
Prayer guide for the care of creation



April 2015

“The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.”
(Psalm 24.1)

“The world was made by him, yet the world knew him not.” (John 1.10)

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and earth were created . . . In him all things hold together . . . Through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things . . . by making peace through the blood of his cross.” (Colossians 1.15-20)

“Climate change detonates the ideological scaffolding on which our contemporary economic and political ideology rests.” (Naomi Klein)

Wednesday 1st April

According to Bishop David Atkinson, climate change poses some questions for Christians, such as:

- What sort of trust should we place in technology? Are we secretly hoping that a technical fix will be the answer?
- What is our responsibility to the parts of the world that are poorer, have done least damage to our atmosphere and are least able to adapt?
- How do we let future generations speak to us of *their* needs?
- Why do we keep fostering the illusion that growth in GDP is the most important thing?
- Why do we maintain our dependence of fossil fuels when we know that burning them is a major cause of damage to the planet?
- What are we to do about the unfair trade rules that often hamper attempts to curb dependence on fossil fuels?
- Why do we seem so ready to downplay, deny or displace the urgency of climate change?

Thursday 2nd April

Concluding his paper “Why we in the churches need to take climate change

more urgently”, Bishop David Atkinson asks: Can climate change be the trigger for a rethinking of our desires and how to value them in the light of God’s Wisdom, and for the costly discipleship that will entail? Can we learn, in the light of God’s Wisdom, what it means, in the present environmental crisis, to live justly and to love our neighbours? Can climate change provoke us into recovering our human calling under God as bearers of God’s image in responsible care for His creation?

The urgency of the task is not only underscored by science, but also required by the gospel.

Friday 3rd April. Good Friday.

Loving Father, as on this solemn day we bow at the foot of the Cross, may the love of Christ that was manifested there stream into the hearts of all who serve you, so challenging and subduing all our desires, and winning from us that response which is your will for us. (Leslie Weatherhead – adapted)

Saturday 4th April

“Hope in God motivates us to take action leading to transformation. Despite the probability of very serious effects from global warming, for Christians despair is not an option . . .

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by email (free), please email :

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Wednesday 29th April

The National Trust, Britain's biggest landowner, has pledged to reverse decades of poor land management, intensive farming and the loss of wildlife habitats, both through its own actions and by working with partners. The plan, costing £1 billion over 10 years, will develop new ways of managing land on a large scale which will benefit farmers, the economy and the environment. As well as protecting and repairing buildings to cope with climate change, the trust will continue its programme of energy efficiency and renewable energy, with a pledge to cut its energy use by 20% by 2020. By then, half its energy use will be from renewable sources such as solar power.

Thursday 30th April

According to the think tank Carbon Tracker, at least two-thirds of known reserves of fossil fuels will have to remain in the ground if we are to avoid average global temperatures rising more than 2 degrees C. above pre-industrial levels. The term "stranded assets" refers to those two-thirds which can no longer be recovered if we are to believe the calculations of climate scientists. They are, in effect, worthless, though none of this is

reflected in the share price of companies such as BP and Royal Dutch Shell. UK universities support fossil fuel companies through their research, their £5.2 billion investments and their partnerships with major fossil fuel companies. Some universities, here and abroad, have already pledged to disinvest from fossil fuels. Oxford University has postponed a decision but is under pressure from many alumni to join the growing movement for disinvestment, so releasing money for investment in renewable energy.

Sources:

"This Changes Everything"
by Naomi Klein (Allen Lane)
www.edie.net

Additional Prayers

We are called to live and work with hope in response to God's gift, and in the light of the promised coming of Christ's reign over us all." (from The Ash Wednesday Declaration – www.operationnoah.org)
Hope for the Future is an umbrella organisation to help us all to bring climate change on to every political agenda. (www.hfff.org.uk)

Sunday 5th April. Easter Day.

O Christ, risen and glorified, reigning at God's right hand, but still our Friend and Saviour, abide with us today and always, so that by the loving influence of the Holy Spirit we may become more like you, until all selfishness and unkindness is purged away, and we become the kind of people you can use for your redeeming work on earth. Take possession of us now and use us henceforth for your glory.

(Leslie

Weatherhead – adapted)

Monday 6th April

Church congregations, acting together, can have a huge influence on the policies of candidates seeking election in May. Hope for the Future provides resources for those seeking to influence their parliamentary candidates. Operation Noah

(www.operationnoah.org.uk) provides guidelines for churches wishing to contribute towards the greening of their activities.

Tuesday 7th April

The 2014 IPCC Assessment Report warns that carbon emissions must be cut sharply and quickly to net-zero. The Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) draws together a number of plans to achieve this. A report from the Potsdam Institute and PriceWaterhouseCoopers shows how, with the use of renewable energy and supergrids. Europe and N. Africa can achieve 100% renewable electricity by 2030. www.cat.org.uk/snip/58434
A Greenpeace report called "Energy Rich Japan" shows how a combination of the best energy-efficiency technologies together with a massive investment in renewable energy can ultimately provide Japan with 100% of its energy needs.

www.energyrichjapan.info

The Deep Decarbonization Pathways Project consists of 15 research partners from countries responsible for 70% of global GHG emissions. It recognises that achieving net-zero global emissions by 2050 will require unprecedented global co-operation including a collective effort to

accelerate the development and sharing of key technologies.

www.deepdecarbonization.com

Wednesday 8th April

Germany's Kombikraftwerk or Combined Power Plant project shows how intelligent controls enable a mix of 36 wind, solar, biomass and hydropower installations throughout Germany can be linked in a way that enables them to match changing power demands and intermittent supply. www.kimbikraftwerk.de TrackO is an independent charity providing research, advice, communications and networking to open the floodgates of innovation in many areas, from political solutions to development opportunities for the poor and market openings. www.trackO.org Currently the CAT report "Zero Carbon Britain" remains the most detailed option for net-zero emissions in the UK, but CAT expects fierce opposition before long! www.cat.org.uk

Thursday 9th April

The problem of how to store surplus energy from renewables remains the "philosophers' stone" of the 21st century. Scottish Renewables claims that hydropower storage on Scottish

mountains could unlock £1 billion of investment and deliver a massive boost to UK energy security. German and Japanese engineers are working on hydrogen storage, whereby surplus electricity is used to split water into oxygen and hydrogen, then use the hydrogen in fuel cells to generate electricity, or else to convert the hydrogen into methane, which can be used to power conventional gas turbines.

Friday 10th April

A £1 billion tidal lagoon in Swansea Bay is expected to receive planning approval this month. A 14-mile seawall running from Cardiff to Newport could enclose a bigger tidal lagoon, which, costing £6 billion to build, would provide enough electricity to power every home in Wales and supply 8% of UK demand for electricity. Tidal Lagoon Power, the developers, also have plans for large-scale lagoons in West Cumbria, Colwyn Bay and Bridgwater Bay.

Saturday 11th April

Severn Trent Water already generates 24% of its electricity from 56 anaerobic digesters. It also produces 20,000MWH of electricity a year from its four wind turbines, and plans to

Philip Roderick, founder of the Quiet Garden Movement, David Shreeve, Environmental Adviser to the Archbishops' Council and Steve and Anne Hollinghurst of St. Albans. There is a choice of workshops. To book a place, go to:

www.stalbans.anglican.org/faith/caring-gods-earth/ or email environmental@stalbans.anglican.org or call 01727 818148. Bring a packed lunch.

Sunday 26th April

Christ has no body now on earth but ours,
No hands but ours, no feet but ours,
Ours are the eyes through which looks out Christ's compassion to the world,
Ours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good,
Ours are the hands with which he blesses his people daily.
Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Amen.

Monday 27th April

A study from the Emergency Response Department of Public Health England published in The Lancet reports that warming temperatures could bring disease-carrying mosquitoes to Britain by 2030. The diseases in question are

chikungunga virus (already reported in France), dengue fever, West Nile virus and malaria. These mosquitoes have adapted to breed in discarded tyres and ornamental plants, so are likely to be shipped around the world. Based on current climate change models, this could mean that London, for example, would face a month of chikungunga virus by 2041 and three months of it by 2071.

Tuesday 28th April

Last year saw sales of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles, including electric cars, increase by 4 times in the UK. The Government has set aside £32 million to support the required infrastructure. £15 million will go towards the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme, £8 million towards establishing charging points on major roads in towns and cities, while £11 million is for research into a number of projects, including:

- The use of recycled carbon fibre material to bring lightweight chassis structures to the mass market
- The development of a zero-emission electric bus with a hydrogen fuel cell extender at a fraction of the present cost of hydrogen buses.

finds that, if all four are met, UK households would on average be £565 better off each by 2030, due to the higher employment resulting from increases in investment.

UK businesses would also benefit from extra low-carbon investment in the power sector, in the manufacture of low-carbon vehicles and the installation of energy efficiency measures.

Energy security will be improved by reducing UK exposure to price spikes in fossil fuels, leading to more stable energy bills.

There would be improvements in air quality due to a reduction in PM-10 emissions from diesel vehicles, creating health benefits and reducing NHS costs.

Thursday 23rd April

Two energy-from-waste wood plants have been given the go-ahead in the Midlands. The Welland Bio Power Plant will divert up to 60,000 tonnes of waste wood from landfill each year, generating enough electricity to power 17,000 homes. The waste wood is converted into a gas, which is used to raise steam. This is then passed through a turbine to produce electricity. A similar project at Tyseley

near Birmingham is due for completion next March.

Friday 24th April

An encyclical from Pope Francis due this summer is expected to cover environmental sustainability. A weekend retreat at the Franciscan Retreat Centre, Pantasaph, Holywell, Flintshire CH8 8PE, begins today to explore the writings of Popes John Paul II, Benedict and Francis on the greening of the Church and society. Participants will study, with a friendly ecumenical team, the background to our relationship with creation and how they can live it. For details, visit www.pantasaph.org.uk or ring 01352 711 053.

Saturday 25th April

A day conference on “Caring for God’s Earth: Growing Sustainable Communities” takes place today at St. Alban’s Cathedral. “Churches have a presence in every community and are guardians of sacred buildings and sacred land. How can we become prophetic voices in our local communities for a more sustainable future?” Speakers include Martin Palmer founder of the Alliance of Religions & Conservation, David Bookless, founder of A Rocha UK,

invest £190 million over 5 years in new anaerobic digesters and a solar photovoltaic farm at Coventry. By 2020, if all its plans go ahead, it will be generating 50% of its total energy consumption from renewables.

Sunday 12th April

O God, who has set before us the great hope that your Kingdom shall come on earth and has taught us to pray for its coming, give us grace to discern the signs of its dawning and to work for the perfect day when the whole world shall reflect your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Percy Dearmer – used by Operation Noah in the Ash Wednesday Declaration) www.operationnoah.org

Monday 13th April

Insured losses from the UK floods in 2014 have reached £1 billion. Insurers round the world managing more than \$9 trillion have called on governments to tackle climate change and build resilience to increasingly common natural disasters. Norway’s Government Pension Fund Global – worth \$8.93 billion – asks companies to explain their business strategy in a world of 2 degrees C. above pre-industrial levels. WWF comments: “This means that coal, oil and gas

companies in which GPFG invests are being asked to consider how robust their business model is in a world managing to tackle the worst impacts of climate change. So far, most oil companies have dismissed this as unrealistic and placed their bets against global action on climate change.”

Tuesday 14th April

The non-profit organisation Society for the Environment, among 48 environmental policy suggestions for the next government, highlights the need for an Air Quality Strategy. Poor air quality accounts for 5% of premature deaths in the UK “The real elephant in the room is road traffic. Technological fixes for diesel vehicles have failed and their use in our towns and cities needs to be reduced. This may mean reducing traffic, diverting it away from residential areas, implementing low-emission zones that adequately restrict diesel vehicles, and reducing fiscal incentives for diesel cars.”

Wednesday 15th April

A report from the Waste & Resources Action Plan (WRAP) finds that extending the product life of everyday foods by just one day could prevent

250,000 tonnes of food waste each year – around 5% of the UK's preventable food waste – saving consumers around £500 million. It details five ways of extending shelf life:

- Retailers and manufacturers to challenge safety and quality buffers to identify opportunities to extend product life;
- Retailers to use 'Open Life' guidance for food safety, not where quality is the limiting factor;
- Review supply chain practices such as stock rotation so as to increase the available life for consumers;
- Delivery times to retailers to be benchmarked so as to improve performance;
- 'Display until' labels to be removed from all foods, leaving only 'Use by' and Best before' dates.

The Food Standards Agency said that these proposals could extend shelf life without compromising food safety.

Thursday 16th April

Fruta Feia (Portuguese for "ugly fruit") is a project to collect and sell the 30% of all food discarded by the main retailers in Portugal as being less than

perfect in colour, shape or calibre. Isabel Soares set up the co-operative with the goal of channelling crops to people who do not judge the quality of food by its exterior. Beginning in Lisbon, the aim is to replicate the project in other Portuguese regions, thanks to a 15,000 euro prize won in a competition held by the Gulbenkian Foundation. Further funding is required to purchase the transport needed to ensure weekly collections.

Friday 17th April

Chido Govera, born in rural Zimbabwe, was orphaned by AIDS at age 7, then, after suffering abuse, she used her knowledge of wild mushrooms to become an expert in growing edible fungi on food and agricultural waste. She now teaches hundreds of AIDS orphans and other vulnerable people, in Zimbabwe and beyond, how to grow mushrooms all the year round and so to break the cycle of poverty and abuse.

Saturday 18th April

"Think! Environment Day – Nature, Climate, the Bible and You" is a day of reflection and action for individuals and churches taking place today at Ashburnham Place, Battle TN33 9NE. Guest speakers include Andy Atkins

from Friends of the Earth and Ruth Valerio from A Rocha. There are workshops on sustainable living, organic growing, sketching God's creation and a walk with praise and prayer. To book a place, ring 01424 892244 or book online at www.ashburnham.org.uk

Sunday 19th April

Loving Father, we pray that as young people in each generation discover for themselves the glories of your creation, so their energies may be used creatively in your service. May their choices be based on whatever is true and of lasting value. Amen.

Monday 20th April

For many people, climate change is, first and foremost, an issue of justice – justice for the under-privileged and justice for future generations. The Mary Robinson Foundation on Climate Justice is a centre for thought, leadership, education and advocacy to secure global justice for people most vulnerable to the impact of climate change, the poor, the disempowered and the marginalized across the world. Its core principles are:
Respect and protect human rights;
Support the right to development;
Share benefits and burdens equitably;

Ensure that decisions on climate change are participatory, transparent and accountable;
Highlight gender equality and equity;
Harness the transformative power of education for climate stewardship;
Use effective partnerships to ensure climate justice.

www.mrfci.org/pdf/Principles-of-Climate-Justice.pdf

Tuesday 21st April

Climate justice is an issue for all the world's religions. Last September an interfaith summit in New York saw leaders of many faiths delivering a statement to world leaders highlighting the disproportionate effect of climate change on the lives, livelihoods and rights of poorer, marginalized and more vulnerable populations, including indigenous peoples. They called for enhanced co-operation between the nations and the creation of mutual trust, fairness and equity, and intergenerational justice.

www.interfaithclimate.org

Wednesday 22nd April

A study from Cambridge Econometrics called "The Economics of Climate Policy in the UK" examines the first four carbon budgets proposed by the Committee for Climate Change and