

Sources:

Countryside Voice (CPRE)
Environment (CIWEM)
Population Matters news
Positive News
www.BusinessGreen.com

Additional Prayers

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Prayer guide for the care of creation



May 2017

“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)

“There is no denying that the accelerated rate of population growth brings many added difficulties to the problems of development when the size of the population grows more rapidly than the quantity of available resources.”
(Pope Paul VI)

“Some people think – excuse my expression here – that in order to be good Catholics we have to be like rabbits. No. Parenthood is about being responsible.”
(Pope Francis)

“Overpopulation has become a serious threat to the well-being of many people and a grave obstacle to any attempt to organise peace on this planet of ours.”
(Albert Einstein)

Monday 1st May

As Britain prepares to negotiate to leave the EU, the Government's White Paper declares: "The Great Repeal Bill will ensure that the whole body of existing EU environmental law continues to have effect in UK law. This will provide businesses and stakeholders with maximum certainty as we leave the EU." This is a pledge that will be monitored closely by all who are concerned about climate change.

Tuesday 2nd May

A survey by the Bright Blue think tank has found that over 90% of Conservative voters favour the maintenance and strengthening of regulations on water quality, beach cleanliness, habitat protection and targets for curbing air pollution and combatting increasing household waste. 71% of those polled were proud of the UK passing the world-leading Climate Change Act 2008 to limit greenhouse gas emissions.

Wednesday 3rd May

Following a decision of the High Court to allow fracking in

Lancashire, chemical firm INEOS is bidding to explore Sherwood Forest for shale gas. Over a quarter of a million people have signed a petition asking the Environment Secretary to save Sherwood and other public forests from fracking. WWF comments: "Rather than fracking, the Government needs to focus investment on innovative low-carbon technologies to provide for our energy needs. Fracking hinders our progress towards our carbon targets by opening up a new source of fossil fuels when what we most need is to leave most of the world's gas, coal and oil in the ground."

Thursday 4th May

The Government's Clean Growth Plan, due out in March, is likely to be postponed until after the election. A new report from Energy UK titled 'Pathways to a Low Carbon Future' urges the Government to step up efforts to communicate the costs and benefits of transitioning to a low-carbon economy.. In particular: "The industry believes that energy efficiency should be a national priority to make the transition to a

vehicle (EV) charging specialist ZAPINAMO has been awarded £3.1 million to roll out portable EV charging points. ITM Power will receive nearly £3.5 million to provide cost-competitive hydrogen to a fleet of 20 fuel cell buses in Birmingham. Energy storage developer Powervault has been awarded over £388,000 to explore how old EV batteries can be re-purposed to boost domestic energy storage capacity. Innovate UK said: "If (these projects) deliver the expected outcomes, we expect them to be rapidly adopted and scaled up across the UK, showing that we are a great place to develop innovative solutions to society's challenges."

Tuesday 30th May

Since the National Trust took ownership of the Kinder Estate in 1982, it has installed over 6,000 hand-built dams to slow down the water that would normally race down the gullies into the rivers below. These dams have raised the water table on the moor, allowing water to trickle off the land and alleviating flood risks downstream.

The NT has also restored 500 acres of eroding bare peat bog, enabling it to act as a carbon trap, preventing harmful CO2 escaping to the atmosphere. They have also fenced the summit and removed 38,000 sheep from the mountain. Wildlife has benefited as a result, such as mountain hare, red grouse, golden plover and common lizard.

Wednesday 31st May

Next Saturday June 3rd, an Anabaptist/Green Christian conference takes place at Warwick Road URC church, Coventry CV1 1EX on the theme "Is religion costing the earth?" Speakers include Joshua Searle (Spurgeon's College, London), Ruth Valerio (TearFund), Cheryl Hunt (theologian) and Chris Walton (Green Christian). There are workshops on "Jesus and Wild Nature", "Joy in Enough", "What is an Anabaptist?" with a visit to Five Acre Farm. For more details, go to www.greenchristian.org.uk

Friday 26th May

A YouGov survey for Friends of the Earth has found that 81% of people polled think that councils should reduce grass-cutting to boost the population of insect pollinators. 68% support councils reducing the use of bee-harming pesticides and 92% support councils in planting more bee-friendly plants in parks and community spaces. FoE comments: "Policies such as allowing grass to grow on roadside verges will help bees, save cash-strapped councils money and are supported by the public. We hope many more councils will stand up for our bees and introduce pollinator action plans in the months ahead."

Saturday 27th May

The UK Air Quality Plan was due to be published on April 24th. However, DEFRA has postponed publication of the final version until September 15th at latest. Many have questioned why, if the plan was ready on April 24th, it cannot now be published. Client Earth comments: "This is not a political issue, but a public health issue.

Whichever party is in power, the British public need to see an air quality plan which rests on good scientific evidence and ensures that people do not have to breathe toxic air and suffer the health consequences for a moment longer." Client Earth is considering further court action against DEFRA if it continues to procrastinate.

Sunday 28th May

Lord God, we live in a world where things have gone badly wrong because we have left you out of account. We have worshipped other gods and have not hallowed your Name. We have adopted our own way and have not served your Kingdom. We have chosen what pleases us and have not done your will.

Dear Lord, forgive us our folly and blindness. Turn us back to your self, for the sake of your Son, our only Saviour. (Frank Colquhoun)

Monday 29th May

Innovate UK has announced £18 million of government funding for 12 projects designed to promote cleaner, greener travel. Electric

low-carbon economy more affordable for both consumers and businesses." In addition: "The Government should urgently develop a new approach to delivering low-carbon heat technologies and to accelerate the development of a smart and flexible grid."

Friday 5th May

Global Divestment Mobilisation begins today until the 13th when people around the world will be calling on institutions to divest from fossil fuels and reinvest in a brighter, cleaner future. Events around the world will highlight the climate impacts of churches, universities, local government and pension funds, and demand that they do the right thing. The Church of Sweden, the World Council of Churches and the Anglican Church of South Africa have shown moral leadership in divesting from fossil fuels. Some churches in the UK have done likewise, but the Church of England still invests more than £190 million in Shell and BP alone, while the Methodist Church has £52 million invested in fossil fuels. For

more information, go to: <http://brightnow.org.uk/action/global-divestment-mobilisation-coming-soon>

Saturday 6th May

"Good News for God's Earth" is the title of a day of presentations, workshops, activities and worship at the Great Britain Centre, Swaffham PE37 7HT from 10 to 4.30 today. There will be presentations by Chris Naylor (A Rocha), Ruth Valerio (Tearfund), Julia Hanmer (Bat Conservation Trust) and Nigel Cooper (diocese of Ely), with workshops on Becoming an Eco-Church, Sustainable Church Buildings, Voices from the Global South, Churchyard Biodiversity and Celebrating Creation through Liturgy. For further details, go to:

<http://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/ev-ent?id=8587>

Sunday 7th May

Lord God, the resurrection of your Son has given us new life and renewed hope. Help us to live as new people in pursuit of the Christian ideal. Grant us wisdom to

know what we must do, the will to want to do it, the courage to undertake it, the perseverance to carry it through and the strength to complete it. (from the New St Joseph People's Prayer Book)

Monday 8th May

“Unlike plagues of the dark ages or contemporary diseases we do not yet understand, the modern plague of overpopulation is soluble by means we have discovered and with resources we possess. What is lacking is not sufficient knowledge of the solution but universal consciousness of the gravity of the problem and education of the billions who are its victims.”

(Martin Luther King)

The Trump administration has announced a stoppage of all support for the UN population Fund (UNFPA) which provides and coordinates family planning in the world's poorest countries. The US is currently the world's largest funder of family planning services through overseas aid and the announcement could result in the

withdrawal of more than \$9 billion of funding.

Tuesday 9th May

Shortly after this announcement, the Dutch Government initiated the “She Decides” project, designed to generate funds to replace those to be withdrawn and to lobby other governments to provide additional funding. The UK Government says it will lead efforts to secure extra funding for family planning: a detailed announcement is expected at a global family summit in London this July. See

<http://www.populationmatters.org/about/protect-family-planning-services-us-cuts/>

Wednesday 10th May

Last month the world population reached 7.5 billion. The UN projects a likely population of 9.7 billion by 2050 – an increase of nearly 30% . It reports that the Total Fertility Rate is still above replacement rate. High birth rates in some African countries (Niger has a TFR of 7.5 children per woman) are holding them back from escaping poverty as communities and families

Macquarie has pledged to invest at least £3 billion in low-carbon projects over the next 3 years. WWF suggests that their priority should be novel green projects which are less likely to be funded privately. “Green growth has the ability to power our economy, create more jobs and dramatically reduce our emissions.”

Wednesday 24th May

A report published in “Science” from the IAMS and Centre for Marine Socioecology, Tasmania, finds that shifts in the distribution of land, marine and freshwater species caused by climate change are a growing driver of species extinction, conflict and major economic uncertainty. The report highlights the crucial role of indigenous peoples in efforts to build resilience to climate change, as demonstrated by the Skolt Sami in Finland through local efforts of ecological restoration in areas where it makes sense. In the light of these findings, the report calls for a moratorium on destructive and extractive activities in the Arctic and in territories where the preservation

of carbon sinks can slow the impact of climate change. “Permafrost melt is a global event. Industries like oil and gas have no role in these regions any more. Preservation of these marshmires, old-growth forests and tundras, which have been governed sustainably for millennia by the Sami and others are our best bet for survival as the Arctic warms.”

Thursday 25th May

A study from Pretoria University estimates the number of elephants that should be present in 73 protected areas spanning 21 African countries.. Three-quarters of those elephants (around 730,000 animals) are missing from these protected areas. One-third of them contain fewer than 5% of the elephants that should be there. However, China has pledged to end its domestic trade in ivory by next year, the US has introduced a near-total ban on ivory and Singapore has announced its intention to ban the ivory trade.

Saturday 20th May

According to Pricewaterhouse Coopers, transactions in the UK's sharing economy doubled to £7.4 billion in 2015 – the fastest rate of growth in Europe. Sharing and making can be positive ways to satisfy the innate human need for novelty. In Sweden the rate of VAT has been halved for repaired items such as bicycles, clothes, shoes, dishwashers and washing machines. It is hoped that this will encourage people to fix their possessions instead of buying new ones.

Sunday 21st May

Father, we pray for all who are working in industries which offer outstanding powers for good or all over the rest of humanity – the nuclear industry, the chemical and pharmaceutical industries, the biotechnological industry. Be with them when they face conflicts between their beliefs and their short-term interests. Support them in every crisis and make your presence known to them, especially when they face pressures to conform.

Monday 22nd May

On April 22nd Britain enjoyed its first-ever working day without using any coal to generate electricity. Coal use fell by 52% in 2016, causing CO2 emissions to drop to their lowest since 1894.

Renewables now account for a quarter of our electricity in the UK (higher in Scotland) while our environmental goods and services sector is now worth £29 billion to the UK economy, supporting around 400,000 full-time jobs.

However we have made little progress on decarbonising buildings and transport.. Greenpeace comments: "Whoever forms the next government must prioritise a plan for reducing emissions from all sectors, so guaranteeing an environmentally clean and economically successful future for the UK."

Tuesday 23rd May

The UK Green Investment Bank is to be sold to Australia's Macquarie Group for £2.3 billion. Britain's GIB has backed 99 green infrastructure projects and committed £3.4 billion to the green economy. Now

struggle to meet the food, education and health needs of their growing numbers. Soils, water supplies and wildlife habitats are all under pressure.

Thursday 11th May

While numbers are growing quickest in the poorest countries, children born in the richest countries have the greatest impact on the environment. An American produces 160 times more CO2 than someone from Niger. Also, levels of consumption in the developed world demand more of the planet's resources than it can provide. We already use the resources of 1.6 planets. If we all lived like Americans, we would require 4 planets to sustain us.

Friday 12th May

What are the solutions? If, on average, there were just half-a-child less per family in the future, there will be 1 billion of us fewer than the UN expects in 2050 – and 4 billion fewer by the end of the century. Billions less mouths to feed, land to use and greenhouse gases to be produced. Ensuring that everyone

is able to choose their family size and exercise that right thoughtfully and responsibly will mean a better future for the next generation of children and those that follow.

Saturday 13th May

Today a conference called "Faith and the Environment" takes place at Edward King House, Lincoln LN2 1PU from 9.30 to 4.30. The conference will highlight things we can do as individuals, churches and in our communities in order to live more justly and sustainably. The Bishop of Lincoln, Christopher Lowson, will set the scene, followed by a keynote address from Bishop Graham Cray, former Bishop of Maidstone. Other talks will cover Community Energy, Lincolnshire Wildlife, Fracking and Eco-Church, followed by open discussion.

Tickets are £6.96 from <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/faith-and-the-environment-conference-lincoln-act-local-think-global-tickets-32434841484>

Sunday 14th

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, amongst the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(The Book of Common Prayer)

Monday 15th May

In 2015 catastrophic forest fires in Indonesia caused deaths estimated at 100,000 in Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia. The President of Indonesia, several ministers and the Governor of Central Kalimantan have been found guilty of negligence by an Indonesian court. The Government has been ordered to:

- Issue a public apology
- Set up hospitals for those affected by the disaster
- Review how forest concessions are granted to corporations responsible for the fires
- Release the names of the companies responsible.

The fires destroyed 261,000 hectares, releasing 1.6 billion

tonnes of greenhouse gases and decimating precious populations of orangutans, clouded leopards, sun bears, gibbons, rhinoceroses and tigers. Not one of the plantation companies has yet been penalised, despite the clear evidence of negligence.

Tuesday 16th May

2016 was the 3rd year in a row to set a record for average global surface temperatures. These have risen about 1.1 degrees C. since the late 19th century, with most of the warming occurring in the last 35 years. 16 of the 17 warmest years have occurred since 2001. Unless we tackle global warming, it will bring to nought all efforts to increase security, reduce poverty and improve economies. Unchecked climate change will lead to migrations not seen since the Dark Ages. We must not allow this issue to fall off the political agenda.

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Wednesday 17th May

Despite global commitments to decarbonise societies, it is essential that a drive for innovation is maintained to ensure that the

smartest ideas are given the support required for them to come to fruition.. The Young Global Leaders competition launched at the World Economic Forum offers prizes in three categories:

- Smart solutions for households
- Smart solutions for energy-efficient buildings
- Sustainable mobility in an urban environment.

15 finalists will receive 6 weeks of mentoring from experts to overcome technical and business challenges. The winners were announced yesterday in Brussels. They will then work with international business leaders, engineers and IT experts to develop their ideas and bring them to market.

Thursday 18th May

The Society for the Environment (SocEnv) has developed a Code of Ethics for members of CIWEM and others. The Nolan Committee on Public Standards proposed seven principles for holders of public office. The Welsh Assembly, in passing the Welsh Environment Act 2016, added a further duty: “To

seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems.” SocEnv proposes a simpler version: “To seek to maintain and enhance the sustainable use of natural resources”. This should be obligatory for every holder of public office, whatever their position in government.

Friday 19th May

23-year old Leitan Mkhebelo is one of a team of South African women standing in the frontline against poaching in the 154 sq. mile Balule Nature Reserve bordering the Kruger National Park. The team of 34, called the Black Mambas, have in the past year removed 231 snares, tracked down and destroyed 3 poachers' camps and bush kitchens, stopped 14 attempted poaching raids and arrested 6 poachers as well as carrying out over 20 operations for the rescue, treatment and recovery of 5 rhinoceroses, 4 elephants, 16 buffalo, 1 cheetah, 8 lions and numerous antelopes. In 2015 they became UN Champions of the Earth. Their work continues.