigger bucks by building homes in green fields rather than on brownfield sites. The food industry lobbies hard against any tax on sugar. Pharmaceutical companies fleece the NHS with their insistence that we all need statins. The list could go on. “Where is the democracy” asks Eileen Price “when corporations wield such power and when short-term profit takes precedence over the long-term welfare of people and the environment?” Only when governments publicly rein back the power of corporations and other pressure groups and begin to serve the people who elected them can our country truly be called a democracy. Only then will we have the regulations we need to protect our country from the climate changes shortly to fall on us.

### **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January**

Extreme weather events, shrinking water supplies and rising energy costs can only be addressed by people trained with the right skills for a sustainable economy. A survey last October found that only 13% of businesses were confident that they have the skills to compete in a sustainable economy. The Institute of Environmental Management calls for:

- The new Government to set up a policy unit, with sufficient staff, to establish a sustainable culture across all departments;
- Business schools, universities and training bodies to ensure a workforce with the knowledge, practical skills and core behaviours needed to deliver sustainable outcomes;
- Higher and further education bodies to support small and medium-sized businesses in their moves to a sustainable economy.

### **Friday 16<sup>th</sup> January**

The Government has announced details of a National College of Wind Energy based in the Humber area to open in 2016, funded by employers with a government grant. It will offer a post-A level professional qualification to equip students with the engineering

and technical skills required in the wind industry, particularly the offshore sector, where there is the greatest need for these skills.

### **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> January**

Last year anaerobic digestion (AD) sites increased from 87 to 117, boosting employment by 38% and increasing capacity by 55%. Apart from generating energy and usefully disposing of food waste, the amount of digestate fertiliser produced by AD passed the 1 million tonne mark last year, 98% of which went on agricultural land. The UK is one of the leaders in Europe on food waste AD facilities, but currently only 7% of our food waste is recycled through AD. According to ADBA: “If we were to recycle all the food waste which is unsuitable for consumption, we could generate enough green energy to meet over 10% of the UK domestic gas demand, reduce carbon emissions by 2%, recycle essential nutrients for food production and deliver high value biotechnology products such as biochemicals and bioplastics.”

### **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January**

God of righteousness and truth, grant to all in positions of responsibility the

guidance of your Holy Spirit. May they never lead the nation wrongly through the love of power, desire to please, or unworthy motives, but laying aside all private interests and prejudices, keep in mind their responsibility to seek to improve the condition of all.

*(from a parliamentary prayer)*

### **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January**

The Government’s Renewable Heat Incentive supporting projects to inject biomethane into the gas grid has been welcomed as a vital weapon in the fight for lower-carbon energy. It is one of the few renewable options for the gas grid and for heavy goods transport. The Renewable Energy Association commented: “Biomethane is one of the success stories of the RHI and has a major role to play in greening the gas grid. From almost nowhere 2 years ago, we now have ten projects operational, with more still in the pipeline.”

### **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January**

Data collected over a six-year period by scientists from the US, France, Chile, Australia and New Zealand shows that more than 5 trillion pieces of plastic, weighing nearly 265,000 tonnes, are floating in the world’s oceans, causing damage throughout