

Monday 31st January

The next Ashden Awards winner is also UK based. Manchester's Carbon Co-op has trained more than 1,000 builders to deliver home energy efficiency upgrades, tackling a major skills shortage. The co-op's flexible and practical approach includes virtual workshops and on-site 'toolbox talks', while its networks help builders find projects and contracts to use their new skills. "Carbon Co-op's training is great because it's grass roots, building networks. Not a standalone training course, somewhere for people to do the work. When I've learnt a new skill, I've been able to put it into practice." Richard Shears, Contractor

<https://ashden.org/winners/carbon-co-op/>

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

Website: www.greenchristian.org.uk

Picture on front cover: snowy trees in Leeds, Emma King

Prayer on front cover from <https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/sustainability-prayers>

Green Christian is a Trading name of Christian Ecology Link Ltd. Correspondence Office: 48 Morrab Road, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 4EX. Company Registration No. 2445198 Registered Charity No. 328744.

Tel: +44 (0) 345 4598460
info@greenchristian.org.uk

Prayer guide for the care of creation



January 2022

O Lord, grant us the grace to grow deeper in our respect of
And care for your Creation.
Lord, hear our prayer.

O Lord, help us to recognize the sacredness of all of your
Creatures as signs of your wondrous love.
Lord, hear our prayer.

O Lord, help us turn from the selfish consumption of
Resources meant for all and to see the impacts of our choices
on the poor and vulnerable.
Lord, hear our prayer.

"A land that the Lord your God cares for. The eyes of the Lord
your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to
the end of the year." Deuteronomy 11 v 12

Saturday 1st January

As the dawn breaks on a new year, let us give thanks for all we hold dear: our health, our family and our friends.

Let us release our grudges, our anger and our pains, for these are nothing but binding chains. Let us live each day in the most loving ways, the God-conscious way. Let us serve all who are in need, regardless of race, color or creed.

Let us keep God of our own understanding in our hearts and to chant God's name each day. Let us lead the world from darkness to light, from falsehood to truth and from wrong to right.

Let us remember that we are all one, embracing all, discriminating against none. May your year be filled with peace, prosperity and love. May God's blessings shower upon you and bestow upon each of you a bright, healthy and peaceful new year.

Rev. Marcy Sheremetta

<https://www.womansday.com/life/q3024313/3/new-years-prayers/>

Sunday 2nd January

Loving God,
We thank you for this world which you have created,
For its abundant riches, resources and complex ecologies
Both those which are useful to us, providing food, clean water, clean air and so much more;

And those which are beautiful and inspiring, and which help us connect with You.

We have not cared for them well.

You have given, and keep giving, so much

to us;

Your love and grace, and nature's abundance, but also our own free will and the means to use it.

We have not used it well.

And with that free will comes consequences; consequences which affect others as well as ourselves.

Consequences which often fall hardest on the poorest,

And hurt not only those who live now, but those who are not yet born and cannot speak out for themselves.

From Cat Turner's prayer No more hot air Lord

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/resources/show-the-love-prayer-2021/>

Monday 3rd January

The 2021 Ashden Award winners were announced at COP26 last November. Today, and for the next eight Mondays, we'll look at each of the winners, and pray for their work, their innovation and their influence on the policymakers, funders and investors in the future. Firstly we focus on the NGO Mbou Mon Tour [who] helps rainforest communities in the Democratic Republic of Congo make a sustainable living through agriculture and tourism. By supporting local people to manage their own land, the organisation creates better lives and protection for a precious natural resource. The NGO has helped communities in six villages win the status of 'Forest Concessions of the Local Communities' for their land. Now conservation efforts led by local people are

meters of its surface to growing space. A vertical farm in such a space could produce an estimated 270,000 kilograms of food per year, which would feed 40,000 people. Cultivation, harvest, sale and consumption of the food is intended to take place all within the same building to cut down on supply chain waste and pollution. The tower will also house offices, a food court and a supermarket.

<https://inhabitat.com/vertical-farm-building-in-china-feeds-40000-people/>

Friday 28th January

Today sees the start of the 2022 RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch. According to the RSPB we've lost 38 million birds from UK skies in the last 50 years, so it really is vital we do all we can to look after our birdlife. Last year a million people got involved. Pray that people get involved this year too with this research, and that future generations of bird and nature lovers will be inspired to protect the wildlife they see around them.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/>

Saturday 29th January

UBS Asset Management and the UK's largest pension scheme, Nest, have divested from five fossil fuel firms which they say have not responded well to climate-related engagement. The companies confirmed [in December] that shares in US-based ExxonMobil and Canadian refining firm Imperial oil, in which ExxonMobil has a majority stake, have been sold. UBS AM and Nest have also divested from the Korea Electric Power

Corporation (Kepco), Marathon Oil and Power Assets. The decision was taken following a three-year engagement process, during which the five companies were "unresponsive" and identified as lagging on climate-related topics, including reducing emissions and investing in low-carbon assets for the future... The news comes shortly after a shareholder resolution was filed at ExxonMobil that would require the firm to align emissions goals with climate science and finally face up to its Scope 3 (indirect) emissions.

<https://www.edie.net/news/7/Nest-divests-from-ExxonMobil-and-other-unresponsive-fossil-fuel-giants-on-road-to-net-zero/>

Sunday 30th January

Free us

Dear motherly fatherly God, our creator and sustainer,
your Word made flesh urges us to consider the wild lilies
and to consider the wild birds,
all in their freedom from busy clutter:
May your Spirit prompt our shame at our grabbing and getting,
and free us from our disastrous greed for stuff,
For the sake of the wise divine love into which you draw us.
Amen.

Gerald Downing

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/resources/show-the-love-prayer-2021/>

free technical training. Solar Freeze was founded in 2016, offering affordable and sustainable cooling to farmers in Eastern Kenya through solar-powered cold rooms. Two years later it began work in Kakuma refugee camp – a settlement of about 200,000 people, where access to clean and affordable energy is extremely limited. CEO Dymus Kisilu says *“When we think of a refugee camp, we don’t generally think of the struggles that clinics and small enterprises face without cooling. Through the Ashden Award, we want to highlight the resilience that renewable energy builds.”* <https://ashden.org/winners/solar-freeze/>

Tuesday 25th January

For more than 70 years, Gross Domestic Product, or GDP, has been the key yardstick by which nations have measured economic progress. But GDP is designed to exclusively account for the monetary benefits accrued from economic activity. It is blind to the degradation of the natural environment, finite resources and human wellbeing. It’s time we came up with something better. Without ever having to acknowledge how nature has contributed to economic growth, GDP has promoted unsustainable practices that have contributed to the climate and biodiversity emergencies. To put it another way, GDP is like a ledger that will not accept red ink. Like an accounting trick, it has allowed us to vent greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere, destroy habitats and neglect human wellbeing without ever having to worry about the consequences... As such, we need to start looking at

alternative metrics such as Gross Ecosystem Product (GEP) so that we can account for nature’s contribution to economic activity and human wellbeing. <https://theconversation.com/gdp-ignores-the-environment-why-its-time-for-a-more-sustainable-growth-metric-170820>

Wednesday 26th January

The next in the Joy in Enough series of monthly talks is tonight. Paul Ashford: will be talking on “The Corporate world – friend, foe, or simply a reflection of wider society?” Joy in Enough (JiE) is a Green Christian project which is a challenge to Christians in Britain, and an invitation to all people of good will, to join in building a just economy within the ecological limits of the Earth. Free, but you need to register <https://greenchristian.org.uk/gc-campaigns/green-christian-workshops/>

Thursday 27th January

“Small-scale urban farming is happening in cities all over the world – from Paris to New York to Singapore,” said Carlo Ratti, founding partner of CRA and professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. *“Jian Mu Tower, [in Shenzhen, China] however, takes it to the next level. Such approach has the potential to play a major role in the design of future cities as it engages one of today’s most pressing architectural challenges: how to integrate the natural world into building design. In addition to producing food, the Jian Mu Tower’s farm helps with solar shading – a key issue in tall buildings.”* The tower is 218 meters tall and dedicates 10,000 square

protecting 50,000 hectares of forest – and the future of the endangered bonobo great ape, an animal of huge cultural importance to local communities. <https://ashden.org/winners/mbou-mon-tour/>

Tuesday 4th January

If a sustainable transformation is pursued within this decade, Latin American and Caribbean cities can halve their consumption of natural resources such as fossil fuels, minerals and food, while succeeding in the fight against poverty and inequality, according to a new report by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). The publication, developed in collaboration with the International Resource Panel (IRP), concludes that by 2050, cities in the region will consume two-to-four times more resources than what is considered sustainable if they do not start comprehensive planning and do not increase their systems’ efficiency and circularity, a scenario that would come with severe degradation of vital ecosystems. *The Weight of Cities in Latin America and the Caribbean: Future Resource Requirements and Potential Courses of Action* points the way towards a more sustainable urban planning and includes recommendations in four axes – transport and sustainable mobility, efficient and sustainable buildings, waste, and water and sanitation – to reduce resource consumption, waste, environmental damage, and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/latin-american-and->

[caribbean-cities-can-halve-resource-consumption](#)

Wednesday 5th January

Poland is planning to build a wall along its border with Belarus, primarily to block migrants fleeing the Middle East and Asia. But the wall would also divide the vast and ancient Białowieża Forest, a UNESCO World Heritage site which harbours more than 12,000 animal species and includes the largest remnants of primeval forest that once covered most of lowland Europe... The core of Białowieża is characterised by old-growth forest rich in dead and decaying wood on which mosses, lichens, fungi, insects and also many vertebrates depend. Big animals such as the European bison, boar, lynx and wolf inhabit the forest on both sides of the border... Poland’s wall will be 5.5 metres high, solid, with barbed wire at the top, and will replace a 130 km provisional 2.5m high razor-wire fence built during summer to autumn 2021. This wall will be high enough to affect low-flying birds, such as grouse. <https://theconversation.com/polands-border-wall-will-cut-europes-oldest-forest-in-half-173735>

Thursday 6th January

Wind power is a powerful tool for reducing carbon emissions that cause climate change. The turbines, however, can be a threat to birds and bats, which is why experts are looking for—and finding—ways to eliminate the danger. The US government has allocated \$13.5 million to look for solutions. But, already a Boulder,

Colorado company has produced a camera- and AI-based technology that can recognize eagles, hawks and other raptors as they approach in enough time to pause turbines in their flight path. Their tool, called Identiflight, can detect 5.62 times more bird flights than human observers alone, and with an accuracy rate of 94 percent.

<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/wind-turbines-use-cameras-and-ai-to-save-birds/>

Friday 7th January

In November of this year, a piece in Christianity Today outlined a story of a vicar in north London who has had his application for solar panels on the roof of his Church blocked by the Victorian Society. There has been shock and frustration about this from the congregation and the wider public, leading to a follow up piece being issued in The Church Times. The Young Christian Climate Network responded to the solar panels being blocked by saying *“As a group of young Christians, we want to see the church prioritising the climate crisis with the urgency it merits. This is not only about our future, but about our brothers and sisters across the world in climate-vulnerable countries, who are already suffering the terrible effects of climate change. We want to be proud of the church, and see it standing up for justice and in solidarity by doing everything possible – even when it’s not the easy option.”* Since this publication of these pieces, CCA (Christian Climate action) have heard from other Churches who have had green aspects blocked – and even of one Church having bike rack installation blocked. This is clearly a

problem that has impacted many different churches and stands in stark contrast to the Church of England’s own stated goal of going net-zero by 2030.

<https://christianclimateaction.org/2021/12/14/the-victorian-society-blocking-eco-churches/>

Saturday 8th January

Thomas E. Lovejoy, a leading conservation biologist who is credited with popularizing the term “biological diversity,” has died. He was 80. His death on [Christmas Day] was announced by George Mason University, where he was director of the Institute for a Sustainable Earth, and the Amazon Biodiversity Center, which he founded. Lovejoy began referring to biological diversity — the rich variety of life on Earth — in the late 1970s. Later shortened to biodiversity, it has become one of the most important themes of the age of climate change. A leading extinction researcher, Lovejoy found that habitat destruction, pollution and global warming were snuffing out species around the world. He called for restoring forests to encourage the regrowth of native plants and animals and for protecting large tracts of water and land.

<https://apnews.com/article/science-biodiversity-george-mason-university-743e4e0da7f009ebcf2444a41171b290>

Sunday 9th January

Loving God,
Forgive us, please, for our folly.
Help us to use this time of turmoil, and the pauses which pandemics and more have brought to our busy-ness....

Friday 21st January

NGO WRAP [Waste and Resources Action Programme] has forged a partnership with Asda and Unilever, to collect data from ongoing refillable product trials and develop ideas for making refill more accessible and attractive to shoppers. Unilever launched pre-filled returnable and reusable stainless steel bottles at Asda’s “sustainability store” in Leeds back in June, alongside in-store refill stations and empty bottles, to test which format got the higher uptake. Shortly after that, Asda launched more than a dozen additional product lines in refillable formats at the store in Middleton, and also outlined plans to bring the offer to additional UK locations by the end of the year. Now, under the partnership with WRAP, there will be “in-depth” research into consumer behaviours around the retailer’s refill offering. Researchers will engage with shoppers as they plan their shopping lists, make choices in store, and decant and use products at home. This same research format has been used with WRAP’s work on reducing food waste in stores and at home.

<https://www.edie.net/news/12/Asda-and-Unilever-partner-with-WRAP-to-help-make-refillable-packaging-more-popular/>

Saturday 22nd January

U.S. Senator Joe Manchin’s rejection of President Joe Biden’s \$1.75 trillion social spending bill threatens to scuttle hundreds of billions of dollars in funding for measures to fight global warming and meet the administration’s climate goals. Biden wanted his sweeping Build Back Better bill to put the United States on track to at least

halve its greenhouse gas emissions this decade from 2005 levels and decarbonize the power grid by 2035. These goals will be harder to reach if Biden’s fellow Democrat Manchin helps Senate Republicans kill the bill.

<http://news.trust.org/item/20211220224010-c5f65/>

Sunday 23rd January

Breathe in us

God of mercy and love. Creator of all living things we praise your name.
Everything you have made is connected and beautiful. ...
You embraced the cross for us – bound and entwined you became one,
Your love for us was greater than all our sins and selfish ways.
Breathe in us a new strength of purpose,
To rebuild in faith and hope, to go forward together – to a kinder more loving life for all.
Let us live in the way of truth and love – to your praise and glory.
Amen

Ingrid Riches

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/resources/show-the-love-prayer-2021/>

Monday 24th January

The next Ashden Award winner we want to focus on and pray for is Solar Freeze, a Kenyan-owned-and-run company. [They] offer cooling for food and medicine in Kakuma refugee camp. Its sustainable and affordable service has supported health clinics and small businesses, and 100 women and young people have received

Tuesday 18th January

Green groups have argued that the UK Government's proposals to ban the sale of peat compost from 2024 are unlikely to stop the worst of the environmental damage of peat extraction domestically. The Department for Food, the Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) ... launched a consultation on how best to deliver its promise to end the same of peat products, including compost, by May 2024. That commitment was originally made in May under the new England Peat Action Plan. The consultation runs until 18 March 2022. It proposes that the sale of peat for domestic use is banned from May 2024 in England and Wales, but not phased out for professional use until 2028. Bagged growing products, sold to professionals and amateurs, account for 70% of all peat sales in the UK, Defra estimates... Conservation groups have argued that these timelines are not ambitious enough and that Defra's proposals will, ultimately, not end peat extraction domestically.

<https://www.edie.net/news/11/Plans-to-ban-peat-compost-in-England-and-Wales-doesn-t-go-far-enough--green-groups-warn/>

Wednesday 19th January

As far back as 2005, the United Nations had estimated that Iraq was already littered with several thousand contaminated sites. Five years later, an investigation by The Times...suggested that the U.S. military had generated some 11 million pounds of toxic waste and abandoned it in Iraq. Today, the country remains awash in hazardous materials, such as depleted

uranium and dioxin, which have polluted the soil and water. And extractive industries like the KAR oil refinery often operate with minimal transparency. On top of all of this, Iraq is among the countries most vulnerable to climate change, which has already contributed to grinding water shortages and prolonged drought. In short, Iraq presents a uniquely dystopian tableau—one where human activity contaminates virtually every ecosystem, and where terms like “ecocide” have special currency.

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/29122021/iraq-ecocide/>

Thursday 20th January

The first Coral IVF babies on the Great Barrier Reef have produced the next generation—the first time that a breeding population has been established on the Great Barrier Reef using the innovative process. Researchers have found that 22 large coral colonies born through the first Coral IVF trial on the Reef in 2016 have grown to maturity, and were filled with eggs and sperm ready to spawn after the recent full moon mass coral spawning event. Great Barrier Reef Foundation Managing Director Anna Marsden said, “*We couldn't be more excited to see that these coral babies have grown from microscopic larvae to the size of dinner plates, having not only survived a bleaching event but are now reproducing themselves – helping to produce larvae that can restore a degraded reef.*”

<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/coral-ivf-babies-deployed-on-great-barrier-reef-are-reproducing/>

To stop. To stop, and to reflect on our way of life.

To consider what we are losing, when we behave so acquisitively; What we are destroying when we make things, and build things, and buy things, for the sake of profits or greed alone. To ask ourselves what You would want. Help us to reflect on what we truly need; on what is “enough”; and on how we have squandered the world's natural riches, and wasted the resources which our children and grandchildren will so desperately need.

Give us courage to speak for the environment, for the unborn, for the vulnerable

Give us grace to change our lives so as to live within our reasonable means

Give us strength to act, selflessly and bravely, and soon.

From Cat Turner's prayer No more hot air Lord

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/resources/show-the-love-prayer-2021/>

Monday 10th January

Next of the 2021 Ashden Award winners is Mahila Housing Trust [who] helps poor women in India's cities come together and tackle social challenges. This includes supporting them to take up practical and affordable home cooling solutions. These can cut indoor temperatures by up to 6C, helping women and their families work, study, rest and stay well. The trust also helps women fight for political change on

cooling and other issues. “*During summer, we had dizziness, vomiting and fever. I used to get tired and need to close my shop in the afternoons for four hours. The tin sheet roofing made the shop too hot to stay in. Now, with the bamboo roof, I can open my shop for the entire day, as I can comfortably sit inside my shop in the hot afternoon.*” Saya Savita Pandey, a small shop owner in Surat where summer temperatures can reach 48°C.

<https://ashden.org/winners/mahila-housing-trust/>

Tuesday 11th January

Each time flash floods engulf their villages, the Mising people [in Assam, north east India] shift their homes further inland - but after a decade of flooding and riverbank erosion, they are running out of space. Between 2014 and 2021, more than 32 million people in Assam were affected by flooding, including nearly 660 deaths, according to data from the state disaster management authority. In an effort to minimise the destruction, Besemora residents raise the floors of their traditional stilted bamboo homes depending on the level of the latest flood... The villagers also try to break up the force of the flooding with a network of bamboo “porcupines”, triangular structures made of intersecting poles built along the riverbanks. But those measures are often no match for the overpowering water... When that happens, said Binud Doley, an elder from Salmora village, about a kilometre north of Besemora, the area's indigenous communities face yet another problem: the

inability to reclaim their land once the floodwaters have receded. With no title deeds to prove ownership, the Mising traditionally settle on unused riparian land, Doley said. But the effects of flooding and riverbank erosion, along with the spread of farming and the region's growing population, mean available land is becoming scarce, he added.

<http://news.trust.org/item/20211228115729-po4z5/>

Wednesday 12th January

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has mandated that all Olympic Games from 2030 will need to be certified as carbon-neutral or carbon-negative, after confirming that Tokyo 2020 was carbon-negative... Building on this progress, the IOC itself has committed to becoming a carbon-negative organisation ahead of the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. It will work to reduce its own emissions while also funding offsetting, backing nature-based solutions and projects that mitigate emissions, like renewable electricity and clean cooking fuels. The IOC has also committed to halving the carbon footprint of Games and their value chains by 2030 and requiring future Olympic and Paralympic Games Hosts to outline plans for either achieving carbon-neutral events, or going further and achieving carbon negativity. Failure to produce strong commitments and plans, the Committee has stated, may mean cities lose out on host positions for post-2030 games.

<https://www.edie.net/news/6/All-Olympic-Games-to-be-carbon-neutral-or-carbon-negative-going-forward/>

Thursday 13th January

On the floodplain of Sabah's milky-brown Kinabatangan river in Borneo, teams of local women have been working to restore the area's degraded rainforest for more than a decade. They hope to create a forest "corridor" for wildlife in one of the most biodiverse areas of Malaysia, which has been under pressure for years from the relentless expansion of oil palm plantations... The industry's expansion has not only led to deforestation but the fragmentation of the forests, crowding and isolating wildlife, including Borneo's unique pygmy elephants and orangutans, into ever smaller areas. The women's reforestation teams plant native trees on strategically-chosen plots with the intention of connecting various wildlife sanctuaries located around their village of Sukau.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2021/11/12/local-women-grow-rainforests-in-the-malaysian-borneo>

Friday 14th January

Climate breakdown is the hot toxic breath of the white supremacist capitalist patriarchy. Women, feminists and LGBTQIA2S+ peoples across the planet have been claiming for decades that the climate crisis has patriarchal roots... Women and Feminists for Climate Justice have become a transnational force deserving of their very own acronym — WFCJ. As global warming accelerates this movement is doubling

down on activism towards a feminist climate justice across continents. And although WFCJ have gone global, they spring from resistance and action at place-based community, regional and national levels... Women make up 80 percent of those forced to leave their home during climate catastrophes according to UN studies. They are also 14 times more likely than men to die during climate change related disasters.

<https://theecologist.org/2021/dec/10/racial-capitalist-climate-patriarchy>

Saturday 15th January

Scientists surveying the Mediterranean Sea have found at least four different species, including sperm whales and three species of dolphins, in an area close to the island of Crete, where TotalEnergies and ExxonMobil are set to start seismic tests to explore for oil and gas, a new Greenpeace Greece report shows [released last month]. Sperm whales are an endangered species in the Mediterranean due to their low numbers and their vulnerability to human activities. Campaigners warn about the dire threats to these mammals, including extremely loud noise pollution from seismic blasts if the oil companies' plans go ahead.

<https://www.greenpeace.org/international/press-release/51688/total-exxon-seismic-testing-whales-dolphins-oil-gas/>

Sunday 16th January

Loving God,
We have not loved Your planet, and its inhabitants, well.

We have praised Your creation, but if we do not care for it, our praise is just "hot air".

Give us wisdom.

Inspire our leaders.

Blow away our hot air,

And fill our hearts with the cooling,

invigorating breath of Your Spirit,

So that we may be moved to show our love

for You, by truly loving all You have

created.

Amen.

From Cat Turner's prayer No more hot air Lord

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/resources/show-the-love-prayer-2021/>

Monday 17th January

Third in our series of the 2021 Ashden Award winners is a UK based company. Kensa's innovative ground source heat pumps and shared ground loop arrays deliver efficient and affordable heating, tackling a major source of carbon emissions and reducing fuel poverty. Tenants in social housing have seen their heating costs halved – while Kensa is also investing in developing skills and training, and engaging in political lobbying to increase the uptake of this game-changing, low-carbon heating technology. Kensa's shared ground loops are now heating more than 2,600 properties, with a focus on social housing. Work to connect a further 500 properties started in 2021. [Kensa] employs 140 people, with in-house training for installers.

<https://ashden.org/winners/kensa-group/>