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## Prayer guide for the care of creation



# March 2015

“The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul.  
The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.”  
(Psalm 19. 1 & 7)

“Unlike God, nature is not infinite. The delicate balance that maintains life, while amazingly forgiving and adaptable, has its limits. Balance is maintained when the purpose of creation is maintained, and God’s creatures live in love and care for each other because they are living in love with God. But as soon as the balance is forgotten, then the balance is upset.” (Barbara Wood)

“Act as if everything depended on you; wait as if everything depended on God.”  
(St. Ignatius Loyola)

### **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March**

Creator God, you have called us to be keepers of your Earth. Through greed we have established an economy that is destroying the web of life. We have changed our climate and are drowning in despair. May we learn to sustain and renew the life of our Mother Earth. We pray for our leaders, custodians of Mother Earth, as they prepare to gather in Paris at the climate talks in December. May they negotiate with wisdom and fairness. May they act with compassion and courage, and lead us in the path of justice for the sake of our children and our children's children (Archbishop Desmond Tutu)

### **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March**

Today, at the Brighthelm Centre, Brighton BN1 1YD, a seminar entitled "Best to Divest" meets from 11.30 to 3.30. Speakers from Operation Noah, 350.org and the Quakers will meet with key institutional investors to review fossil fuels as a 'safe' investment and to investigate the new generation of ethical alternatives including renewable energy options..

For more details, go to:

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

### **Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March**

On St. Valentine's Day party leaders David Cameron, Ed Milliband and Nick Clegg jointly agreed to work together to tackle climate change. In particular they pledged:

1. To seek a fair, strong, legally-binding global climate deal which limits temperature rises to below 2 degrees C.
2. To work together, across party lines, to agree carbon budgets in accordance with the Climate Change Act
3. To accelerate the transition to a competitive, energy-efficient, low-carbon economy and to end the unabated use of coal for power generation.

### **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March**

On March 11<sup>th</sup> members of the London Assembly will vote on a motion to divest from fossil fuels and to pressure the London Pension Fund to divest and to provide fossil-free investment options. According to medical charity Medicare, pollution from fossil fuels accounts for about 5% of all UK deaths. The Thames Barrier was designed to be raised 1-2 times a year. Last winter it was raised 54 times, highlighting the increased risk of flooding due to climate change.

as a proxy for social 'goods'

"Economic growth has no meaningful value. We need to escape the dogma of finance as the principle mechanism for delivering emission cuts."

### **Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March**

A Green Christian gathering takes place at Ringsfield Hall, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 8JB from May 29 to 31.

The weekend will consist of:

A time for prayer and reflection;  
An exploration of a closer connection to the earth, nature and creation;  
Discussion about how the disciplines might be applied in our lives.

Cost of the weekend: £120. Booking form at: [www.greenchristian.org.uk](http://www.greenchristian.org.uk) or ring 01502 713020.

Are there answers to prayers? Please see [www.greenchristian.org.uk/prayer-guide-archive](http://www.greenchristian.org.uk/prayer-guide-archive)

### **Additional Prayers**

and the environment, “The fossil fuel industry is unequivocally driving us towards a climate crisis. UK universities and colleges support the industry through research projects and £2.5 billion of investments in fossil fuel companies. However, the University of Glasgow has announced it will divest its £129 million endowment from fossil fuels and nearly 50 institutions have gained 25,000 signatures in support of a fossil-free campaign.” People & Planet calls on universities and colleges:

To move their money from the fossil fuel industry to lower-risk, ethical investments;

To publish details of all their ties to the fossil fuel industry and to stop accepting sponsorship and advertising from fossil fuel companies;

To support a clean energy future by refocusing research on climate solutions and demanding research funds for renewables from industry and the government.

### **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March**

Earth Hour is an annual event when millions of people across the globe switch off their lights between 8.30 and 9.30 pm to create a spectacular act of solidarity with all who care about protecting the planet. Ghost walks,

night golf, stargazing events and concerts by candlelight are some of ideas for observing Earth Hour. For other ideas, go to:

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

### **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March**

Lord God, we lift into your hands the witness of Christian thinkers, teachers, scientists and communicators on the world you created and our place in it. We thank you for those who work to create beauty, fruitfulness and order. We pray for our generation, that we may hand on to our successors a world better for our having lived in it. Amen.

### **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March**

Speaking at a meeting of Scientists for Global Responsibility, Maria Sharmina from the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change explained the problem of energy system ‘lock in’, when coal-fired power stations operate for 30-50 years and ships and planes have a 30-year lifetime. “The only thing we can work on right now is reducing energy demand.” The UK and other wealthy nations need to decarbonise by 70% over the next decade to make a fair contribution to cutting global emissions. Part of the solution is in stepping away from economic growth

London is a major hub for global investment in fossil fuels, yet it is seriously at risk from these wasting assets.

### **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March**

“Unhealthy Investments” is a report from a coalition of health charities. It warns that investment in the fossil fuel industry is incompatible with health organisations’ moral and professional responsibilities to address direct health impacts and the longer-term health implications of climate change. Professor Martin McKee, Professor of European Public Health at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, said: “The UK health profession led the way in the tobacco divestment movement two decades ago, putting the issue firmly on the political agenda, strengthening public understanding of the risks and paving the way for stronger anti-tobacco legislation. This report shows why, in 2015, fossil fuels can no longer be considered an ethical investment. This is one of the defining challenges of our time.”

### **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March**

A report published in “Nature” called “The global geographical distribution of fossil fuels unused when limiting

global warming to 2 degrees C.” makes these key findings:

- One-third of oil reserves, half of gas reserves and 80% of coal reserves should remain unused from 2010 to 2050 in order to limit global warming to 2 degrees C. above pre-industrial levels.
- Development of resources in the Arctic and any increases in unconventional oil production are incommensurate with efforts to limit average global warming to 2 degrees C.
- Policymakers’ instincts to exploit rapidly and completely their territorial fossil fuels are inconsistent with their commitments to this temperature

### **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March**

The National Climate March takes place today in London. An ecumenical Climate Service at St. Mary le Strand Church, London WC2R 1ES at 11.30 precedes the march, which begins 12.15 at Lincoln’s Inn Fields and continues to Parliament Square. For more details, go to:

[www.timetoact2015.org](http://www.timetoact2015.org)

### **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March**

Heavenly Father, you know, as we know, that the way we live exploits

and degrades your creation. May your Holy Spirit enlighten us and guide us to use our gifts to engage with our local communities in joint initiatives to protect your creation. May our lives be renewed. May your Name be magnified. Amen.

### **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March**

“The Seven Dimensions of Climate Change” is the subject of a discussion paper from the Climate Outreach & Information Network (COIN). They are:

*Science.* We need a new social contract between scientists and society – moving away from expecting ‘more facts’ to a deeper engagement with climate policies.

*Behaviour.* We need to face up to ‘stealth denial’ – the fact that most of those who understand the problem intellectually don’t live as though they do.

*Technology.* We need deep decarbonisation at scale, with more and better tools to decarbonise energy as quickly as possible.

*Democracy.* We need to overcome the governance trap – we expect government to act while government thinks that people don’t care about the issue. But climate change is a collective ‘tragedy of the commons’ problem at every level.

*Economy.* It’s not only about moving money away from fossil fuels, but also getting beyond the fetish of economic growth and re-imagining economic models and purposes.

*Law.* We need a global legal constraint on extraction of fossil fuels and a legal mechanism to keep them in the ground.

*Culture.* We need to break ‘climate silence’ and normalise discussions on the issue, moving away from whether it’s happening to what we’re doing about it.

### **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March**

The Government’s Green Investment Bank has announced a £60 million investment in 30 community-scale renewable projects – including run-of-river hydropower, onshore wind on brownfield sites and biogas projects such as anaerobic digestion and landfill gas. The energy generated will be about 24,000 MW. During the first two years of its existence the GIB has invested £5 billion in 37 UK green energy projects, with £3 coming from private firms for every £1 provided by the GIB. Its chairman, Lord Smith of Kelvin, said: “In future we will see less reliance on a small number of large power stations and more focus on a network of smaller, locally-generated,

The Intergenerational Foundation ([www.if.org.uk](http://www.if.org.uk)) campaigns for fairness for future generations.

### **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March**

Taking food for granted (as many of us do) means that we are complacent about importing 40% of our food and wasting 30%. Taking food for granted means that supermarkets provide umpteen varieties of cheese, biscuits, oriental sauces and frozen meals. It means the appalling quality of institutional food, strawberries and cherry tomatoes at Christmas, and turning a blind eye to food miles and wastage. It means no government emergency stocks -supermarkets are supposed to fulfil that role.

Yet it’s not difficult to grow food. Seeds just love to do what they do best – germinate, grow and produce more seed. Children love to be involved. Community food-growing projects around the world are involving the displaced and dispossessed, the homeless, refugees, former prisoners and troubled teenagers. Growing food together brings people together in the way God intended. Research has shown that small plots are more productive than large farms, and more wildlife-friendly. Is it part of our prophetic witness to joyfully grow food

together, to passionately care for the creation of which we are part, and to watch with joy the miracle of life giving life to us? It’s a challenge, perhaps, but more of an invitation. (Deborah Tomkins)

### **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March**

The average temperature in the UK during 2014 was 9.9 degrees C. – the warmest year recorded since records began in 1652. This was 1 degree warmer than the long-term average. Bob Ward of the Grantham Research Institute said: “This is clear evidence of the impact of man-made climate change on the UK. The public is largely unaware of how climate change is affecting their exposure and vulnerability. This lack of awareness represents a colossal failure by Government and its agencies, including the Environment Agency and the Met. Office, to communicate with the public about this situation. As Britain warms, it will also grow wetter, raising the spectre of flash floods that could cost lives and cause billions of pounds of damage to households and businesses.”

### **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March**

According to People & Planet, a student action group on world poverty

increasingly carbon-intensive. Rapid upgrades mean that too many good devices lie abandoned in cupboards and drawers before ending up as e-waste.”

### **Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March**

Hilfield Friary, Dorset DT2 7BE, is host to today's conference on “The Ethics and Politics of Climate Change” when discussions will focus on the questions we should be asking candidates at the forthcoming general election. To book a place, telephone the guest co-ordinator on 01300 341 741 or email: [hilfieldssf@franciscans.org](mailto:hilfieldssf@franciscans.org)

### **Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March**

Lord, we know that while we in our country enjoy an abundance of good things, much of the world is in terrible want. Give us courage to face these things and to think more deeply about them. May thought lead to action in whatever way is in our power; for the sake of your dear Son, our Saviour.  
(Frank Colquhoun)

### **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March**

Ground-source heating technology to collect heat from the back of refrigerators in order to heat supermarkets has been pioneered by Sainsbury's and is now installed in 30

of its stores, cutting energy use by more than 30%. The ground-source heat pumps provide 100% of the stores' heating by collecting the waste heat at the back of refrigerators and storing it in an underground heat chamber. The subsurface rock makes good insulation, keeping the heat for use in colder months, when the heat is pumped back up into the building. In addition, Sainsbury's has installed 135,000 solar PV panels on its stores and plans to instal a further 170,000 this spring, so generating 40 MW. of electricity.

### **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March**

“I sincerely believe that the principle of spending money to be paid by posterity under the name of funding is but swindling futurity on a large scale.”  
(Thomas Jefferson)  
According to the Office of National Statistics, 3.3 million adults aged 20-34 were still living with their parents in 2013. A Halifax survey found that 1 in 3 people aged 20-34 have completely given up hope of owning a home. 52% of 8000 young people surveyed believe that renting rather than buying will become the norm within 20 years. In a period when average house prices rose by 2.8%, incomes for people aged 22-29 rose by just 1%.

renewable sources of power. Hydro is an example of how we can do this and we are delighted to play our part in helping the market grow, bringing investment to rural communities along the way.”

### **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March**

The world's largest offshore wind farm has been approved by Ed Davey, the Energy Secretary. The Dogger Bank Creyke Beck A & B wind project will generate enough electricity to power 2 million homes. The farms will lie 81 miles off the Yorkshire coast and extend over 430 square miles of sea. Each of the sites will have a capacity of 1.2 GW. and reduce carbon emissions by nearly 4 million tonnes a year. The project will support up to 900 jobs in Yorkshire and bring millions of pounds-worth of investment to the nation's economy. The director of RenewableUK said: “Dogger Bank demonstrates the sheer potential of offshore technology to turn our vast ocean and wind resource into green energy and shows how far this technology has evolved in the ten short years since the 1<sup>st</sup> major offshore wind farm was installed at North Hoyle just 5 miles from shore.”

### **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March**

The Ashden Awards ([www.ashden.org](http://www.ashden.org)) have for many years been encouraging entrepreneurs young and old to develop practical ways of reducing our impact on the environment. Since 2010 a programme called LESS CO2 has supported workshops in schools to cover aspects of energy saving, from recording meter readings to monitoring energy use and incorporating sustainability into the curriculum. So far 23,000 pupils in 100 schools have benefited, 818 tonnes of CO2 emissions have been avoided and schools' fuel bills have been reduced by £200,000. Last year, 43 schools in London, Devon, Essex, Surrey and Hampshire joined the scheme and it is expected to reach 100 schools by 2016.

### **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March**

According to a study by the National Centre of Ecological Analysis & Synthesis, around 8 million tonnes of plastic waste find their way into the world's oceans every year, where they can absorb toxic chemicals and often enter the food chain when mistaken for food by fish, seabirds and marine mammals. Of the world's 20 worst sources of mismanaged plastic waste,



China is top with 28%, followed by Indonesia (10%) and the Philippines. However, according to Plastics Europe, seven EU states plus Norway and Switzerland have introduced landfill bans on plastics waste. "The experience of these countries shows that phasing out landfilling together with better enforcement of waste legislation is crucial to tackling this issue."

#### **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March**

Today at St. Andrew's Church, Waterloo SE1 8LJ Operation Noah and Hope for the Future are hosting a workshop for Christians to explore their calling to care for God's creation and to acquire the knowledge and tools to become active in the climate movement. The programme for "Spirit in Action" runs from 10.15 to 5. Speakers include Richard Cheetham, Bishop of Kingston, and Eilidh Macpherson from CAFOD. The cost of £15/10 includes lunch. To register, go to:

[www.spiritactionclimate2015.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.spiritactionclimate2015.eventbrite.co.uk)

#### **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March**

Loving Father, teach us how to use your gifts of inventiveness in the service of the world you created. May we acknowledge you as the source

and inspiration of all wisdom and strength.

#### **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March**

A study from the International Council on Clean Transportation finds that creating advanced biofuels from waste produced by industry, farms and households could generate 36,000 jobs in the UK and save around 37 million tonnes of oil annually by 2030. This advanced biofuel could come from woody crops, agricultural residues, algae or household and industrial waste. It is less environmentally damaging than first generation biofuels produced by growing crops such as rapeseed, which have been criticised for displacing food crops and raising commodity prices. Finnish firm UPM Biorefining has opened a biorefinery that transforms pulp residues into diesel useable by cars or perhaps, one day, by planes.

#### **Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March**

A report from the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee makes the following points: Continually tightening carbon budgets under the Climate Change Act will significantly curtail our scope for fossil fuel energy and, as a consequence,

only a very small fraction of shale gas deposits will be burnable.

A moratorium on the extraction of unconventional gas through fracking is needed to avoid the UK's carbon budgets being breached in the 2020s and beyond, and the international credibility of the UK in tackling climate change being critically weakened. "The Infrastructure Bill should be amended to explicitly bar fracking of shale gas."

This has not happened and applications for fracking gas in rural Yorkshire and elsewhere are going ahead. For a factual background to the fracking process, visit [www.frackingfact.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.frackingfact.blogspot.co.uk)

#### **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March**

An analysis of Indonesian government data by the Forest Trends reveals that more than 30% of wood used by Indonesia's industrial forest sector stems from the unreported clear-cutting of natural forests and other illegal sources. "The timber industry's own numbers show that if all companies implemented their environmental commitments, such as 'zero deforestation' pledges, it would be impossible to meet current demand for timber. Instead of allowing new mills to be built, it would be advisable

for Indonesia to hold future expansion of the industry until they successfully increase the number of tree plantations."

#### **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March**

Tetra Pak has received full Forest Stewardship Council certification for its wood supplies and can now supply packaging from sustainably-managed wood sources from any of its 92 facilities across the world. FSC-labelled products can be traced at every step through the supply chain. Tetra Pak said: "The FSC logo is an easily recognisable hallmark for forest management and our customers can now demonstrate their support for responsible forestry anywhere in the world."

#### **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March**

"A Circular Economy for Smart Devices" is a report from the Green Alliance revealing that the sector is getting ever more carbon-intensive. It details ways to cut their carbon emissions, including providing more uniform parts and a focus on re-use. Just keeping a smartphone for an extra year cuts its CO2 impact by 31%. "Smartphones, tablets and laptops are spreading the benefits of the internet, but their production is