

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by email (free), please email :
prayer-guide@greenchristian.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@greenchristian.org.uk
Website: www.greenchristian.org.uk

Picture on front cover: Blackthorn Blossom by Poppy Pickard

Green Christian is a Trading name of Christian Ecology Link Ltd.
Correspondence Office:
97 Plumpton Avenue, Hornchurch,
RM12 6BB
Company Registration No. 2445198
Registered Charity No. 328744.
tel: +44 (0) 845 4598460
info@greenchristian.org.uk

Prayer guide for the care of creation

May 2015



“This is what the Lord says: ‘Stand at the crossroads and look. Ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.’ “
(Jeremiah 6.16)

“From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”
(Luke 12.48)

“Goodness is stronger than evil.
Love is stronger than hate.
Light is stronger than darkness.
Life is stronger than death.
Victory is ours through Him who loves us.”
(Archbishop Desmond Tutu)

Friday 1st May

This St. Valentine's Day, David Cameron, Nick Clegg and Ed Miliband jointly declared:

1. Acting on climate change is an opportunity for the UK to grow a stronger economy;
2. We pledge to seek a fair, strong, legally-binding global climate deal by December 2015 that limits temperature rises to 2 degrees C.
3. We pledge to accelerate the transition from a fossil fuel-based economy to a competitive, energy-efficient, low-carbon economy, part of which is the banning of burning coal to generate electricity.

We pray that God will give our leaders the strength and determination to fulfil these pledges.

Saturday 2nd May

Known reserves of coal, oil and gas owned by the world's biggest fossil fuel companies have swollen by 10% within the last 5 years, despite warnings from the World Bank and others that most existing reserves of fossil fuels cannot safely be burned. The top 200 of these companies now hold 555 gigatonnes of CO₂ in their fuel reserves – a figure close to the

total the world can ever emit if it is to keep temperature rises to 2 degrees C.

In addition, 2,650 gigatonnes are held by state-owned companies, making a total 4-5 times the amount that can be safely burned. However, exploitation in challenging places such as the Arctic, Alberta tar sands and deep seas is dominated by the 200 commercial firms.

The Guardian is running a campaign asking the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Wellcome Trust to divest from fossil fuels.

Sunday 3rd May

Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, grant unto thy people that they may love the thing which thou commandest and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Common Prayer)

Monday 4th May

The US Government has approved a request from Royal Dutch Shell to recommence drilling for oil in the Chukchi Sea within the Arctic Circle,

Providing access to contraception is a top priority for many women in Africa and Asia. The countries that do succeed in reducing fertility rates can benefit from a demographic dividend, where there are more people in work than children to support. If you have a rapid decline in fertility, the younger population is no longer growing so fast and the economy is boosted because the number of workers per child goes up, resulting in a period of rapid economic growth. This is what happened in countries like South Korea and Taiwan in the 70s and China in the 80s and 90s.

Sunday 31st May

Give us, loving Father, 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. So may we look up and lift our heads as we look for the promise of your Kingdom, which you pledged for us in the sacrifice of your dear Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Sources:

Resurgence
Positive News
Green Health Watch
www.edie.net

Additional Prayers

Wednesday 27th May

The passing into law of the Transparency of Lobbying Act has, according to Caroline Lucas MP, placed an astonishing range of requirements on campaigning organisations. “It puts huge barriers in the way of people raising awareness about issues of public interest, whether NHS reform, housing policy or wildlife conservation. Campaign spending limits for charities and pressure groups have been drastically cut and the definition of ‘campaigning’ widened. The Act’s reach even extends to community groups involved locally in what Parliament considers ‘political’ issues.” She fears that any government, of whatever political colour, might find it convenient to hold on to these powers.

Thursday 28th May

Veteran environmentalist Lester Brown is retiring from the Washington-based Earth Policy Institute after working for more than 50 years on issues such as water shortages, declining crop yields and the consequences of increased consumption and climate change. He founded the Worldwatch Institute, which publishes the annual State of the Earth reports. His new book

“When the Wells Go Dry” highlights concerns about the growing water shortage.

Friday 29th May

A Green Christian gathering takes place this weekend at Ringsfield Hall, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 8JB. The weekend consists of:

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

Cost of the weekend: £120.

Booking form available at www.greenchristian.org.uk or ring 01502 713020

Saturday 30th May

India’s population is now near 1.2 billion – an increase since 1995 equivalent to the whole population of the USA – and is set to exceed China’s in 2028. Vivek Baid of Mission for Population Control which works in West Bengal says that India’s population growth has meant that the country hasn’t benefited from development. John Bongaarts of the US-based Population Council said: “The first thing we need to do is to help women with their contraceptive needs.

where 3 years ago its drilling rig ran aground. Shell spent £3 billion on its failed search for oil in Alaska but, despite the low oil price, it believes the region’s estimated 166 billion barrels of oil are worth exploiting..

Greenpeace comments: “All the evidence shows that Shell can’t drill safely in the Arctic.” The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management has said that there is a 75% chance of “one or more large spills” happening.

Tuesday 5th May

Costa Rica in January and February became the first country to generate 100% of its electricity from renewable sources. In 2014 all but 6% of its energy was generated renewably – largely from hydropower and geothermal plants operating from a string of active volcanoes. In Britain just under 15% of its electricity in 2013 came from renewable energy. The Government’s target is for this to reach 30% by 2020.

Wednesday 6th May

The territory of the Beaver Lake Cree Nation in Canada sits on the Alberta tar sands, the largest known reservoir of crude bitumen oil. Most of their land has been leased to the oil industry without consultation. A series of oil

spills in 2013 caused the death of over 200 animals and over 300,000 kg. of oiled vegetation. In 2008 the Cree filed a lawsuit against the governments of Alberta and Canada alleging violation of their treaty rights “to hunt, fish, trap and gather food and support.” Their battle is also to protect the boreal forest – one of the world’s most important carbon sinks – and to stop the expansion of Canada’s largest producer of greenhouse gases. It is also about the inherent rights of First Nation peoples, collective human rights and the rights of nature.

Thursday 7th May

Andy Atkins, the director of Friends of the Earth, remembers his time working with indigenous communities in Honduras, when the hired guns of the big ranchers and illegal logging companies were trying to intimidate those communities into abandoning their ancestral lands. Was it, he asks, a human rights problem, an economic development problem or an environmental problem? “It was all three. It was a threat to life in all its fullness, and they were defending not just the right not to be murdered, but the physical environment that gave them food, shelter and spiritual sustenance.” Today, those who point

out the truth are increasingly subject to human rights abuses for challenging a status quo that is ultimately unsustainable. These threats are so widespread that FoE International has a programme for protecting environmental defenders worldwide. "The answer to swifter progress on environment, global poverty and respect for human rights lies in . . . forming determined alliances with others who see the truth."

Friday 8th May

"Don't Even Think About It: Why Our Brains are Wired to Ignore Climate Change" is an analysis by George Marshall of the reasons why, despite dozens of conferences and hundreds of scientific studies making it clear that climate change is a real and present danger, most people are reluctant to do anything about it. He concludes that the success of the fossil-fuel lobby and free market think-tanks in destroying public trust in science is aided by our human inability to prepare for anything other than immediate dangers. Are we really wired to allow our own destruction? Is the fossil-fuel industry so skilled at undermining the science that they will

make sure that we take no meaningful action until it is too late?

Saturday 9th May

Scientists from the US National Snow and Ice Data Center have reported that winter sea ice in the Arctic Ocean fell in February to its lowest level since records began in 1979. According to another survey, Arctic sea ice thinned by 65% between 1875 and 2012. Bob Ward of the Grantham Research Institute at the LSE said: "The gradual disappearance of ice at the poles is having profound consequences for people, animals and plants in the polar regions, as well as around the world, through sea level rise."

Sunday 10th May

Father, we live in a world where things have gone badly wrong because we have forgotten you and left you out of account. We have worshipped other gods and not hallowed your Name. We have adopted our own way of life and have not served your Kingdom. We have chosen what pleases us and have not done your will. Lord, forgive us our sin and folly and blindness. Turn us back to yourself, for the sake of your Son, our only Saviour. (Frank Colquhoun)

350,000 households, with a further 200 plants in the development pipeline. But further development may be hampered for lack of food waste contracts, leading to the use of agricultural waste instead. The Renewable Energy Association's head of biogas said: "A perverse cost-control mechanism in the Feed-in Tariff is unduly penalising the deployment of small-scale AD. Sub-250 KW plants are a long way from the ambition of thousands of on-site digesters set out by the NFU a few years ago, when the AD strategy was launched."

Sunday 24th May

Grant us, Father, the serenity which comes from living close to you. Daily renew in us the sense of joy, filling every corner of our hearts with light and grace, so that, bearing with us the infection of a good courage, we may be diffusers of life and meet all life's ills and cross-accidents with gallant and high-hearted joy, giving you thanks always for all things.

Monday 25th May

The Government's Feed-in Tariff rates of subsidy for ground-mounted solar projects will be cut by 28% from July 1st, although roof-mounted projects will

only suffer a 3.5% cut. The Solar Trade Association warns that this will create a big rush to meet the July 1st deadline, and so lead inevitably to a further cut in the 4th quarter of 2015. However, Ray Noble of the Renewable Energy Association has said that the price of solar energy will continue to fall, even if all subsidies were removed. "It's a world industry and nothing will stop the prices coming down."

Tuesday 26th May

A campaign has been launched by retired geography teacher Daniel Raven-Ellison to make London the world's first National Park City. This would prompt Londoners to re-imagine their city in a positive way and help with issues like obesity and climate change. London is already home to 3,000 parks, 30,000 allotments, 3 million gardens and two National Nature Reserves. Almost half of London is green space and 60% is classified as open space. "The idea could radically change how we see, manage and experience the city. London's landscape is very different to the countryside, but it is equally distinctive and inspiring."

www.greaterlondonnationalpark.org.uk

equivalent in area to the state of Delaware.

Thursday 21st May

A report commissioned by WWF into the monetary value of oceans puts their value at \$ 24 trillion – equivalent to the 7th largest economy in the world. The goods and services they provide, such as food, amount to \$2.5 trillion a year, and this does not factor in things like wind power and the oceans' role in climate regulation. Two-thirds of the world's fisheries are fully exploited, with most of the rest over-exploited. The oceans' biodiversity slumped by 39% between 1970 and 2010, during which time half the world's coral reefs and nearly a third of its seagrasses disappeared. Lead author Professor Hoegh-Guldberg said: "This generation of humans is defining the future of 300 generations to come. We are conducting these experiments with our world despite the consequences for people to come."

The report calls for six key steps to revive the health of the oceans, including a stronger focus on oceans in UN agreements, deep cuts in emissions, at least 30% of marine areas to be protected by 2030 and greater action to tackle illegal fishing.

Friday 22nd May

A new UN University report says that 41.8 million tonnes of electronic waste was discarded in 2014 – the vast majority of which was neither re-used nor disposed of in an environmentally-friendly way. This e-waste represents \$ 52 billion-worth of potentially reusable resources. The US and China produced nearly one third of this waste. 60% of it consisted of discarded kitchen, laundry and bathroom equipment including washing machines, clothes dryers, dishwashers and electric stoves. It was estimated to include 16,500 kilotons of iron, 1,900 kilotons of copper and 300 tonnes of gold plus significant amounts of silver, aluminium and palladium. Biffa, the waste managers, since launching its collection service three years ago, has collected 400 tonnes of household e-waste. Its director, Pete Dickson, said: "The service has high value as it's an easy way for residents to capture and recycle a difficult waste stream, and they respond accordingly."

Saturday 23rd May

Anaerobic digestion (AD) of food waste is expanding rapidly. Currently, 185 AD plants are capable of supplying the electricity needs of

Monday 11th May

As the state of California faces one of its longest droughts on record, 135 communities face a reduction of 35% in their water supplies, while 400 water agencies have to make cuts of 20-25% in urban water use. This follows news that, despite the severe drought, water use in Southern California declined by only 2.8% while some communities actually increased their consumption. The head of San Francisco's Board of Supervisors said: "We should not be using drinking water for landscaping and to flush toilets. We have proven ways of reusing water, whether it's storm water or water from a bathroom sink. That water can be treated and reused."

Tuesday 12th May

The annual UN World Water Development Report forecasts that there could be a 40% global shortfall in water within 15 years unless countries dramatically change their use of water. Demand from a growing population will increase by 55% by 2050, while reserves continue to dwindle. The report calls on policymakers and communities to urge more conservation as well as re4cycling of wastewater, as is done in Singapore. Countries might also

consider raising prices for water, as well as making water-intensive industries more efficient and less polluting. At least 80% of India's population relies on groundwater for drinking, so as to avoid bacteria-infested surface waters.

Wednesday 13th May

The new European Red List of threatened species finds that nearly 1 in 10 of bee species are threatened with extinction owing to loss of habitat from intensive farming, pesticide use, urban development and climate change. It recommends:

- Better monitoring and assessment;
- More protection for habitats supporting bees;
- Regulation of trade in managed bees, which may spread disease;
- Long-term incentives to farmers to provide habitats for bees.

Thursday 14th May

The House of Commons International Development Committee has warned that the world needs to wake up to the "ticking time-bomb" of youth unemployment in developing countries, and treat it as seriously as humanitarian disasters and efforts to eradicate disease. With 600 million

young people competing for 200 million jobs over the next decade, the committee says there is a danger of widespread social and political unrest. “Complacent assumptions about population growth slowing are being proved wrong and we need to see that this situation needs to be addressed with the same kind of passion as children’s vaccinations and humanitarian emergencies.” Tunisia, for example, has 600,000 unemployed, of whom almost half are higher education graduates.

Friday 15th May

A weekend at the Friary, Hilfield, Dorchester DT2 7BE beginning today focuses on the role of communities in sustaining nature. Sir Ghillean Prance, former Director of Kew, Andy Lester of A Rocha and Brother Samuel SSF will engage participants with the transformative role of indigenous tribes in the Amazon, community projects supported by A Rocha and the growing experience at Hilfield Friary. To find out more, ring 01300 341741 or email: hilfieldsf@franciscans.org.uk

Saturday 16th May

An opinion poll carried out by the Institute of Environmental

Management reports that more than 92% of environmental and sustainability professionals believe that, because of the current UK loss of biodiversity and natural capital, the new Government should introduce a Nature and Wellbeing Act to stem the decline of natural capital. Nick Blyth of IEMA explains: “The UK is in the privileged position of still having a wealth of natural capital which makes a real contribution to our recovering economy. However, if we are to retain our natural assets and wildlife, the next Government must be the first to create a Nature and Wellbeing Act.” The Welsh Assembly has just passed into law its own “Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill” which mandates public bodies providing services to do so in a sustainable way.

Sunday 17th May

Dear Father, inspire, lift up and enlighten the fallen minds of humankind. Help us to assess wisely the benefits and risks of technology, that new technologies may never be directed to improper or evil ends. May we never in our lives plan on earth what we would not wish to leave to our successors. Let no neglect or blindness allow or threaten the destruction of this beautiful world. This

we ask in the name of your Son, who died to save us all.

Monday 18th May

On April 10th, due to high levels of pollution, old people and children were urged to “avoid strenuous activity” and even the healthy were advised to “reduce physical exertion”. Some 29,000 people – more than 16 times as many people as die on the roads – are killed annually by particulates from diesel engines, while another 30,000 are thought to die of pollution from nitrogen oxide. Air pollution is increasingly linked to cancers and strokes, yet 38 of Britain’s air-quality zones exceed EU safety limits for nitrogen oxide, while London is Europe’s worst capital for this pollutant. London’s congestion charge cut pollution by one-seventh, but a low-emission zone in Berlin cut particulate pollution by half. Germany already has 70 LEZs and other countries have more. Britain’s sole example – in London – only applies to commercial vehicles though it will be extended to all vehicles in 2020. How many more deaths are needed before urgent action is taken?

Tuesday 19th May

A review of the links between eating processed foods and developing high blood pressure has concluded that high levels of sugar are more likely to be the culprits rather than high levels of salt. Most sugar in processed foods is high fructose corn sugar added by manufacturers. Health promotion advice should minimise consumption of processed foods in favour of creating meals by combining and cooking raw ingredients. Consuming 3-4 grams of salt a day is consistent with the lowest risk of cardiovascular disease. 200 years ago hypertension didn’t exist, but as soon as sugar consumption started to increase, so did hypertension, gout, obesity and diabetes.

Wednesday 20th May

Over the last 4 years in the USA, 7 million acres of land have been converted from grasslands to crops of corn and soya for biofuels. Researchers have calculated that converting to these crops could have emitted as much CO₂ as 34 coal-fired plants, or as much as an extra 28 million cars on the road. Grasslands store large amounts of carbon in their soils, especially the 16 million acres of undisturbed natural grassland –