

reducing emissions of nitrous oxide, a greenhouse gas 300 times more potent than CO₂. Other effective interventions include planting trees among crops and improved management of livestock.

Sources:

The Environment (CIWEM)
Clean Slate (CAT)
Greenpeace News
Business Green
www.edie.net

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Picture on front cover: Frozen canal at Armley, Leeds. Emma King

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Prayer guide for the care of creation



January 2018

“Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.” (Ephesians 6. 17-18)

“Prayer at its best opens earth to heaven.” (Selwyn Hughes)

“He showed me a little thing, the size of a hazelnut, in the palm of my hand, and it was as round as a ball. I looked at it with my mind's eye and I thought 'What can this be?' and answer came: 'It is all that is made.' In this little thing I saw three truths:

The first is that God made it.

The second is that God loves it.

The third is that God looks after it.

What is he indeed that is maker and lover and keeper? I cannot find words to tell.” (Mother Julian of Norwich)

Monday 1st January

Loving Father, who changes not in this changing world, give us a sense of the direction you are leading us in the year to come. Save us from allowing events to pull our idealism down to unworthy compromise or moral despair. Help us to look forward with hope and determination, and to use past failings to learn how utterly we depend on you. So, marching forward into the New Year, make us brave, serene and strong, so that we may be as lamps shining in the darkness, helping to light the path which humanity must tread, and guiding us into the way of peace.” (Leslie Weatherhead – adapted)

Tuesday 2nd January

Almost half the energy we consume is used in buildings. This includes heating homes, workplaces, shops and public buildings, providing their hot water and powering all our appliances. Until 2015, when the government scrapped it, Britain had a National Zero Carbon Homes standard. Now the UK Green

Building Council has confirmed that a new Zero Carbon Homes policy could be delivered at scale and at a reasonable cost. This could drive a much-needed improvement in the energy use of new homes and deliver a step-change in construction industry skills

Wednesday 3rd January

Until 2014, when the power was removed, local authorities could use planning permissions to drive higher efficiency standards in homes. This power still exists in the Republic of Ireland, where local authorities such as Dublin City Council require that all new buildings must meet “Passive House standard or above.”

Thursday 4th January

The market for refurbishing existing homes is estimated at £11 billion a year. Each project is also an opportunity for upgrading its energy use. The Dutch government-supported Energiesprong system delivers whole-house

Forgive us, dear Lord, and grant us the strength to turn from our evil ways.

Monday 29th January

A peer-reviewed study led by The Nature Conservancy and published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences finds that human impacts on land cause a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions. The way we manage land could deliver 37% of the solution to climate change. “If we are serious about climate change, we are going to have to get serious about investing in nature, as well as in clean energy and clean transport.” Christiana Figueres, former head of UNFCCC, said: “Land use is a key sector where we can both reduce emissions and absorb carbon from the atmosphere. Natural climate solutions are vital to ensuring we achieve full decarbonisation and can simultaneously boost jobs and protect communities in developed and developing countries.”

Tuesday 30th January

According to the FAO, 30.6% of total land area is forest. The research found that trees have the greatest potential to cost-effectively reduce carbon emissions because they remove CO₂ from the atmosphere. Re-afforestation, avoiding forest loss and better forestry practices could cost-effectively remove 7 billion tonnes of CO₂ annually by 2030, equivalent to taking 1.5 billion petrol-burning cars off the roads. Also, reducing the footprint of livestock would release vast areas across the globe for trees and can be achieved while safeguarding food security.

Wednesday 31st January

According to the FAO, agriculture now covers 11% of the world's surface. Changing the way we farm could cost-effectively deliver 27% of emissions reductions, equivalent to taking 52.2 million petrol-driven cars off the road. Smarter applications of chemical fertilisers could improve crop yields while

Friday 26th January

A study by SCS Global Services commissioned by fashion designer Stella McCartney compares the environmental performance of 10 man-made cellulose fibres. It concludes that the choice of raw material is key in determining the environmental profile of these materials. Fibres made from Belgian flax emerge as environmental preferable together with viscose (also known as rayon) produced from recycled clothing. Asian production from Canadian forest pulp, Chinese production from Indonesian forest pulp and Indian cotton linter pulped in China had the heaviest environmental footprint among the 10 scenarios. The findings will be fed into all products bearing the Stella McCartney brand.

Saturday 27th January

CIWEM recently attended a China-UK symposium on Urban Flooding. 57% of Chinese people now live in urban areas and the government intends to increase this to over 70%

by 2030. Warmer temperatures and high-rise buildings drive more convection and unstable air, combined with the aerosol effect from air pollution, leading to torrential downpours. These generally occur at the evening rush hour, when subways and underground systems are most used. After the 2007 UK floods, the Pitt Review recommended more joined-up governance, improved emergency response and the importance of sustainable drainage systems, but no government action followed. Now China is leading the way in its response to urban flooding.

Sunday 28th January

Lord God, creator of all, we have turned from your love and followed the way of greed and injustice, fear and violence. In our selfishness, we have denied the needs of future generations and built a society which takes but seldom gives, which demands but rarely counts the cost, which values success above love, which seeks growth in output rather than in maturity.

refurbishments, using customised prefabricated walls and roofs, which are pre-fitted with windows and doors. Each refurbishment is completed within a week, without the occupants having to move out, and the cost is covered in the long term by the guaranteed energy savings. UK social housing providers, construction companies and trade bodies have formed "Energisprong UK" which aims to create a game-changer for the retrofit sector.

Friday 5th January

Vehicles above a certain age must have an annual MOT. Why are buildings not subject to periodic testing? If buildings were required to have an 'Energy MOT' whenever they are rented, bought, sold or renovated, this would normalise the concept that buildings, like vehicles, must meet certain standards. If such a system were in place, events like the Grenfell Tower disaster could never have happened.

Saturday 6th January

In 2012 China had over 45,000 small hydropower plants providing electricity to over 300 million people. In the UK, small hydro plants of under 100 kw. qualify for Feed In Tariff payments of 7.78p. per kWh generated, so making hydropower a better option for rural properties than running a diesel generator. The total UK potential for hydropower is 1.5 gigawatts – around 2.5% of current electricity use. For more information, go to: <http://info.cat.org.uk>

Sunday 7th January

Loving Father, we thank you for the skills which, passed down from one generation to another, enable us to harvest the earth's natural resources. We thank you for the lives of those who enable your gifts to be channelled into areas of need, and we pray that you will raise up many others willing and eager to share your gifts to the benefit of all.

Monday 8th January

“The current highly-centralised method of providing electricity is not the only, or even the best, way of keeping the lights on” declares Paul Allen of the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT). “Yet it is difficult to change because of the legal frameworks, institutions, financial support, investment models, consumer preferences etc. Our food and agriculture systems are also locked into industrialised fossil-fuel-driven production, supported by systemic bias such as subsidies, regulation and institutional preference. Changing a culture cannot be easy, but examples across the globe show how it can be done”. CAT's 'Zero Carbon Britain: Making it Happen' report describes ways that help society move past carbon lock-in.

Tuesday 9th January

All but four of Denmark's 98 municipalities have a Climate Action Plan, and 79% of these have a target of becoming carbon-neutral, and five of becoming

entirely fossil fuel-free, by 2025. Ashton Hayes in Cheshire has since 2006 cut its CO₂ emissions by 40% through working together, sharing ideas and behaviour change. Now they have their own renewable energy company.

Wednesday 10th January

Local projects can create strong connections between a range of people working to reduce carbon emissions, while making it difficult for decision-makers to say that it can't be done. Flower Pod in Nottinghamshire offers customers locally-produced flowers with a low carbon footprint, while providing employment for adults with learning disabilities and offering learning and recreational facilities focussed on growing flowers for local markets.

Thursday 11th January

A report from the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) shows how the North of England can decarbonise key sectors and

meeting is free, but donations are welcome.

Tuesday 23rd January

For many years China has imported much of the world's waste. Nearly two-thirds of UK plastic waste has gone to China. Now China will no longer accept plastic or other waste. UK recycling centres are already stretched to capacity. The Government therefore needs urgently to introduce a deposit return scheme for plastic bottles. Corporations such as Coca Cola, which produces 110 billion single-use bottles a year, must switch production to reusable and refillable plastic bottles and invest in new technology such as the University of Reading's smart fountains scheme, which is currently being trialled.

Wednesday 24th January

According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 95% of plastic packaging material worth \$80-120 billion annually is lost to the

economy by dumping it. Edible plastic film made from the milk protein casein is being trialled by the US Department of Agriculture. It not only protects the food in the packaging but could be enhanced with flavours and micronutrients further down the line.

Thursday 25th January

Adidas plans to market 1 million pairs of trainers made from plastic bottles collected from the ocean. Nike has followed this trend, with some football kits consisting of up to 18 plastic bottles. Proctor & Gamble's Fairy washing-up liquid is now being packaged in bottles containing 10% ocean plastic and 90% post-consumer plastic. Ecover's washing-up liquid is packaged in bottles containing 50% ocean plastic and it plans to use 100% recycled plastic in all its bottles from 2020. However, the biggest impact can be made by individual consumers simply rejecting the unnecessary packaging that surrounds nearly all that we buy.

Saturday 20th January

Penzance has become the first UK place to be accredited with the title of Plastic Free Coastline Community. Surfers Against Sewage, which organised the initiative, reports that over 90 communities in the UK, Ireland and Portugal are working to secure Plastic Free Coastline status, including Birmingham, Glasgow and Oxford as well as coastal communities such as Jersey, Swansea and Truro. The initiative sets out five guidelines for aspiring communities, such as working with local businesses to replace single-use plastic with sustainable alternatives, educating people on the damaging effects of plastic pollution and organising community beach-clean initiatives.

Sunday 21st January

Lord, you have given us this beautiful world, yet in our greed we are robbing future generations, poisoning your world and destroying many of your creatures. Help us, Lord, to come to our

senses, to realise that we interfere with your world at our peril, for it is your hand, not ours, that rules the world, for you created the universe and we are here as your stewards.

Monday 22nd January

On Saturday February 3rd from 11am to 16.30 an open meeting organised by Green Christian takes place at St. Aloysius Church, 20 Phoenix Road, London NW11 1TA (near Euston station). The programme includes a session on 'The Green Christian Way of Life', providing a framework for Prayer, Living Gently on the Earth, Public Witness and Encouragement, plus a session on 'Joy in Enough', a vision for a society dedicated to human flourishing and the common good rather than the constant pursuit of more. There is information about the range of resources offered by Green Christian and the activities and events in which it is involved. To book a place, email: georgedow@greenchristian.org.uk not later than January 27th. The

industries. It recommends new regional carbon budgets, so that the regions can take ownership of the rapid structural change needed to reach net decarbonisation by 2050. This would enable their leaders, particularly mayors, to sit at the forefront of the climate effort. In return, more money and powers must be devolved by Westminster. Negotiations around the 'Northern Powerhouse' have so far ignored the need for new energy infrastructure.

Friday 12th January

Green housebuilder Citu has unveiled its ultra-sustainable timber-framed housing system, planned to build 500 homes in Leeds together with offices and recreational facilities. They are claimed to be 10 times more energy-efficient than a standard modern home and 10 times more airtight than building regulations require. Standard in every home will be rainwater and stormwater collections, integrated heat recovery systems and bicycle storage. Citu's purpose-built Leeds

factory will produce up to 750 homes annually and save 24,000 tonnes of CO₂ in the construction process.

Saturday 13th January

The World Bank has announced that after 2019 it will stop financing oil and gas exploration, although it will still offer financial support for upstream gas in poor countries 'where there is a clear benefit in terms of energy access for the poor, and the project fits within the country's commitments under the Paris Agreement. The World Bank president said: "Every day, climate change becomes a more urgent economic, social and existential threat to all countries and all people."

Sunday 14th January

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with us.

Let there be love on earth, and let it begin in our hearts.

Let there be miracles on earth, and let them begin with our faith.

Let there be a future for humankind, and may it begin with our actions now.

Monday 15th January

President Macron, in opening the One Planet Summit last month, said that the world was nowhere near being able to honour a pledge to keep global temperature increases to between 1.5°C. and 2°C., and the planet was heading up to a 3.5° increase. At the summit, some 225 investment funds, managing more than \$26 trillion in assets, pledged to put pressure on the 100 largest corporate greenhouse gas emitters to curb pollution and disclose their climate-related information. Mohamed Adow of Christian Aid said: “The missing piece of the jigsaw is the funding to help the world's poorest countries gain access to clean energy, so that they don't follow the fossil-fuel-powered path of the rich world.”

Tuesday 16th January

More than 20 governments including Britain and Canada, plus high-profile businesses such as BT, Diageo, M & S, Unilever and Virgin, have joined the 'Powering Past Coal Alliance', which pledges to support clean power through their policies and investments, and to restrict finance for traditional coal power without carbon capture and storage. The alliance will now work to highlight best practices for phasing out coal and 'to encourage our peers to join us in powering past coal to build a better world for our kids and grandkids.'

Wednesday 17th January

Over 100 MPs from all parties have signed a petition calling for the £621 million Parliamentary pension scheme to divest from fossil fuels. Jeremy Corbyn, the latest signatory, said: “Two years on from the historic Paris Agreement, our country must show leadership in confronting the existential threat posed by climate change... To help protect our planet, we must wean

our economy off its fossil fuel dependency and do more to move towards clean and renewable energy.”

Thursday 18th January

The global livestock industry causes 15% of all greenhouse gas emissions, and meat consumption is rising around the world. Moreover, many people already eat far too much meat, seriously damaging their health and incurring huge costs. Livestock rearing also drives other problems such as water pollution and antibiotic resistance. An analysis from Farm Animal Investment Risk & Return (FAIRR) initiative argues that meat is now following the same path as tobacco, carbon emissions and sugar, towards a levy on harmful products to cut consumption. Meat taxes have already been discussed in parliaments in Germany, Denmark and Sweden, while China's government has cut its recommended maximum meat consumption by 45% “If policymakers are to cover the true cost of human epidemics like

obesity, diabetes and cancer, and livestock epidemics like avian flu, while also tackling the challenges of climate change and antibiotic resistance, then a shift from subsidising the meat industry to taxing it looks inevitable. “

Friday 19th January

Today more than 180 jurisdictions tax tobacco, more than 60 tax carbon emissions and at least 25 tax sugar. A 2016 global analysis of meat taxes found that levies of 40% on beef, 20% on dairy products and 8.5% on chicken would save 1.5 million lives a year, and slash climate-warming emissions. Investors such as Bill Gates are developing plant-based alternatives. “There are huge market opportunities” said Maria Lettini of FAIRR “if we can replace meat protein with plant-based protein that has the same look, taste and feel as meat. When red-blooded meat eaters are happy to dig into a burger that is plant-based, we are changing the world.”