

Prayer guide for the care of creation



January 2017

“Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also . . . Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.”
(Matthew 6.20-21 & 33)

“Once we realise that we own absolutely nothing, we are enlightened, not only in the sense that our minds are flooded with light, but also in the sense that a weight is lifted from us and our hearts grow lighter.”
(Donald Nicholl)

Sunday 1st January

With every power for good to stay
and guide me,
Comforted and inspired beyond all
fear,
I'll live these days with you in
thought beside me,
And pass, with you, into the
coming year.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, from prison 1945.

Monday 2nd January

With the appointment of Rex Tillerson, former CEO of ExxonMobil, as US Secretary of State, with strong business links to Putin's Russia, and of Scott Pruitt (who is suing the Environmental Protection Agency over its Clean Power Plan) as chief of the EPA, many view the new presidency with great trepidation. Nothing however can hide the deep concerns of the rest of the world over climate change and the commitment of so many nations to the terms of the Paris Agreement. This world is, after all, God's handiwork and he is with us in all our efforts to protect it from human greed.

Tuesday 3rd January

A report from Direct Invest shows that global commitments to disinvest from fossil fuels have been entered into by 688 institutions across 76 countries representing \$5 trillion in the value of their assets. The figure has doubled since September 2015. The latest to join the movement is Southwark Borough Council's pension fund with assets worth £1.2 billion. The chairman of the fund said: "The council will explore new opportunities to invest in the development of sustainable energy infrastructure alongside other local authorities. We are a long-term investor, aiming to deliver a truly sustainable pension fund." Local councils in Britain have over £14 billion invested in fossil fuels. Elections next May provide an opportunity to change this situation. See www.350.org

Wednesday 4th January

In the USA between July and September, more than 4 gigawatts of new solar capacity was

installed – enough to connect one new home to solar power every 11 seconds – taking the total installed capacity to 25.8 GW. - capable of generating enough clean electricity to power 65 million homes. The cost of solar power is now approaching parity with that of fossil fuels and can only become cheaper still. However, economist Chris Goodall sounds a note of caution: “The fast-maturing renewable sector still has to overcome storage limitations and the world's dependence on infrastructure geared to fossil fuels.”

Thursday 5th January

Chris Goodall writes: “Although the sun supplies enough power in 90 minutes to meet the world's energy needs for a whole year, there will be periods when it produces far more energy than can be used. Surplus electricity, and indeed sunlight itself, can be used to create liquid hydrocarbons for fuel, plastics and methane to drive gas-fired power stations at times when renewable output

dips. This is not a pipe dream. A project launched in Paris by Bill Gates as the Global Apollo programme, and taken up by 20 major governments, is to produce liquid fuels and methane directly from carbon dioxide using sunlight – in effect, mimicking the photosynthesis that every plant accomplishes so easily.”

Friday 6th January

The 1,172 mile Dakota Access Pipeline was planned to carry oil close to land reserved to Native Americans at Standing Rock. Protests by Native Americans and others were met by the police with teargas, water cannon and high-velocity rubber bullets, resulting in some injuries. Last month the US Army Corps of Engineers refused permission for a crucial part of the pipeline because of health and ecological risks. However, despite the ruling, the threats and intimidation have continued. The US is a signatory to the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which requires free, prior and

informed consent for any interference with traditional lands. However, President Trump is himself a major investor in the project. The campaign is far from over.

Saturday 7th January

Leaving the EU, according to pressure group Greener UK, presents opportunities as well as challenges. Greener UK is an alliance of 13 environmental organisations with a membership of 7.9 million. 145 MPs from all parties have signed a commitment to do all in their power to:

- establish the UK as a world leader on the environment by matching or exceeding current environmental, wildlife and habitat protections
- ensure that the UK leads on climate action
- create a countryside richer in nature by supporting farmers and landowners to deliver environmental benefits alongside a thriving farming sector.

Sunday 8th January

We thank you, dear Father, for the men and women who have given their lives to the protection of your beautiful world. We pray that their labours and sacrifices may not be in vain, but that the torch they lit may be carried by the rest of us as long as it takes to free your world from pollution, degradation and the bitter harvest of human greed.

Monday 9th January

“Windows into Ecology” is the title of a 6-week course taking place every Monday from today in the Pearson Room at Truro Cathedral. The Revd. Dr. Lucy Larkin will lead an exploration into the spiritual and moral dimensions of ecological crises such as climate change and biodiversity loss. “We will plumb the depths of Biblical and theological resources to help us think imaginatively about the natural world and suggest things we can do.” Fee for the course: £12. More information from:

AlanBashforth@trurocathedral.org.uk

Tuesday 10th January

The EU fisheries council last month approved new fishing quotas which would allow UK fishing fleets to catch 16.5% more North Sea cod, 17% more whiting, 20% more anglerfish and more than 50% more pollock. The Western Channel will yield 7% more haddock and 25% more sole. Yet scientists have warned that nearly two-thirds of European fish stocks are overfished and 85% are below healthy levels. The European director of Oceana accused ministers of ignoring the science in favour of short-term interests. "It is difficult to understand why ministers fail to see the great opportunity of fish recovery for EU fishermen and citizens alike. Rebuilding stocks will create more jobs and provide more healthy food for European tables. Why is that not a political priority?"

Wednesday 11th January

Last year UNESCO threatened to put the Donana World Heritage Site on the danger list unless the

Spanish Government cancelled its plan to dredge the Guadalquivir River, which would result in lowering the water table. The Government has indeed cancelled the project, but the Donana is far from safe. WWF said: "The government needs to address all of UNESCO's concerns, from illegal water extraction to mining in the region." You can let Spain know you want Donana properly protected permanently at www.wwf.org.uk/donana

Thursday 12th January

Communications by sound between animals is even more important under the seas than on land, according to Dr Steve Simpson, Professor of Marine Biology at Exeter University. Listening to the sounds made by a range of fish species, crabs, sea slugs and whelks, and recording the whole marine ecology system shows that animal behaviour is altered by noise pollution from shipping and wind turbines. "With many environmental stresses on marine ecology, including global

warming, waste pollution and over-fishing, to eliminate just one stress – noise pollution – really would help marine species to build resilience to better cope with other stress factors.”

Friday 13th January

18 miles off the Yorkshire coast lies Britain's biggest gas storage reservoir, known as Rough, with a capacity of 130 billion cu. feet of gas. However, it was closed in the summer for maintenance and now holds just 12% of the UK's peak gas demand. National Grid says that Britain will not run out of gas since there are pipelines from Norway and the Low Countries plus imported LPG from Qatar, but a gas analyst from ICIS warns that in the event of a cold winter and diminishing rough gas stocks, wholesale prices would need to rise in order to incentivise supplies from other sources.

Saturday 14th January

A planned 188 MW energy-from-waste plant in Flintshire will, by the end of 2019, process up to

200,000 tonnes of non-recyclable waste from five county councils, to generate enough electricity to power 30,000 homes. The Parc Adler plant is part-financed by the Green Investment Bank in addition to the county councils. A spokesman for the GIB said: “This ushers in a new era of waste infrastructure financing. Investors are already turning attention to the opportunities provided by new merchant infrastructure, which we believe could require up to £3.6 billion of funding by 2020.”

Sunday 15th January

Save us, Father, from over-reliance on human ingenuity and short-term solutions as we strive to repair the damage that we have wrought to your world. Acknowledging our reason as your most precious gift, inspire us to put our trust in you alone, who gave us your Son for our salvation.

Monday 16th January

Until now most of Britain's offshore wind farms have been made abroad. Now CS Wind and

Dong Energy have agreed to build a factory at Campbeltown, Scotland, for the manufacture of towers for offshore wind farms at the rate of 50 a year, so creating 70 new jobs. Siemens has already opened a factory in Hull to manufacture the blades for wind turbines. The director of RenewableUK said: "Today's news highlights the fact that the industry is creating highly-skilled, sustainable jobs in Britain. Offshore wind developers are committed to bringing industrial benefits to the UK. Building turbine towers in Britain is a big part of this."

Tuesday 17th January

A consortium including Shell has secured the rights to build a 700 MW wind farm off the Netherlands coast with one of the lowest bids ever recorded. The government subsidy of 300 million euros is a fraction of the 5 billion euros originally envisaged. Within 7.5 years after its opening in 2020, it is expected to operate without any subsidy. The country's programme

of offshore wind projects will create around 10,000 jobs by 2020. It will deliver 4.5 gigawatts of offshore wind capacity by 2023.

Wednesday 18th January

Many parts of the UK are unsuitable for wind power technology. Now Shell, E.ON and Schlumberger plan to open Britain's first kite-driven power station later this year. Giant kites, pioneered by Kite Power Solutions, will harness wind energy at higher altitudes than traditional wind turbines and can be manufactured at a fraction of their cost. The first 500 kW system will be installed at West Freugh in Dumfries and Galloway. Once the technology is proven, KPS plans to develop a 3 MW onshore system at West Freugh before installing similar-sized projects offshore.

Thursday 19th January

The Diocese of Winchester is holding a workshop today entitled "Ecochurch – Tools for Transformation". It will take place

from 7.30 to 9.30 pm at Highfield Church near Southampton. The event is a chance to explore the new Eco Church Scheme and the Big Church Switch and to hear about current local church projects. Dr Ruth Valerio of A Rocha, author of “L is for Lifestyle” and “Just Living”, will present the Christian case for action. For more details, go to:

www.winchester.anglican.org/events/ecochurch-tools-transformation-2/ical/

Friday 20th January

A report from consultants AlphaValue finds that nuclear giant EDF could be heading towards bankruptcy as it faces a perfect storm of under-estimated costs for de-commissioning France's ageing nuclear plants, disposal of nuclear waste and building Hinkley C power stations. The French and British governments, for different reasons, have turned a blind eye to the looming crisis. Ultimately, because EDF owns 17 of Britain's nuclear reactors in addition to

those in France, which provide 70% of France's electricity, the two governments may conclude that EDF is too big to be allowed to fail. In that event, the bill will come home to British and French taxpayers. What then?

Saturday 22nd January

Ex-President Obama last November took steps to protect existing funding for family planning in America, But US funding for family planning overseas looks vulnerable to cuts by the new administration. In Britain a quarter of local councils have closed or may close some of their contraceptive services. Worldwide, the provision of these services in developing countries faces a shortfall of \$850 million. The aim of the UN-backed FO2020 programme is to provide access to contraceptives for 120 million more women than in 2012. Currently it delivers services to 30 million women, but is not on target to meet the goal of 120 million women by 2020.

Sunday 22nd January

Lord, make us an instrument of thy power to combat evil:

Where there is sabotage of thy creation, let us strive to safeguard it.

Where greed seeks to destroy our moral heritage, let us be first to oppose it.

Where power and money combine to undermine our community life, let us hasten to affirm the supremacy of love of neighbour.

Where there is passivity, deference and conformism to the giant powers of darkness, give us courage to radiate the light of truth. Amen.

Monday 23rd January

'Fracking' involves injecting water and chemicals at high pressure into rocks deep underground, a technique that can lift the earth's surface and cause earthquakes. The US state of Oklahoma has experienced many earthquakes since fracking began. The latest tremor, measuring 5.8 on the Richter scale, spurred regulators to shut down 37 fracking waste-

water disposal wells. In the UK, the North Yorkshire County Council's planning consent to fracking was the subject of a judicial review which has now allowed the council's appeal. Other planning applications are meeting determined opposition across the country.

Tuesday 24th January

According a new study in *The Lancet* 'gender bender' endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) are having a massive detrimental impact on human health and the economy in the USA and EU valued at over \$550 billion. The damage is mainly caused by flame retardants widely used in building materials, electronics, furnishings, vehicles, aircraft, foams and textiles. The greatest damage is to human intelligence. Flame retardants in the US have caused the loss of 11 million IQ points among 43,000 people, representing a \$266 billion cost to society. The EU has restricted the most dangerous flame retardants since 2008, but

all the same they cost society damages of \$2.6 billion.

Wednesday 25th January

The Lancet article also considers the costs associated with organophosphate pesticides (OPPs), which are also endocrine disrupters. In the US there are safety regulations for children before OPPs can be approved for agricultural use. In the EU there are no such regulations and, as a result, OPPs are the largest contribution to EDC health costs at \$121 billion, i.e. 1.8% of the EU economy. The EU is considering new regulations for “chemicals known to cause adverse effects”, but chemical industry lobbyists have a track record of watering down any regulations that might affect their profits.

Thursday 26th January

9 out of 10 people in England now take their own bags when shopping for food, according to a survey run by Cardiff University. The survey also showed increased support for the carrier

bag charge and for a potential charge on plastic water bottles. This suggests that similar policies could be implemented, such as a deposit return scheme on plastic bottles and a charge on disposable coffee cups.

Friday 27th January

The price of solar panels has fallen faster than anyone predicted. The lowest bid for a 350 MW solar farm in Abu Dhabi was a mere 2.42 cents per kWh – less than half the cost of using oil, coal or gas. According to Chris Goodall in his book “The Switch”, it won't be long before new thin-film solar materials will be covering every light-exposed surface – walls, roofs, windows, cars, roads, mobile phones, not to mention huge areas of the Sahara. The next hurdle is the storage of surplus electricity for periods when the sun is not shining.

Saturday 28th January

Today a Green Christian workshop entitled “Way of Life –

Nurturing Creation” takes place at St. Aloysius Church, 20 Phoenix Road, London NW1 1TA (near Euston station) from 11 to 4.30. Participants can share experience of Way of Life disciplines. There will be presentations on resources. All are welcome. Entry is free, but donations are welcome on the day. To book a place, please email: georgedow@greenchristian.org.uk before the 21st.

Sunday 29th January

Father, you have given great power for good or evil. You have endowed us with gifts that, used wisely could halt the destruction of the biosphere on which we all depend. Send your gift of wisdom on all who are engaged in developing the technologies that, in our perplexity, we are going to need as we see what is happening to the world's climate. Give them integrity and firmness of purpose, that no selfish considerations may tempt them to deviate from their chosen path, This we ask in the name of your

Son, who died to save your world and all its creatures.

Monday 30th January

Chris Goodall explores some options for storing electricity. Batteries in electric vehicles will have a big role, but are too expensive for grid-scale applications. The most important technology, he believes, will be to use surplus solar power to electrolyse water into hydrogen and oxygen. The hydrogen can either be fed into the gas grid, used to power hydrogen-fuelled cars or used to make other types of fuel and chemicals, such as ammonia for agricultural use. Most of these are expensive, but when the electricity used is effectively free, this hardly matters.

Tuesday 31st January

A book called “A Farewell to Ice” by Peter Wadhams, former director of the Scott Polar Institute in Cambridge, examines the importance of ice to the whole of Planet Earth, catalogues its

alarming disappearance and castigates politicians and scientists for their failure inform us of the speed at which we are heading for disaster. He believes that human ingenuity can even now come up with a method of extracting CO2 from the atmosphere on a sufficiently large scale to slow down and eventually reverse global warming.

Sources:

Clean Slate (Centre for Alternative Technology)
Resurgence and Ecologist
BusinessGreen

Additional Prayers

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:
Umbellifer, Malham Tarn, by
Judith Allison

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