

the numbers of insects active between the hours of dusk and darkness when birds are largely absent.

<https://www.bats.org.uk/support-bats/international-bat-night>

Sunday 30th August

Father God, grant us singleness of heart and strength of purpose, that no selfish thoughts may hinder us from seeking your will, and no weakness from doing it, but that in your light we may find light in today's burning issues, and in your service we may find perfect freedom, through the sacrifice of your dear Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Monday 31st August

...[O]ffshore wind currently provides less than 1% of the world's electricity supply. Many of the prime shallow-water locations for building wind farms are being developed. But the potential of offshore wind still remains largely untapped...The reason for this untapped potential is that 80% of the wind blows uninterrupted further offshore – in water deeper than 60 metres, where turbines embedded in the sea floor are tricky to construct. The solution could be floating offshore wind farms... Unfortunately, while floating wind farms are technically feasible, they're not economically viable... That's why it'll likely take new technologies to make floating wind farms cost-effective.

<https://theconversation.com/floating-wind-farms-how-to-make-them-the-future-of-green-electricity-142847>

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by email (free), please email:

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Picture on front cover: West coast of Ireland, Emma King.

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Prayer guide for the care of creation



August 2020

Lord, grant us the wisdom to care for the earth and till it.

Help us to act now for the good of future generations and all your creatures.

Help us to become instruments of a new creation,
Founded on the covenant of your love.

- *The Cry of the Earth*

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Ephesians 4 v32

Saturday 1st August

Greenpeace Brazil and Brazilian actor Alice Braga have partnered to release "Countdown to Destruction," a three-video animated series explaining how the production of food commodities such as meat, dairy, soya and palm oil at an industrial scale has led to widespread deforestation across the world. The current industrial food system is a concentration of global corporate agribusiness that devours the world's forests and vital ecosystems, threatens biodiversity, displaces Indigenous communities and fuels the climate crisis. <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/press-release/44087/alice-braga-youtube-series-industrial-food-deforestation-amazon/>

Sunday 2nd 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 3rd August

RSPB Scotland is launching an ambitious £738k project to protect corncrakes with the help of a £375k grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. The "Corncrake Calling" project aims to save one of Scotland's rarest and most secretive birds. Once widespread, ...corncrake populations fell dramatically with the intensification of farming. They are now confined to a few Scottish islands and a few isolated areas on the North West coast. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/about-the-rspb/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/rspb-scotland-supports-crofters-and-farmers-to-protect-corncrakes/>

Tuesday 4th August

At the dawn of the industrial revolution, the Earth's atmosphere contained 278 parts of CO₂ per million. Today, after more than two and a half centuries of fossil fuel use, that figure is around 414 parts per million (ppm). If the build-up of CO₂ continues at current rates, by 2080 it will have passed 560 ppm... Exactly how the climate will respond to all this extra CO₂ is one of the central questions in climate science... A major new international assessment of the Earth's climate sensitivity, now published in the journal *Reviews of Geophysics*, addresses this question. This research has improved our understanding of how much the world will eventually warm if the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is maintained at double the level of pre-industrial times. <https://theconversation.com/just-how-sensitive-is-the-climate-to-increased-carbon-dioxide-scientists-are-narrowing-in-on-the-answer-143112>

Wednesday 5th August

Coal should play no part in any country's post-coronavirus stimulus plan and economic recovery should align with global climate goals, U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres said in a lecture to Chinese students. "There is no such thing as clean coal, and coal should have no place in any rational recovery plan," Guterres told an online audience of students and researchers [in July] "It is deeply concerning that new coal power plants are still being planned and financed, even though renewables offer three times more jobs, and are now cheaper than coal in most countries," he said. China is a major consumer of coal and is still developing new coal mines and power projects while also making efforts to develop green energy. <https://news.trust.org/item/20200724040821-2azd8/>

Of the freshwater used by humanity each year, 70% is attributable to agriculture.

<https://www.edie.net/news/4/Cargill-pledges-to-restore-600-billion-litres-of-water-by-2030/>

Tuesday 25th August

In a bid to create green jobs, Islamabad looks to give 5,000 mainly young people work protecting 15 national parks. In its latest move to generate jobs amid the COVID-19 pandemic while boosting conservation and curbing the impacts of climate change, Pakistan has announced the creation of Pakistan's first National Parks Service, modelled on the U.S. agency. Under it, the country aims to get more local communities involved in running national parks and earning an income as they protect nearby conservation areas. <https://news.trust.org/item/20200717070925-r4m9m/>

Wednesday 26th August

The sudden appearance of a bearded vulture in the Peak District National Park – a known raptor crime hotspot – has brought joy tinged with apprehension to birdwatchers and nature-lovers who have come to see the impressive raptor. This is only the second time the species, usually found in southern Europe, has been seen in the UK and is part of an international conservation initiative in the Alps. However, a number of shooting, suspected poisoning and nest robbery incidents involving birds of prey in the Peak District National Park have come to light since lockdown, raising fears for the bird's safety and once more bringing into focus the ongoing problem with raptor persecution in the Peak District. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/about-the-rspb/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/new-catalogue-of-bird-of-prey-crimes-in-peak-district-national-park/>

Thursday 27th August

Only found in a few forest patches in Nigeria and Cameroon, a western gorilla subspecies is the world's rarest great ape. They are rarely seen, let alone photographed, even by remote cameras. But new photos captured for the first time in years shows a group of [the gorillas]. With only 300 Cross River gorillas left in the wild, conservationists are celebrating new camera trap photos showing several new infants were born. <https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/camera-trap-shows-several-new-babies-born-to-worlds-rarest-gorillas/>

Friday 28th August

Covid-19 and the fall in oil prices has pushed Iraq towards calamity, underlining the urgency of ending the country's fossil fuel dependency. Tens of thousands of Iraqis took to the streets in October 2019 for what was arguably [the] country's biggest ever grassroots socio-political mobilisation. ... How could living standards be so dire in a nation awash with oil money? Principal among the [calls for change] is ending the corruption that scars [the] nation. Iraq is one of the world's most corrupt states, ranking 162 out of 180 nations according to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) - and the oil sector is its engine. <https://theecologist.org/2020/jul/24/iraq-brink>

Saturday 29th August

Tonight is International Bat Night. There are close to 1,400 bat species in the world (accounting for 20% of all mammal species). Globally, three quarters of bat species eat insects just like all British bats. In the tropics bats also eat many other foods - fruit, flowers, frogs, fish, blood, even other bats! Bats are an 'indicator' species which means they are a sign of a green and healthy environment. Operating at the top of the food chain, bats keep in check

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/george-eustice-speech-on-environmental-recovery-20-july-2020>

Thursday 20th August

It'll be another decade until the world's nations and firms are evaluated for the United Nations 18 Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (SDG). Much to the delight of global conservationists, however, Pakistan has already met the criteria for SDG 13, which calls on nations to take urgent action against climate change and its effects. Pakistan isn't the richest country, but it does have a major incentive to tackle the climate crisis, as they are ranked among the most vulnerable nations to the direct climatic and meteorological effects of global climate change.

<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/pakistan-meets-un-climate-goals-10-years-early/>

Friday 21st August

...[W]hen it comes to plastic pollution, we know close to nothing about how and where plastic waste is generated, managed, treated and disposed of, especially in low and middle income countries. As a result, we're struggling to limit the amount of litter accumulating in the environment. ... [R]esearch published in *Science* involved a herculean effort to spot, track and model the current and future flows of plastics into the world's land and waterbodies. [Researchers] found that plastic entering the marine environment is set to double by 2040 and, unless the world acts, more than 1.3 billion tonnes of plastic waste will be dumped on land and in waterbodies.

<https://theconversation.com/how-earths-plastic-pollution-problem-could-look-by-2040-143220>

Saturday 22nd August

Having tracked the sources of plastic items through the supply chain and their fate in the

environment, [the researchers from the University of Leeds] explored what might help reduce aquatic pollution. [They] found that the single most effective intervention is to provide a service for the two billion people who currently don't have their waste collected. But, of the nine interventions ... tested, none solved the problem on their own. Only an integrated approach that in addition to increasing collection coverage includes interventions such as reducing demand for single-use and unrecyclable plastic and improving the business case for mechanical recycling, could be successful. For the countries suffering most from plastic pollution, this knowledge could offer a way forward.

<https://theconversation.com/how-earths-plastic-pollution-problem-could-look-by-2040-143220>

Sunday 23rd 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 24th August

Food and agribusiness giant Cargill has pledged to dramatically improve water management practices across its operations and priority watersheds in its supply chain by - a move it claims will restore 600 billion litres of water within a decade. The business's new water management strategy outlines plans to support the adoption of regenerative agriculture practices throughout supply chains in a bid to reduce nutrient runoff and improve soil health - both factors which will result in the need for less fertilizer and water, while maximising crop yield.

Thursday 6th August

Today is Cycle to Work day, although this year it's about cycling anywhere! The main reasons for more cycling in this campaign are health and saving money, but environmental benefits are also considerable. According to the UN, switching from a car to a bicycle saves 150g of CO₂ per kilometre. Each 7km by bicycle will save an emission of 1 kilogram of CO₂ as compared to the same distance covered by car.

<https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/cycling-better-mode-transport>

Friday 7th August

In what could be a positive new step towards tackling future pandemics, [WWF] welcomes stronger controls on the illegal trade and consumption of wildlife introduced by the Prime Minister of Viet Nam. COVID-19 is just the latest in a long line of zoonotic diseases, which jump from animals to humans... [WWF is] pleased to see action by Viet Nam to help stop people coming into contact with wildlife that have a high risk of spreading disease. This includes the closure of illegal wildlife markets and wild meat shops and restaurants, together with stricter controls of farmed wild animals.

<https://updates.panda.org/viet-nam-action-could-help-reduce-pandemic-risks-and-protect-wildlife>

Saturday 8th August

C40 Cities today released the C40 Mayors' *Agenda for a Green and Just Recovery* outlining bold steps to deliver an equitable and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The agenda includes specific measures, already being delivered in many cities around the world, which must become the 'new normal' to contain and better prepare for future pandemics, address systemic injustices and keep global heating below the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement. C40 is a network of the

world's megacities committed to addressing climate change

https://www.c40.org/press_releases/mayors-launch-a-green-and-just-covid-19-recovery-plan-demand-national-governments-end-fossil-fuel-subsidies

Sunday 9th 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 10th August

Brighton has gone Green after Labour lost its status as the largest party amid anti-Semitism claims. The Green group officially took over power [in late July] at a time when the city faces a loss of up to £39 million as a result of coronavirus. New council leader Phelim Mac Cafferty said the outlook for local government in the UK "has never been bleaker" but said his party "stand ready to serve the city". The change in political control follows the resignation of two members of the council's Labour group and the suspension of another from the party. The Green group holds 19 of the seats on Brighton & Hove City Council, with the Labour group now on 18.

<https://theecologist.org/2020/jul/24/greens-take-brighton-council>

Tuesday 11th August

The winners of the 2020 Ashden Awards have been revealed. Eleven winners from the UK and developing countries were announced in early July. UK winners include:

- E-cargobikes who have partnered with supermarkets and small businesses to deliver goods via electric bike across London.
- Guru Systems who develops intelligent technology to make energy systems more transparent, lower cost and lower carbon.
- Passivhaus Homes supports the Passivhaus building method, a global standard that guarantees ultra-efficient homes needing minimal energy for heating and cooling.

<https://www.ashden.org/news/2020-ashden-award-winners-announced>

Wednesday 12th August

More winners of the annual Ashden awards include:

- India's S4S Technologies has developed a patented solar dryer for food products. It provides the machines, alongside tailored packages of finance, training and support, to a wide range of customers – including female smallholder farmers.
- Seed collection business Rede de Sementes do Xingu co-ordinates seed collectors, administrators and buyers in the state of Mato Grosso in Brazil
- In Togo, only 35% of homes have access to electricity. The Togolese Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Agency is working with the private sector to deliver on- and off-grid energy. Subsidies, training and new technology help the initiative target women and the poorest households.

<https://www.ashden.org/winners/awards-winners>

Thursday 13th August

In the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, there is space ... for 2 million residents to plant truckloads of trees while social distancing. Although the virus has spread fast throughout the country, its threat was not enough to dissuade the government of the most-populous

Indian state from conducting a mass tree-planting campaign along the banks of the river Ganges as part of its pledge to shade a third of the nation under tree cover by 2030. The planting was carried out [in July] by volunteers, nonprofit employees, government workers, and even lawmakers, all of whom maintained distance from each other and wore face masks to stop the possible spread of coronavirus.

<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/two-million-indian-residents-host-tree-planting-campaign/>

Friday 14th August

The latest estimates indicate that there are 20 million hectares of planted oil palm in the world, and 12.5 million hectares of coconut. But coconut palms are mostly grown on tropical islands, many of which possess remarkable numbers of species found nowhere else on Earth. So despite its benign reputation, coconut has a surprisingly large negative impact on tropical biodiversity. Per volume of oil produced, coconut production affects more species than any other oil crop, including oil palm. According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), coconut threatens some 20.2 species per million metric tonnes of oil produced, followed by olive with 4.1 species, oil palm with 3.8 and soybean, 1.3.

<https://theconversation.com/coconut-oil-production-threatens-five-times-more-species-than-palm-oil-new-findings-141454>

Saturday 15th August

Hugo Boss has had its new emissions targets green-lit by the Science-Based Targets Initiative (SBTi), including an ambition to reduce operational emissions by 51% by 2030. Back in 2018, the fashion major signed the UN's Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action... The Charter bound signatories to charting a path to net-zero emissions by 2050, with an interim aim of reducing operational

emissions by 30% by 2030. Hugo Boss's new targets go beyond the Charter's interim pledge, and will see it halve ... emissions by 2030, against a 2018 baseline. The global fashion industry is believed to account for one-tenth of the world's annual carbon emissions.

<https://www.edie.net/news/6/Hugo-Boss-to-halve-operational-emissions-within-a-decade/>

Sunday 16th 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 17th August

Environment Minister George Eustice has announced a new £5m Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment to protect the UK's environment as part of a new package of Environment Bill measures. The £5m funding for natural capital assessments is aimed to improve the data collection of how nature and biodiversity are used within the UK. It will be followed by a £4m two-year pilot to improve biodiversity across four urban and rural areas that have been heavily impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

<https://www.edie.net/news/11/Defra-unveils-natural-capital--assessment--funding-as-post-Brexit-green-recovery-shapes-up/>

Tuesday 18th August

MPs on the BEIS Committee are launching an inquiry into the UK's Industrial Strategy, questioning whether major updates to the policy package are needed in light of the 2050 net-

zero target and the Covid-19 crisis. Unveiled in December 2017, the aim of the Industrial Strategy was to help businesses create better, higher-paying jobs with investment in the skills, industries and infrastructure of the future. The policy package set out a set of 'Grand Challenges' for the UK, including clean growth – defined as decoupling economic growth from emissions and leading the world in the development of low-carbon technologies and solutions which cost less than their traditional counterparts. It is because of the Industrial Strategy that there are sector deals for fields like construction, aviation and offshore wind.

<https://www.edie.net/news/11/MPs-question-whether-the-UK-s-Industrial-Strategy-is-fit-for-purpose/>

Wednesday 19th August

In his speech in July 2020, George Eustice, the Environment Minister, talked about future policy direction post-Brexit. "In a few months' time the Transition Period will come to an end, and the UK will be free to chart a new course. It is an important moment for policy makers and nowhere more so than in our approach to the environment. As a country we have opted for the freedom to act and to decide our own environment policies in future. But with that freedom comes new responsibilities. It will no longer be the case that the UK can register a position as an outlier around the table during the development of a particular EU dossier, safe in the knowledge that a QMV voting system will always drive out something more nuanced. Instead we must learn to temper our own approach. And we will not be able to hide behind EU law when there are difficult decisions to make or indeed blame the EU when things don't work. Instead we must level with people about difficult decisions and take responsibility for delivering the change that is required."