

Dear Lord and Father, Ruler of heaven and earth, bless all who are called to represent the nations at the climate talks in Paris, that they may act with integrity and wisdom, in the interests of all peoples, but especially the poor and under-privileged. Help them to keep in mind that whatever they decide will affect future generations even more than our own. Give them strength of purpose to withstand the blandishments of special interests and to act only in such ways as will serve your purposes for humans and for all other creatures on earth. This we ask in the name of your dear Son, who died for us on the Cross.

Monday 30th November

The UN Climate Conference (COP21) begins today in Paris. People everywhere will be holding their breath while delegates wrestle with the urgent problems around the need to keep temperature rises to 2 °C. above pre-industrial levels, and the key role played by fossil fuels in heating the planet. Few realise the number and variety of consumer products containing oil

and its derivatives. Urgent research needs to be done on the development of substitutes for oil. Above all, energy use must be decarbonised and work on clean nuclear energy must be accelerated.

Sources:

The Environment (CIWEM)
Green Health Watch Magazine
The Organic Way
www.edie.net

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Picture on front cover: Skipton: canal, church and autumn leaves by Judith Allinson

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Prayer guide for the care of creation



November 2015

“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)

“The most important work we have to do is what must be done, alone with God, away from the bustle of the world and the plaudits of men . . . It is pre-requisite to all the rest of our work in the kingdom of God: preaching, pastoral work, meetings, societies, organisations and fund-raising.” (O. Hallesby)

“Some people think of prayer as the means by which we 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)



Sunday 1st November

Father, we pray for a vision of your world as your love would make it:

A world where the weak are protected and none go hungry or poor

A world where the benefits of life are fairly shared;

A world where nations, races, culture and religions live with mutual respect;

A world where peace is built with justice, and justice is guided by love;

And that we may have the courage and inspiration to play our part in building it.

Monday 2nd November

Many groups under the banner of Pray and Fast for the Climate are meeting today in various venues around the country to focus their prayers and meditations on the climate talks beginning in Paris on the 30th. For details, go to: www.prayerandfastfortheclimate.org/events

Tuesday 3rd November

Ten international oil and gas companies including Shell, BP and Total have confirmed the need for a strong agreement in Paris to limit global warming to 2 °C. "Our shared ambition is for a 2 °C future. It is a challenge for the whole of society. Over the coming years we will collectively strengthen our actions and investments to contribute to reducing the GHG intensity of the global energy mix. Our companies will collaborate in a number of areas, with the aim of going beyond the sum of our individual efforts."

Wednesday 4th November

Southern Solar, which has played a major role in installing solar power systems for schools, local authorities and businesses has become the 3rd solar business to have gone into liquidation following the Government's announcement of an 87% cut in solar subsidies. It comes just as the National Grid warns that Britain faces the highest risk in a decade of power cuts this winter. Britain's record in supporting renewable energy will come under

A 6-inch layer of composted bark or woodchips has the same effect.

Ground-cover ornamentals such as ajuga, alchemilla and hardy geraniums can help reduce weed growth.

Hand-weeding enables distinction to be made between wanted and unwanted species.

Thermal weeders, using paraffin, gas or electricity can kill annual weeds and reduce the vigour of perennials.

Herbicides based on pelargonic acid likewise kill annuals while leaving the roots of perennials unaffected.
www.gardenorganic.org.uk

Friday 27th 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 our environment. Buy Nothing

Day highlights the ethical and environmental consequences of consumerism.

www.buynothingday.co.uk

Saturday 28th November

A People's March for Climate Justice and Jobs takes place today in Leeds, with a service at 12.30 in Leeds Minster.

In Edinburgh there is a Climate March, and an Ecumenical Church service at St Alberts Chapel, University Catholic Chaplaincy at 11am

Tomorrow there will be a Climate Demonstration in London as the UN Climate Conference begins to meet in Paris. Details at: www.greenchristian.org.uk/whats-on

Sunday 29th November

A question that might be asked of any human endeavour is:

Is it motivated by the love of power or by the power of love?

Christians believe that the power of love, as shown by our Lord on the Cross, will bring the final victory. Meanwhile we have to struggle unceasingly to hasten that day.

unlike oil, there is no replacement for water."

Tuesday 24th November

The water industry consumes much energy in treating, pumping and distributing water around the country. Research by Bangor University and Trinity College, Dublin, has found that the use of micro-hydropower, i.e. drawing water from watercourses, passing it through turbines and returning it to the same watercourse, could save £1 million a year in Wales alone and generate enough energy to power at least 2,000 homes, saving a further £1 million a year. The Hydro-BPT Project, funded with 1 million euros from the ERDF Ireland-Wales Programme, has demonstrated the potential, but admits that current hydropower technology cannot yet offer the low-cost, compact technology needed to realise the potential.

Wednesday 25th November

Glyphosate weed-killers were supposed to be a safe replacement for organo-phosphate weed-killers.

However, since the WHO's report last March that glyphosate (Roundup) "is probably carcinogenic to humans" several countries including Holland, Denmark, Sweden and Sri Lanka, together with cities such as Paris, Chicago and Vancouver, have banned its use by public authorities. Yet glyphosate weed-killers are still widely used on farms and gardens. Perhaps we should accept that anything poisonous enough to kill plants is almost bound to have a negative effect on humans and other animals. Perhaps too we need to re-evaluate which plants we need to eliminate as undesirable. The need for weeding could be achieved by less toxic methods, e.g. hand-weeding, flame-torching, scalding and even electrocution.

Thursday 26th November

Garden Organic recommends a variety of methods to control weeds:

Sheet mulches such as cardboard, newspaper, permeable plastic or black polythene kills weeds over a season by excluding light.

intense scrutiny at the Paris talks and the cutting of support for solar energy will send all the wrong signals.

Thursday 5th November

Lord Stern, President of the British Academy, speaking to an audience of ambassadors in Paris, said: "To portray economic growth and climate responsibility as in conflict is to misunderstand economic development and the opportunities we now have to move to a low-carbon economy. Creating an understanding that there is no horse race between economic growth and climate action, and that richer countries must support poorer countries in making the transition to low-carbon growth by setting an example and through finance and technology, should help provide the confidence that can underpin the ramping up of ambition and thus contribute strongly to the success of the summit."

Friday 6th November

Today at 7pm the Green Christian Annual Members' Meeting takes

place at St. Michael's Centre, Stoke Gifford, Bristol BS34 8PD adjacent to Bristol Parkway station. Before it, from 6 pm onwards, members meet for a shared meal. Please bring food to share. Drinks are provided. Tomorrow (Saturday) a meeting on "The Economics of Hope" takes place at the same venue from 11 to 6. The keynote speakers are Molly Scott-Cato MEP for the South-West and author of "Green Economics" and "Environment and Economy" with Jonathan Rowsdon, Director at the Social Brain Centre at the Royal Society of Arts. Workshops will cover Measuring Progress, Economic Education, TTIP and corporate power, Monetary Policy, De-marketing, Inequality and Building a Spirited Movement for Economic Change. Tickets £20 (students £5) obtainable by completing the booking form at www.greenchristian.org.uk/archives/8542

Saturday 7th November

In August the Government, impatient at local authorities' apparent slowness to complete

planning enquiries into fracking applications, imposed a limit of 16 weeks on the planning processes. Otherwise, it appears, they might rule on all planning applications in that area and prioritise any appeals against planning refusals of shale gas applications. Critics say that fracking for gas could last for 30 years at most, so is the Government simply putting off the inevitable decision to move us progressively away an economy based on environment-polluting, health-damaging, climate-changing fossil fuels and towards an economy based on clean, climate-positive, renewable energy, such as wind, solar and tidal?

Sunday 8th November

Father, we pray that you will strengthen our weak wills and our feeble frames, that we may work tirelessly for the fulfilment of your promise of the redemption of all creation from the bondage of corruption, in the Name of your dear Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Monday 9th November

An agreement between the UK and Chinese governments has paved the way for the building of a nuclear power station at Hinkley Point, at a cost of £24 billion, to provide electricity after 2025 at a price of £92.50/KWh. This compares with a forecast price of £79.2/KWh for solar electricity over the next 15 years. Onshore wind-generated electricity is priced at £79.2/KWh, so the £24 billion committed to Hinkley Point could, according to Bloomsbury New Energy Finance, produce six times the power generating capacity forecast for Hinkley Point. The only other nuclear plants using similar technology are EDF's Flamanville plant which, after costly delays, is 3 years behind schedule and £7 billion over budget, and another EDF plant in Finland which is 9 years behind schedule and will cost 4 times more than originally budgeted.

Tuesday 10th November

The All-Party Committee on Climate Change (CCC) reports that onshore wind and solar power are

Saturday 21st November

Today sees the first of 3 events in Cambridge around the big issues facing the Paris Conference on Climate Change. All of them, organised by Great St. Mary's Ministry, take place at Michaelhouse, Trinity Street, Cambridge. Today's, beginning at 5.30 pm, will be addressed by Professor Richard Bauckham, senior Scholar at Ridley Hall, followed at 7.30 by Q & A with Cambridge MP Daniel Zeichner.

Next Monday's event, at 1 pm, on "Nature, the Economy and Human Well-Being" will be addressed by Professor Sir Partha Dasgupta, Emeritus Professor of Economy at Cambridge University. The final event, at 1 pm on Monday the 30th, will be addressed by Susy Brouard of CAFOD on "Engaging with Laudatio Si: Inspiration or Challenge"

www.gsm.cam.ac.uk/great-st-marys/events/

Sunday 22nd November

Loving Father, give us 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. May we look up and lift our heads as we look for the promised redemption of your world, through the steadfast love of Jesus Christ, your Son and our Redeemer.

Monday 23rd November

The World Economic Forum recently ranked global water crises such as droughts, risk of flooding and deteriorating water quality as the greatest threat facing the planet over the next decade. Of the 400 firms surveyed by CDP (formerly Carbon Disclosure Project) on their responses to issues of water security, 53% have failed to conduct a risk assessment, despite recurring crises such as droughts in California and parts of Brazil. Ford, Colgate Palmolive and Toyota were the best-performing companies on water security. Oil and gas companies were the worst. Yet, according to CDP, "Just as oil was to the 20th century, water is fast becoming the defining resource of the 21st century. Unfortunately,

Wednesday 18th November

Environment Secretary Liz Truss has said that Britain's forests, soils and rivers, estimated to be worth £1.6 trillion, should be quantified in the same way as the country's man-made infrastructure. "We are learning to understand and quantify the benefits we get from nature and to treat rivers, trees and bees as national assets just as much as the M25, Manchester airport or the Forth rail bridge. For example, by quantifying what trees do to provide enjoyment for people, filter pollution and store carbon, we can see they are worth at least 15 times their value as timber. Britain's overall stock of natural capital is now at least £1.6 trillion."

Thursday 19th November

Currently more than 30% of food produced globally goes uneaten and wasted, despite the fact that over 800 million people suffer from hunger and malnutrition. The rise of the global population from 7 billion now to 9.6 billion by 2050 only heightens the problem. The new International Food Waste Coalition, consisting of 7 major organisations

including Pepsi, Unilever and WWF, aims to promote programmes throughout the food and drinks sector to reduce the growing problem of waste. Here in the UK, WRAP at a meeting of key players said: "Just over 10% of household food waste is captured and recycled. This means that the majority ends up in the residual waste stream, which is a costly loss for local authorities and a missed opportunity for food waste recyclers."

Friday 20th November

A year after Scotland's 5p. Charge for each plastic bag was introduced, Morrison's, the Co-op and Waitrose have all reported an estimated 90% reduction in carrier bag use and Sainsbury's 100% as it no longer offers carrier bags. The resulting reduction of 650 million bags means an annual saving of more than 4,000 tonnes of plastic and other materials, and more than 2,500 tonnes of CO2 emissions. Last month, England introduced a carrier bag charge, but unlike Scotland it only applies to shops that employ more than 250 people.

already cost-competitive with new gas-fired generation, while offshore wind will also be cost-competitive into the 2020s. The CCC warns that a more variable supply from renewables will require grid upgrades in the form of demand-side management, interconnection with other markets and more electricity storage capacity. Lord Turner of the Energy & Climate Intelligence Service, speaking of Government subsidies, said: "If the Government wants to have a level playing field, it's imperative that fossil fuel generators pay the full costs to society of their emissions, which can be accomplished by simply raising the carbon floor price. As the CCC makes clear, this will keep customers' bills down, so it's a win-win strategy for the Treasury."

Wednesday 11th November

Ecotricity is to build three 'hybrid' energy parks where wind and solar power generation are combined, using the same grid connection to maximise efficiency and reduce initial costs.. They will add 15 MW. of solar panels to existing wind

parks in Devon and Lincolnshire and to a new wind park in Leicestershire. Dale Vince, founder of Ecotricity, said: "When there's less sun in winter, there's typically more wind, and vice versa in the summer – so putting wind and sun together has a big impact. Currently, the Government has rigged the market in favour of fossil fuels. That's why we are calling on them to level the playing field for energy generation in Britain and to remove the subsidies for fossil fuels, just as they have done for wind and solar power."

Thursday 12th November

In 2014, 59% of additions to global power capacity were from renewable energy – nearly 80% in Europe. WWF reports that Chinese coal consumption fell by 2.9% in 2014, the US is closing many of its coal plants and energy giants such as E.ON and RWE are changing their businesses to renewables. Major emerging economies – particularly China – are moving towards a more sustainable energy mix. Investors such as the Norwegian Sovereign Wealth Fund

and AXA have moved their investments out of coal, while Credit Agricole and the Bank of America have ended or reduced their coal lending. All this creates a momentum for the Paris talks and the adoption of a new climate regime.

Friday 13th November

Floating offshore wind turbines could provide a cost-effective form of low-carbon energy by the mid-2020s, according to the Energy Technologies Institute. Fixed foundations can be deployed in depths of less than 30 metres, but for greater depths, floating foundations provide the lowest cost solution as they are easier to install, being towed into position and anchored in a single day. However, the platforms and mountings are significantly more expensive. "Floating foundations are still some way from large-scale deployment and the offshore wind industry is currently focussed on delivering the Round 3 sites in shallower waters."

Saturday 14th November

The EU Climate Commissioner has revealed that the EU is on course to beat its 2020 emissions target by 20%, but a move to increase this to 30% will only be considered if matched by other developed countries at the Paris talks. Estimates of emissions reductions so far submitted would only cap global warming at 3 °C. above pre-industrial levels. He added that a legally-binding agreement might not be possible since it would require President Obama to submit it to a hostile congress. "We would like to have a binding agreement, but the UN needs unanimity. We cannot make the mistake we made at Kyoto where there were only 35 countries, and the big emitters were outside the agreement."

Sunday 15th November

We thank you, dear Father, for the men and women of determination who have taken the lead in the struggle to protect your creation from exploitation and degradation. Help us, in our turn, to give of ourselves, not counting the cost, for

the sake of your dear Son, who died that we might live.

Monday 16th November

Over 150 countries have submitted pledges to the UN Climate Conference, but the pledges are far from sufficient to prevent the world warming to more than 2 °C. above pre-industrial levels. WWF believes that ways must be found to encourage countries to take on tougher emission targets, e.g.

- 1) All countries should pledge to cut post-2020 emissions by at least half before 2025. Developed countries should make quantified pledges of support to developing countries to help them meet this 2025 goal.
- 2) The Paris talks should develop a permanent action agenda, led by country leaders, to incentivise and track progress on co-operation between governments and among non-state actors.
- 3) The Paris outcome should link technical progress to this action agenda with key mechanisms including the Green Climate Fund

in order to launch collaborative initiatives.

Tuesday 17th November

A plan to save the solar industry from collapse by adding £1 to consumer bills is supported by over 30 MPs from all major parties. Proposed by the Solar Trade Association, the plan calls for higher tariffs than those proposed by the Government, with a higher cap on the total of solar to be deployed and an improved mechanism to bring subsidies down.

In return, the industry would deliver enough clean electricity to power 275,000 homes, allowing it to become subsidy-free and preserve up to 20,000 jobs. "Solar is close to grid parity, but it is not there yet. The Government's 98% cut in the budget for solar would derail the industry at the last hurdle and waste millions of public investment in solar to date." So far three solar businesses have gone into administration with the loss of 1200 jobs, and another 20,000 jobs are at risk.