

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/mean-a-water-of-life-navigating-climate-change-for-planetary-health-tickets-57776627448>

Saturday 31st August

Partly as a result of the series of school climate strikes and a recent YouGov poll, more than two-thirds of teachers say that there should be more teaching about climate change, and three quarters did not feel they had adequate training to educate students on the subject. Around 70% agreed that radical change was needed to make the education system “fit for the times we live in.” Issues around the climate crisis are currently covered in both science and geography at key stage 3 for ages 11 to 14 and at key stage 4 for ages 14 to 16. Both subjects are compulsory at KS3, while only science is compulsory at KS4. But many teachers and experts say this is not enough.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jun/21/teachers-want-climate-crisis-training-poll-shows>

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by email (free), please email: prayer-guide@greenchristian.org.uk

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Picture on front cover: Ilkley Moor, August 2010

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Prayer guide for the care of creation

August 2019



“He has made everything beautiful in its time, He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil – this is the gift of God.

I know that everything God does will endure for ever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that men will revere him.”
(Ecclesiastes 3.11-14)

“ The most important prayer in the world is just two words long: 'Thank you'.”
(Meister Eckhart)

Thursday 1st August

The Committee on Climate Change, the Government's official advisers, warns that ministers are failing to cut emissions fast enough to adapt to rising temperatures. Its chairman, Lord Deben, said: "The whole thing (climate change) is run by the Government like a Dad's Army. We can't go on with this ramshackle system." The UK is already stumbling over measures needed for the previous target of an 80% cut in emissions by 2050. "Policies are needed to ensure that people living in care homes, hospitals and flats can stay cool in increasingly hot summers. Ministers must find funds to protect critical infrastructure, such as ports, from rising sea levels. Unless it delivers on these issues, the Government would not have the credibility to host a global climate change summit of world leaders likely to be held in the UK next year. Greenpeace commented: "This is a truly brutal reality check on the government's current progress in tackling the climate emergency. It paints the government as a sleeper who's woken up, seen the house is on fire, raised the alarm and gone straight back to sleep."

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-48929632>

Friday 2nd August

According to Mami Mizutori, UN special representative on disaster risk reduction, while catastrophes such as Cyclones Idai and Kenneth in Mozambique and drought in India make headlines around the world, many 'lower impact events' causing death, displacement and suffering, are occurring much faster than predicted. Estimates put the cost of climate-related disasters at \$520 billion a year, while the cost of building infrastructure resistant to global heating is only 3% of this annually. "Adapting to the climate crisis can no longer be seen as a long-term problem, but one that needs investment now. Resilience needs to become a commodity that people will pay for. We talk about a climate emergency and a climate crisis, but if we cannot confront the issue of adapting to its effects, we will not survive."

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jul/07/one-climate-crisis-disaster-happening-every-week-unwarns>

the mid-20s.

https://www.drax.com/press_release/energy-companies-announce-new-zero-carbon-uk-partnership-ccus-hydrogen-beccs-humber-equinor-national-grid/

Wednesday 28th August

Maintenance of every offshore wind farm costs around £26 million over its lifetime. Now a project is being worked on at the universities of Bristol and Manchester with robotics firm Wootzano to develop the use of driverless boats to survey any damage to the turbines, and robots which use suction pads to crawl along the turbine blades. The project leader at Plant Integrity said: "The moment when an autonomous mother ship and robotic crew sail in UK waters will be a world first, and a likely game-changer for the offshore oil, gas and defence industries too." <https://www.governmenteuropa.eu/autonomous-wind-farm-inspection/93449/>

Thursday 29th August

The Government has unveiled a scheme which allows only trusted traders to install domestic energy-efficiency measures under the

Energy Company Obligation (ECO) which requires energy suppliers to improve the energy efficiency of the poorest households. Between 2013 and 2015 around 10% of households having measures installed under the ECO were found to have had sub-standard work done. Now only traders with an 'Each House Counts' Trust Mark will be allowed to complete installations under the ECO scheme.

<https://www.businessgreen.com/bg/news/3078976/energy-efficiency-government-unveils-trustmark-to-protect-poor-households-from-rogue-traders>

Friday 30th August

From today until Sunday an international conference entitled 'Water of Life: Navigating Climate Change for Planetary Health' takes place at the University of Lincoln Minerva Building, Brayford Pool, LN6 7TS. Speakers from Oceania, USA and the UK will seek to navigate ways in which science and the church can be leaders in identifying the actions we can take together to address the threats of rising tides and falling reservoirs. For details and to book a place, go to:

human population expansion, both numerical and geographical, and the consumption of Earth's resources this implies.”

<https://populationmatters.org/news/2019/07/04/human-population-density-main-driver-nature-loss-africa>

Sunday 25th August

Father, we pray that when the interests and aspirations of nations conflict with one another over the natural resources that you have provided for us, their leaders may not turn to war, but together seek a just and acceptable way forward, so that suspicions may be allayed, misunderstandings clarified, violence averted and peace preserved. We ask this in the name of Christ our Lord. (L. Cumings)

Monday 26th August

Africa's population is projected to increase by a factor of 5 to 7 by 2100 due to slow progress in reducing fertility rates as a result of insufficient investment in family planning, education and women's empowerment. An IPBS report points out that the aims of halting land degradation, resource depletion and

biodiversity loss are not realistic without dedicated, well-funded and large-scale family planning rolled out across the African continent. “There has never been a more important time to re-invigorate the need for long-term, culturally-sensitive and meaningful family planning measures if many African nations are to have any hope of stemming the decline of their biodiversity.”

<https://populationmatters.org/news/2019/07/04/human-population-density-main-driver-nature-loss-africa>

Tuesday 27th August

Drax, Britain's largest coal fired power generator, plans to develop new carbon capture technology to create clean gas through a deal with National Grid and Norway's state energy firm Equinor. The greenhouse gases emitted from generating biomass-fuelled power will be trapped before they enter the atmosphere. Drax hopes to create clean-burning hydrogen from its methane emissions by trapping them during combustion. It is believed that the hydrogen will be used to heat heavy industry and for transport, so creating a hydrogen economy from

Saturday 3rd August

A report from Dr Declan Finney of Leeds University and Dr Giulio Mattioli of the Technical University of Dortmund finds that the planned expansion of Heathrow and other airports is likely to stop the UK meeting the Government's 2050 net-zero carbon goals. The planned increase in capacity by 2050 is more than double that recommended by the Committee on Climate Change. The researchers suggest that increased airport capacity will make flights cheaper, so encouraging people to fly more often. Higher levels of reforestation or the use of carbon capture and storage (CCS) might compensate for airport expansion. However, the Government is failing to meet targets for tree planting and there is little funding available to develop CCS. <https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/heathrow-expansion-airports-climate-net-zero-emissions-goals-a8973991.html>

Sunday 4th August

Father, we live in a world where things have gone badly wrong because we have forgotten you and put money before morality. We have

adopted our own way of life and have not served your Kingdom. We have chosen what pleases us and have not done your will. Lord, forgive us our sin and follies and blindness. Turn us back to yourself, for the sake of your Son, the only Saviour of the world.

Monday 5th August

The UK needs to retrofit 26 million homes by 2050 if we are to radically cut our carbon emissions. Energiesprong (Dutch for 'energy leap') has won an Ashden Award for its work in helping social housing providers to create warmer, greener homes. Walls and other large components are made off-site, so allowing whole house retrofits to be done quickly and with minimum disruption for tenants. The work comes with a 30-year energy performance guarantee. <https://www.ashden.org/news/announcing-the-2019-ashden-award-winners>

Tuesday 6th August

Farming systems have a huge impact on climate change and small farmers grow most of the world's food. Sistema-bio, based in Mexico,

has won an Ashden Award for creating an affordable biogas system that turns animal waste into the cleanest of cooking fuels while producing a plant-friendly fertiliser, so boosting productivity while lowering carbon emissions. Its modular design makes it easy to add capacity and payment can be made in instalments. Buyers in Latin America, Africa and Asia no longer have to cook with expensive, polluting wood fuel, or with fossil fuels. They save money and ease pressure on our forests and climate. <https://www.ashden.org/news/announcing-the-2019-ashden-award-winners>

Wednesday 7th August

119,000 households and businesses living off-grid in Zambia can now buy lights and mobile phones thanks to innovative funding by the 'Beyond the Grid for Zambia' – another Ashden Award winner. The fund builds the market by offering financial incentives to renewable energy companies, making it less risky for businesses to enter the off-grid energy market. Their performance is closely watched and payments are linked to each project's financial

requirements.

<https://www.ashden.org/news/announcing-the-2019-ashden-award-winners>

Thursday 8th August

A report from ETH-Zurich, published in 'Science', and using Google Earth mapping software, finds that the world could support an extra 0.9 billion hectares (2.22 billion acres) of tree cover, leaving out of account existing farmland, urban areas and forests. Once the trees are mature, they could pull down 200 gigatonnes of CO₂ amounting to two-thirds of the extra carbon from human activities put into the atmosphere since 1800. "Our study shows clearly that forest restoration is the best climate change solution available today, and it provides hard evidence to justify investment. If we act now, this could cut CO₂ in the atmosphere by up to 25% to levels last seen almost a century ago." But speed is of the essence since, as the world warms, the potential area for tree-planting is reduced. At the same time, it is vitally important that we protect existing forests, pursue other climate solutions and phase out fossil fuels. <https://ethz.ch/en/news-and->

systems that we all depend on. This is a mere 0.5% of total public expenditure and compares with £37 billion spent on defence. Finally, we must replace the present complex set of poorly-funded mechanisms with an overarching vision of the key place for nature in our farming system. We need to be brave enough to say what type of farming is suitable, and where, rather than leaving market forces to dictate this.

Thursday 22nd August

Scotland's first vertical farm has received £5.4 million in funding from US investors 52G. Dundee-based Intelligent Growth Solutions has created a vertical farming system, using hydroponics, that it claims can grow plants using half the energy of its competitors. Ocado has also invested £17 million in the vertical farming industry claiming that that 'it can be located near the consumer, it doesn't need a field and it can be put in a building.' By 2050, the world's population will have increased by 3 billion, with 80% living in cities. Vertical farms can reduce or eliminate the need to bring additional farmland under the plough. <https://www.intelligentgrowthsolution>

[s.com/intelligent-growth-solutions-attracts-5-4-million-series-a-funding-to-achieve-global-growth-in-vertical-farming/](https://www.intelligent-growth-solutions-attracts-5-4-million-series-a-funding-to-achieve-global-growth-in-vertical-farming/)

Friday 23rd August

From today until the 26th, the Greenbelt Festival takes place at Boughton Park, Kettering. Green Christian and Operation Noah will be sharing a stall. There will be a variety of talks and activities around social, environmental and religious themes. Anyone who would like to help run the GC stall for an hour or two should email: webeditor@greenchristian.org.uk

Saturday 24th August

A paper published in Nature Scientific Reports reveals that rapid human population growth is the biggest driver of environmental degradation in Africa. "The principal drivers of population and species extinctions are clear: habitat conversion – much of it from agricultural expansion, road development, over-exploitation, pollution, urbanisation, climate disruption and their synergies. But these proximate drivers sometimes belie the ultimate driver of them all -

fossil fuels within 12 months, and the entirety within 3 years. Its chief financial officer said that many organisations had been working hard to persuade fossil fuel companies to invest in green alternatives, but without success. “Now we will seek to invest in green startup businesses and other suitable portfolios that deliver benefits for the environment, nature and people.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jul/04/national-trust-to-divest-portfolio-from-fossil-fuels>

Sunday 18th August

Dear Father, we cannot spread care for your creation throughout the world, but help us to begin where we are. Make us honest and careful in all our dealings, true in our words and actions. We cannot alter the course of a suffering and unjust world, but help us to light candles in the darkness in the name of your Son Jesus Christ who at his glorious Day of Judgement will herald the triumph of Justice and Peace.

Monday 19th August

Currently UK farmland loses 3 million tonnes of topsoil a year and the stripping of slurry and agrochemicals

by heavy rainfall is one reason why only 20% of our rivers are in good health. Intensive farming, which has the biggest environmental impact, grew by 26% between 2011 and 2017. Some things have to change, and Brexit provides us with a once-in-a-generation opportunity.

<https://www.cpre.org.uk/media-centre/latest-news-releases/item/5012-time-reassess-approach-to-earth-under-feet-soils>

Tuesday 20th August

We need minimum farming standards covering safety, animal welfare, phasing out of damaging pesticides and reducing the need to plough and spread slurry. At least 3% of farmland should be managed for pollinators, so there should be wider field margins and uncultivated strips along river corridors. None of this will happen without a solid bedrock of firm regulation.

Wednesday 21st August

In order to pay for all the things that the market will not supply – such as soil protection, flood control and natural ecosystems – we need a green subsidy system. £3 billion a year would help restore natural

[events/eth-news/news/2019/07/how-trees-could-save-the-climate.html](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/07/how-trees-could-save-the-climate.html)

Friday 9th August

Following a YouGov survey of over 4,300 people which found that 61% of those not on a renewable tariff for electricity would like to switch to green power, energy giant E.ON has moved all its 3.3 million residential customers to 100% renewable electricity supplies, promising that their power use is matched by wind, biomass and solar supplies. “This is an important first step, but the future of energy doesn't stop here. The opportunities include helping all our customers to better manage their energy through smart, personalised and sustainable technologies.”

<https://www.energylive.com/2019/07/09/e-on-to-supply-all-customers-with-100-renewable-power/>

Saturday 10th August

Rory Stewart, while the International Development Secretary, pledged £193 million of government aid for climate-related issues – half of it to be spent on low-carbon energy projects to cut carbon emissions, and the remainder to be split among

projects to help developing countries adapt to global heating and to help farmers to develop crops less susceptible to heat, drought and floods. “All development policies must be ethical. The key is in partnerships. It's not us giving lessons to other people. It's about sharing. In the end, all politics must be morally purposed.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jul/03/uk-overseas-aid-climate-crisis-environment-spending>

Sunday 11th August

Father, we pray for all who work closely with the natural world, For farmers and gardeners who grow our food, For scientists and technologists who probe the secrets of life, For foresters who plant and harvest trees, For photographers, artists and poets who capture beauty for others to see, For conservationists and all who guard the precious heritage of the earth.

Monday 12th August

Extinction Rebellion (XR) has staged co-ordinated protests in Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Leeds and outside

the Royal Courts of Justice in London, causing much traffic disruption. Alex Evans, one of the protesters, said: "As a parent with young children. I'm deeply scared about the kind of future our kids will inherit. It feels like we've had decades of everyone waiting for someone else to do something about climate change. Now we're out of time and can see the signs of climate breakdown all around us. I'm involved in XR because I want government, big banks and businesses to recognise that this is an emergency and to act now."

<https://www.itv.com/news/calendar/2019-07-15/climate-change-activists-take-leeds-bridge/>

Tuesday 13th August

One of the demands made by Extinction Rebellion (XR) is for a citizens' assembly to explore the fastest and fairest way to end the UK's carbon emissions. Six House of Commons select committees have announced a citizens' assembly, i.e. a representative group of citizens, to take place over a series of weekends in the autumn. Rachel Reeves MP, chair of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Select Committee,

said: "This isn't a challenge for just one parliament, one political party or one generation. To achieve net zero by 2050, we need to build cross-party and cross-generational support for the actions needed to deliver it. I hope the citizens' assembly will demonstrate that, when all is considered, there is strong public support – even demand – for the government to take the necessary action."

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/business-energy-industrial-strategy/news-parliament-2017/climate-change-and-net-zero-chairs-comments-17-19/>

Wednesday 14th August

In 2016 a consultation from the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy department outlined plans to cut amend fire safety rules to cut the use of chemical flame retardants which are present in many products from domestic furniture to children's mattresses and breastmilk. Three years later, the results of the consultation remain undisclosed. Mary Creagh, chair of the Environmental Audit Committee, said: "Mums in the UK have some of

the world's highest concentrations of flame retardants in their breast milk, some of which have now been banned. Yet chemical flame retardants are still widely used in our furnishings from children's mattresses to sofas. Meanwhile the government is sitting on its hands instead of changing regulations to ensure that the most toxic chemicals are taken out of use.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/environmental-audit-committee/news-parliament-2017/toxic-chemicals-report-published-17-19/>

Thursday 15th August

Forty-one Conservative MPs have signed a manifesto put out by the Conservative Environmental Network demanding that fracking be banned, that the UK take global leadership on the climate emergency and that a royal commission be set up to decide how to build homes in an environmentally sustainable way. The group called for a new Environment Act to set out a path towards a net-zero carbon society by 2050.

<https://www.theguardian.com/enviroment/2019/jul/02/tory-mps-green-manifesto-urging-more-eco-friendly-policies>

[ment/2019/jul/02/tory-mps-green-manifesto-urging-more-eco-friendly-policies](https://www.theguardian.com/enviroment/2019/jul/02/tory-mps-green-manifesto-urging-more-eco-friendly-policies)

Friday 16th August

A cross-party group of 28 MPs with WWF, Christian Aid, Amnesty International and others has launched a 'People and Nature' initiative calling on the government to tackle the climate and ecological crises simultaneously in order to eradicate poverty and deliver on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Among its demands are that all UK aid be made 'nature positive' and that investments which support fossil fuels, deforestation and destruction of carbon-rich ecosystems should be terminated. Between 2010 and 2016, £4.8 billion of UK export finance went towards supporting fossil fuel projects.

<https://www.peopleandnature.co.uk/news/make-all-uk-aid-nature-positive-urges-cross-party-mp-group>

Saturday 17th August

The National Trust, which manages more than 500 historic houses, castles, monuments and parks, has said it will withdraw the vast majority of its £45 million investments from