

### Sources:

Resurgence and Ecologist  
Positive News  
The Environment (CIWEM)  
[www.edie.net](http://www.edie.net)

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Picture on front cover: Hoverfly on Knapweed by Judith Allison

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## Prayer guide for the care of creation



# August 2016

This is what the Lord says:

Stand at the crossroads and look.  
Ask for the ancient paths.  
Ask where the good way is,  
walk in it and you will find rest for your souls”.

(Jeremiah 6.16-19)

“Coming before God in prayer is the central God-given human task, the one by which, whether spectacularly or quietly, everything is transformed.”

(Tom Wright)

## Monday 1<sup>st</sup> August

The Committee for Climate Change, in its 8<sup>th</sup> annual report, states that the vote to leave the EU does not change the UK legal requirement to reduce carbon emissions to levels which were set by the UK Parliament. However, policies derived from the EU, such as car emission standards, the EU Emissions Trading Scheme and the directives on waste, may need UK legislation. A 13% fall in UK emissions in the last 3 years was almost entirely due to reduced use of coal and the rise in electricity generation from renewables. Emissions reductions in the power sector, or any sector alone, will not be enough to achieve our carbon reduction targets from 2028 onwards. The Government's plan for these years, due in the autumn, must deal with the building sector, where low rates of insulation and low take-up of low-carbon heat have meant that emissions from this sector have remained static.

## Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August

While new efficiency standards for vehicles have reduced emissions, the benefits have been offset by

increased demand for travel and low fuel prices. The Committee recommends new standards to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles, supported by developments to the charging infrastructure. These would bring benefits to air quality and, potentially, in balancing electricity demand.

## Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August

Cancellation of the programme to commercialise Carbon Capture & Storage, cancellation of the standards for zero-carbon homes, and a reduction in funding for energy efficiency have together made it more costly to achieve our climate targets. Filling these policy gaps would ensure that we reach those targets in the most economical way, while maximising opportunities for UK businesses.

## Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> August

Forum for the Future has outlined simple rules for businesses to grapple with climate change:

- Since climate will impact not only individual businesses but also supply chains, market access, workforces and the wider infrastructure, it's important to

inspire us to put our trust in you alone, who gave your Son for us and all your creation.

## Monday 29<sup>th</sup> August

The world's first solar-powered internet drone has been successfully tested by Facebook in a 96-minute low-level flight over Arizona. The aim is to open internet opportunities to people in unconnected regions of the world. The unmanned Aquila craft will fly at a night-time altitude of 60,000 feet while, during winter, its solar panels will collect enough energy to keep the batteries charged overnight. There are many technical challenges ahead, but owner Mark Zuckerberg hopes the system can be brought into service 'in the near future'.

## Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> August

Although Google's data centres are powered by renewables, they still consume vast amounts of energy during the cooling process. Now, using DeepMind technology, Google has developed artificial intelligence to predict the temperature and pressure outputs 60 minutes in advance of the need to establish lowered output and energy

consumption. The system will deliver cuts to energy consumption and also reduce the ratio of total building energy use to IT energy use (known as 'Power Usage Effectiveness').

## Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> August

Creation Time takes place annually across the world from the 1<sup>st</sup> September to the feast of St Francis on the 4<sup>th</sup> October. The period is dedicated to prayer for the protection of Creation and the promotion of sustainable lifestyles that reverse our contribution to climate change. Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) has compiled a programme to encourage churches to observe Creation Time. This year, on the theme of 'Followers of Jesus, Caring for Creation', the Scottish churches have compiled a programme of resources for each week of the period. Other resources can be found on the World Council of Churches website.

[www.ecocongregationscotland.org/materials/creation-time](http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/materials/creation-time)

seawater, so reducing ocean acidification and, incidentally, providing biogas for energy generation. The problem is the scale. It would require seaweed farms covering 9% of our oceans to solve the problem of climate change. Many of the “solutions” won't work or have dangerous side-effects that make them worse than useless. The best solutions always come down to producing less CO2 in the first place and finding substitutes for fossil fuels.

### **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> August**

From today until the 29<sup>th</sup> the Greenbelt Festival is being held at the Boughton Estate, Kettering NN14 3AG. The line-up of celebrities attending includes Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, Satish Kumar, long-time editor of Resurgence magazine, Bill McKibben, founder of 350.org, and Terry Waite.

Green Christian will be there throughout the Festival. For more details, go to:

[www.greenchristian.org.uk](http://www.greenchristian.org.uk)

### **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> August**

The Leonard di Caprio Foundation, which supports environmental organisations, has recently raised \$45 million at a meeting in St. Tropez. The Foundation has contributed to the moratorium on new palm oil plantation in Indonesia, the first increase in tiger numbers in Nepal for over 100 years and the restoration of degraded coastline in Somalia. The Hollywood film star said: “ While we are the first generation with the technology, the scientific knowledge and the global will to build a truly sustainable economic future, we are the last generation that has a chance to stop climate change before it is too late. The destruction of our planet continues at a pace we can no longer afford to ignore. I'm proud to support these organisations that are working to solve humanity's greatest challenge.”

### **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> August**

Save us, dear Father, from over-reliance on human ingenuity and quick fixes as we strive to repair the damage we have wrought to your world. Acknowledging our reasoning powers as your great gift to us,

consider low-probability outcomes with potentially large consequences.

- Current climate impacts and trends are not a reliable indicator of future impacts, which will certainly include some surprises.
- Climate change is a significant enough risk to compel regular consideration at senior management level. It must be embedded across all departments and cannot be the sole responsibility of the sustainability team.
- No business acting alone can protect itself against climate risks. Partnerships in and across industries, and with government and communities, will be essential.

### **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> August**

In the wake of the Brexit vote, a Cantonese commentator remarked to Forum for the Future:

“Not every country gets the chance to undo everything and build itself again. So, in a way, you guys are lucky.”

The Forum has initiated a 5-point plan to accelerate the positive aspects of current uncertainties. One

of them - “Equipping people to lead in new ways” - says “This isn't about new leaders, but new leadership, purposeful and egoless - leadership where communities can take control of their own futures, working together, where people are heard and actively participate in the way they are governed.” Their project to develop this is found at [www.forumforthefuture.org/project/eu-innovate-citizen-driven-innovation/overview](http://www.forumforthefuture.org/project/eu-innovate-citizen-driven-innovation/overview)

### **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> August**

Many people look forward for a low-carbon, affordable energy system. Forum for the Future's One Energy project aims to bring people together to map the challenges in the energy system in order to achieve an affordable, secure, low-carbon energy future for everyone. See [www.forumforthefuture.org/project/bi-g-energy-vision/overview](http://www.forumforthefuture.org/project/bi-g-energy-vision/overview)

### **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> August**

Protect your Creation, dear Lord. Defend the work of your hands. Save our generation from our addiction to fossil fuels. Wash our hands of their clutch on dirty energy. Clean our hearts of our desire for more and

more. Turn our souls away from materialism and our desires from taking and taking from your finite world.

Give us a vision of the blessings we will receive if we turn away from idolatry of the economy and bow to wisdom and truth.

Let humankind see that true happiness rests in enjoying your earth as you intended, not according to the lies of the enemy.

Show us that a kinder, simpler lifestyle will allow us to see your glory more clearly. Let your glory shine throughout your kingdom.

(Ruth Jarman)

### **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> August**

The Sunderbans is the world's largest mangrove forest, running through India and Bangladesh and providing an essential natural defence against cyclones. Now India and Bangladesh have agreed to build a 1320 MW. Coal plant on its border, no matter what the cost to the people nearby or to the effects on climate change. The plant would take 219,000 cu. Metres of water per day from the nearby Poshur river and discharge 123,600 cu. metres after cooling the plant, polluting the water

on which the mangroves depend. 472 million tons of coal would be imported each year through narrow waterways, increasing the risk of spillage of oil and coal. The Sunderbans is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a campaign is underway to ask UNESCO to declare it a World Heritage Site In Danger. See [www.350.org](http://www.350.org)

### **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> August**

Bangladesh also plans to build two coal-fired power stations at Gandamara near Chittagong with finance provided by China. With a combined capacity of 1,224 MW. The project involves the eviction of thousands of people from fertile coastal land. In April the police opened fire on protesting villagers when five people were killed, 100 injured and prosecutions were mounted against 3,500 villagers for violence.. Most of the coal will come from Indonesia, where communities are also facing eviction and loss of farmland and have been protesting. See [tinyurl.com/gandamara-coal](http://tinyurl.com/gandamara-coal)

### **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> August**

In Bangladesh 18% of the country is affected by flooding while 27% of its

the Government's cancellation of the CCS competition could put back the deployment of CCS technology to 2030 and cost the country a further £30 billion if it is to meet its climate change targets. Dr. Jenifer Baxter of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers commented: "Without CCS technology the UK could lock itself into relying on unabated fossil fuel power for future generations. The Government needs to clarify the direction that UK energy policies will take, and work with regulators to provide developers with the certainty they need in order to meet electricity demand as well as the UK's ambitious carbon reduction targets."

### **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August**

The Mayor of London Sadiq Khan has announced Low Emission Neighbourhoods across eight London boroughs with an £11 million fund for car-free days, green taxi ranks for zero-emission cabs, parking reserved for the cleanest vehicles and new penalties for the worst polluting vehicles. Nearly 10,000 Londoners die every year from long-term exposure to London's dirty air. The Mayor is calling on Government to provide incentives for

people to switch to low-emission vehicles and to provide additional funding for this public health crisis.

### **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> August**

A report from the Committee on Climate Change says that large-scale shale gas extraction would be incompatible with the UK's climate targets unless tests were met to minimise its impacts. The main test requires strict regulation to limit harmful emissions and tackle methane leaks. Current regulations fall short of these minimum standards. Meanwhile, planning permission has been granted to Third Energy for shale gas extraction near Kirby Misperton in North Yorkshire. Objectors have applied for a judicial review of the decision, citing climate change concerns.

### **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August**

A new book by Australian Tim Flannery called "Atmosphere of Hope: Solutions to the Climate Crisis" sets out various schemes for drawing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it safely. One such scheme is to establish seaweed farms, which would take large quantities of CO2 out of

strategy to reduce greenhouse gases.” He concludes that:

- Family planning could bring more benefits to more people than any other single technology
- Benignly delivered family planning reduces greenhouse gases and helps conserve habitats
- The low-carbon benefit of one less birth is greater in affluent settings than in poorer ones
- Climate-concerned health professionals should therefore promote parental replacement fertility
- Action on population growth is as essential as limiting consumption and to ensure that climate mayhem is minimised and mitigated.

### **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> August**

Solar installations on open farmland are sometimes opposed for their alleged negative effects on food supply. Now floating solar arrays are being built around the world on reservoirs and other open water. The pumps and treatment plants that control our water supply require vast amounts of energy, and floating rafts of solar panels are providing a

solution. Solar photovoltaics on land lose efficiency at high temperatures, but placed on water can be efficiently cooled. The solar array on London's Queen Elizabeth II reservoir generated 5.8 million kWh during its first year of operation. Japan's solar array on its Yamakura reservoir will have 50,000 solar panels and generate 13.7 MW. of electricity.

### **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> August**

Creator God, you have given us a new vision of

Resources conserved,

Earth tended,

Atmosphere cleansed,

Trees planted,

Injustice ended,

Oceans teeming,

Nations at peace.

Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer,

Alert nations, inspire churches,

Receive our commitment, so that

Earth and heaven may be filled with your glory. Amen.

### **Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> August**

A report from the National Audit Office, pointing out that adoption of Carbon Capture & Storage (CCS) technology is essential for meeting our 2050 climate targets, finds that

people are under-nourished. Traditionally, fish and rice have been cultivated separately. Now integrated fish-farm systems are being introduced, where small fish are cultivated in rice paddies, where they reduce the need for pesticides to control insect pests and add fertiliser to the rice with their droppings, as well as reducing methane emissions while oxidising the water. Integrated fish-farm systems can be used in areas flooded by salt water and they increase crop yields and nutritional variety, so building resilience to climate change and alleviating food insecurity.

### **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> August**

The term “Demographic Dividend” refers to the boost to economic growth that can occur when the number of people of working age exceeds the number of non-workers such as children and the elderly DD occurs when countries change from high birth and death rates to low birth and death rates. Typically, the stages are:

- A fall in child mortality due to improvements in healthcare and nutrition

- A resultant rise in the working population
- A fall in birth rates, resulting in the demographic dividend as described
- A decrease in the proportion of workers to the non-working population.

South Korea and other East Asian nations provide examples of these trends.

### **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> August**

Populations in most of sub-Saharan Africa are expected to double by 2050 while, currently, 40% of the population is under 15. This means that many of these countries can benefit from the Demographic Dividend if they can lower fertility rates and tackle population growth. Rwanda for example had a total fertility of 7.54 per woman in 1989, but reduced this to 4.51 by 2013, leading the Population Reference Bureau to predict that “if this impressive progress continues, Rwanda will by 2030 have achieved the demographic conditions necessary for accelerated economic growth.” Burundi, by contrast still has a total fertility rate of 6.03 per woman. Both countries had a similar

GDP in 1989: now Rwanda's GDP is twice that of Burundi. Lowering fertility rates is critical to preventing environmental degradation and curbing the possibility of conflict over scarce resources.

### **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August**

For most of sub-Saharan Africa, the demand for family planning is far from being met. It is predicted that "current investments in family planning must increase by 3-5 times their current levels to meet women's needs for family planning, to stabilise births by 2030 and to establish the conditions to achieve the Demographic Dividend." See [www.unfpa.org/demographic-dividend](http://www.unfpa.org/demographic-dividend) and [www.prb.org/pdf12/achieving-demographic-dividend.pdf](http://www.prb.org/pdf12/achieving-demographic-dividend.pdf)

### **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August**

Dear Father, to whom we turn for bread day by day, your creative power has provided food for everyone. We remember our sisters and brothers who, like us, ask you for their daily bread, their cup of rice, a blanket for the night – and receive nothing. Let us realise where we have failed them, and where our

consumer choices may have contributed to their poverty. Turn our hearts, that there may be help for them, and for ourselves, so that we may join them in thanks for everything that you give us, each day anew. (Dr Ruediger Minor)

### **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> August**

In order to feed the projected 9.7 billion people on earth by 2050, we shall need to produce 70% more food. Yet current agricultural practices such as rearing cattle for human consumption, plus the global supply system, are contributing to climate change and the destruction of natural habitats. In Britain over half a million people are now vegan, according to an Ipsos Mori survey, and nearly half of these are under 34. If meat-eaters chose chicken instead of beef, and we fed ourselves only on livestock reared on grass, straw and crop waste, and we raised our animals only on land unsuitable for crop production, our carbon footprint could be cut drastically without the need for us all to become vegans. However, adoption of a plant-based diet is still one of the best ways of lowering our carbon footprint.

### **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> August**

The Courtaulds Agreement 2025 brings together major food and drinks retailers representing 93% of the UK market in a commitment to cut waste, and its associated carbon emissions, by 20% by 2025. A water reduction target remains to be agreed. Speaking at the launch in March, Richard Swannell of WRAP said: "The pressure of resource scarcity, population growth and our changing climate will have profound effects on our food supply in the coming years."

### **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> August**

Asda, like other large retailers, has to charge 5p per carrier bag. Since October 2014 it has invested £700,000 of this money in loans to Scottish social enterprises. Marks & Spencer has donated half the proceeds of the 5p bag charge to local charities such as Macmillan Cancer Research and the Marine Conservation Society. The charge has seen carrier bag usage drop by 80%, with more than £6.7 million being raised for good causes during 2015 alone. DEFRA is expecting the charge to save £13 million-worth of carbon emissions, £60 million in

clean-up costs and added over £780 million a year to the UK economy.

### **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August**

This year's Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement has been awarded to Sir Partha S. Dasgupta for his contributions to environmental economics. He first came into prominence with a study of "optimum population", when he considered social dynamics including individual choices as to whether or not to have children, recognising that reproductive choices made by one generation affect not only those who do the choosing, but also influence the quality of life of the next generation. Professor Dasgupta also had a major influence on the thinking behind the publication of the Pope's Encyclical *Laudatio Si*.

### **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> August**

Professor John Guillebaud, writing in the British Medical Journal, calls for voluntary family planning to minimise and mitigate climate change. "Wise and compassionate promotion of contraceptive care and education in a rights-based culturally appropriate framework offers a cost-effective