

Picture on front cover: Moor above Marsden, West Yorkshire, Emma King.

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Green Christian contact: Information Officer: info@greenchristian.org.uk

Tel: 0345 459 8460

www.greenchristian.org.uk

Green Christian: 48 Morrab Road, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 4EX.



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Prayer guide for the care of creation



February 2024

Father of Creation,
God of Justice,
From mountain heights to ocean depths,
The impact of humanity has been made known.
Instead of worshipping,
Tending
And keeping.
We have forsaken,
Betrayed
And plundered.
Have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

From prayer 10, Lament and Hope <https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-hope-40-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency/>

 **Green Christian**
Ordinary Christians, extraordinary times

Thursday 1st February

Join with many other Christians from around the world with the monthly Pray and Fast for the Climate Movement on the first of each month. Prayer points for February will be on their website.

Merciful God, we believe that you uphold and sustain all that you have made, while also lovingly giving us the freedom to live in relationship with the rest of creation. We ask your forgiveness for the ways we have abused that freedom, through what we have done and what we have left undone. We bring our lament and our longing for a renewed earth to you now: (prayer from Christian an online Climate Action's prayer for climate grief).

<https://prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk/resources/>

Friday 2nd February

Today is World Wetlands Day. Wetlands are land areas that are saturated or flooded with water either permanently or seasonally. Inland wetlands. They include inland wetlands such as marshes, lakes, floodplains and swamps; coastal wetlands including saltwater marshes, estuaries and mangroves, and human-made wetland such as fish ponds or rice paddies. Nearly 90% of the world's wetlands have been degraded since the 1700s, and we are losing wetlands three times faster than forests. Yet, wetlands are critically important ecosystems that contribute to biodiversity, climate mitigation and adaptation, freshwater availability, world

economies and more. *Wetlands and Human Wellbeing* is the theme for this year.

<https://www.worldwetlandsday.org/about>

Saturday 3rd February

A new report has revealed that the UK is currently trailing behind its EU counterparts in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), writes Sidhi Mittal, while the EU itself is projected to fall short on 75% of its goals by 2030... The SDGs are a call for action by all governments to deliver 17 common objectives that promote economic and social prosperity while protecting the planet by 2030... In the report, *Europe Sustainable Development Report 2023/24 (ESDR)*, Finland secures the leading position on the SDG index for Europe, with Sweden, Denmark, Austria and Norway following closely, while the UK holds the 16th position. The report underscores that, based on the current pace, the EU is projected to fall short of achieving a third of the SDG targets by 2030.

<https://www.edie.net/report-uk-lags-behind-its-eu-peers-in-sdg-progress/>

Sunday 4th February

Father of Creation, God of Compassion,
The earth as a cosmic temple presents
itself as a symphony of praise;
A rich diversity of song and dance, From a
whole range of characters who Inhabit,
Perform
And point to you
As the giver of gifts.

classified as endangered at present, but that doesn't mean their populations aren't vulnerable. There are around 22,000 polar bears left in the wild, but man-made climate change and global warming are making life tough for these impressive, powerful predators—so saving the polar bears could be in our hands.

<https://www.wwf.org.uk/learn/wildlife/polar-bears>

Wednesday 28th February

In December [last year], Venezuela's president announced a series of measures and legislation to formalize the country's possession of the oil-rich Essequibo region in Guyana, which he argues was stolen from Venezuela when the border was drawn more than a century ago, writes Aimee Gabay. Venezuela has instructed the state's oil and gas agencies to immediately grant operating licenses to explore and exploit oil, gas and mines in the Essequibo region, giving companies already operating in the area three months to leave. Amerindian communities in Guyana have raised concerns that Venezuela's takeover may threaten decades-long battles for recognition of their customary lands and, in the process, endanger the region's rich biodiversity.

<https://news.mongabay.com/2024/01/guyana-a-amerindian-communities-fear-venezuelas-move-to-annex-oil-rich-region/>

Thursday 29th February

A village in Hampshire [in the south of England] is set to have its heating and cooling sourced from an underground reservoir, in a move that will save households on their energy bills while reducing emissions compared to using either gas networks or air-source heat pumps, writes Matt Mace. Development is underway on the Welborne Garden Village in Hampshire to build 6,000 homes with shops, schools, commercial buildings and healthcare sites. As part of the development, plans have been confirmed for the buildings to tap into Portsmouth Water's underground Hoads Hill Reservoir to gain access to a new low-carbon water-source heating and cooling network... The organisations [involved in the development] claim it is the UK's largest water-source low-carbon heating and cooling network. An additional feature of the network is that heat can be transferred and exchanged between buildings. When one is cooling, it can supply excess heat to others in the network. It is estimated that the complete network could save more than 272,000 tonnes of carbon in the first 25 years of operation compared to using gas boilers.

<https://www.edie.net/hampshire-to-host-uks-largest-water-source-heating-and-cooling-network/>

From prayer 10, Lament and Hope
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Monday 5th February

Clean energy contributed a record 11.4tn yuan (\$1.6tn) to China's economy in 2023, accounting for all of the growth in investment and a larger share of economic growth than any other sector, writes Lauri Myllyvirta et al. The new sector-by-sector analysis for Carbon Brief, based on official figures, industry data and analyst reports, illustrates the huge surge in investment in Chinese clean energy last year – in particular, the so-called “new three” industries of solar power, electric vehicles (EVs) and batteries... Clean-energy sectors, as a result, were the largest driver of China's economic growth overall, accounting for 40% of the expansion of GDP in 2023. Without the growth from clean-energy sectors, China's GDP would have missed the government's growth target of “around 5%”, rising by only 3.0% instead of 5.2%.

<https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-clean-energy-was-top-driver-of-chinas-economic-growth-in-2023/>

Tuesday 6th February

The latest State of Nature report warns that nearly one in six of Britain's 10,000 species under review could be lost, writes Catherine Early. The UK Government is currently way off track on its own target to protect 30 per cent of its nature by 2030 - despite

committing to this goal through an international deal agreed in Montreal in 2022. There has been “little or no change” in the extent of land protected under the UK's network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and their condition in England has deteriorated, according to a report on the government's progress towards its environmental targets published this week. There was also a lack of appropriate monitoring of sites outside this network, which limited the extent to which progress could be measured, the report noted. The government's plans to recover nature in national parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty had the potential to contribute to the 30 by 30 target, but action is too slow.

<https://theecologist.org/2024/jan/22/clock-ticking-uk-nature>

Wednesday 7th February

Tonight at 7pm is our next Green Christian workshop. This workshop will inspire and challenge us to use creativity to express our deepest feelings and thoughts about the climate crisis. We will be guided by Emma Major in using Haiku, a particular form of poetry that uses relatively few words and can be accessible and powerful. Emma has written a collection of Haiku expressing much that is true for her about climate grief and climate activism, published by Wild Goose publications, and she will read from this, and tell us about her journey into poetry writing and other forms of creativity. Free but you will need to register for the zoom link.

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/gc-campaigns/green-christian-workshops/>

Thursday 8th February

A Ghanaian-English entrepreneur has designed an electric bike from the ground up that's transforming short-range transportation in her home country, proving that problem-solving in Africa can be done in Africa, by Africans. Andy Corbley writes for Good News Network: her company, Wahu! assembles each bike by hand, and they can travel up to 80 miles on a single charge. This means that a delivery rider for Glovo or Bolt can comfortably cover a whole day's work without refueling. Anyone who's visited Accra, Ghana, in the dry season will remember the incredibly poor air quality. Poor roads mean that cars are stuck in second and third gears, and old cars traveling in second and third gears mean plenty of extra car exhaust.

<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/ghanaian-entrepreneur-is-revolutionizing-transportation-building-electric-bikes-to-improve-air-quality/>

Friday 9th February

Groundwater provides about half of the world's population with drinking water and nearly half of all water used to irrigate crops, writes Scott Jasechko et al. It sustains rivers, lakes and wetlands during droughts. Groundwater is a renewable resource, but it can take decades or even centuries for some aquifers to recover after they are depleted. Current understanding of this challenge is based mainly on where

and how frequently people record measurements of water levels in wells. In a newly published study, [the] team of data scientists, water specialists and policy experts compiled the first global-scale dataset of these levels. [They] analyzed millions of groundwater level measurements in 170,000 wells located in over 40 countries and mapped how groundwater levels have changed over time. [The] study has two main findings. First, [it] shows that rapid groundwater depletion is widespread around the world and that rates of decline have accelerated in recent decades, with levels falling by 20 inches or more yearly in some locations. Second, however, [the] research also reveals many cases where deliberate actions halted groundwater depletion. These results show that societies are not inevitably doomed to drain their groundwater supplies, and that with timely interventions, this important resource can recover.

<https://theconversation.com/humans-are-depleting-groundwater-worldwide-but-there-are-ways-to-replenish-it-220816>

Saturday 10th February

Palau has become the first nation to officially ratify the UN Ocean Treaty on Monday by depositing its ratification with the United Nations, in a further sign of Pacific Small Island Developing States' continuing leadership on ocean protection. Laura Meller, Project Leader of Greenpeace's Protect the Oceans campaign, said: "*As the first country to officially ratify the UN Ocean Treaty, Palau has jumped into the lead in the race to*

to 131 royal Bengal tigers, a 27 per cent jump from 2015. The survey was conducted with support from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and was welcomed by conservationists, who have seen wild tiger numbers around the world plummet in recent decades.

<https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/bhutan-endangered-bengal-tiger-making-comeback>

Sunday 25th February

Father of Creation,
God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
We live within both the beauty and the brokenness.

We ask that you would give us a melody of praise to join with creation's cosmic song and dance.

We ask that you would give us a lament that grieves for what we have lost and what will be.

May the melody of our humble existence take up afresh our priestly calling
To tend and keep your cosmic temple until the redemption and restoration of all things.

From prayer 10, Lament and Hope
<https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-hope-40-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency/>

Monday 26th February

Carbon Brief analysis of figures in the IEA's Renewables 2023 report show that the world is now on track to build enough solar, wind and other renewables over the next five years to power the equivalent of the US

and Canada, writes Josh Gabbatiss. Rapid growth has also pushed the IEA to once again significantly upgrade its renewables forecast, adding an extra 728 gigawatts (GW) of capacity to a five-year estimate it made just a year ago. This is more than the electricity capacity of Germany and India combined. The agency attributes this growth to plummeting costs of solar power and favourable policy regimes, particularly in China. New solar and onshore wind now provide cheaper electricity than new fossil fuel power plants almost everywhere, it says, as well as being cheaper than most existing fossil fuel assets. Despite such accelerated expansion, the world is not currently on track to achieve the COP28 target of tripling renewables capacity by 2030, according to the IEA.

<https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-world-will-add-enough-renewables-in-five-years-to-power-us-and-canada/>

Tuesday 27th February

Today is World Polar Bear Day. Polar bears are the planet's biggest land-based carnivores – although they actually spend most of their lives around water and ice (their Latin name means 'sea bear'). So they're at particular risk from global warming, which is melting the Arctic sea ice they depend on. Polar bears generally live and hunt alone, though they can be quite social too. They mainly eat seals – using their remarkable sense of smell they can detect a seal in the water beneath a metre of compacted snow, and from almost a kilometre away...Polar bears are not

virtue ethics and the apophatic Christian Tradition to encourage the practice of joy and hope in a world that feels on a desperate and destructive trajectory. Her focus will be on how God's work in us can create a place of joy and freedom, even while our eyes are open to the sin and suffering of the world; a joy that transforms. Free, but you will need to register to get the zoom link.

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/gc-campaigns/green-christian-workshops/>

Thursday 22nd February

Researchers from Michigan State University are proving that salt in plastic recycling has the properties to outperform much more expensive materials that are being explored to help recycle plastics. The MSU team uses pyrolysis to break down the plastics into a mixture of simpler carbon-based compounds, including gas, liquid oil, and solid wax. Pyrolysis is the process of heating an organic material in the absence of oxygen. One of the challenges of plastic recycling has always been an undesirable wax byproduct, which accounts for over half of the pyrolysis output. The wax obtained from the pyrolysis of waste plastic is generally regarded as a low-value product that requires further treatment in a refinery for it to be considered valuable as chemicals, diesel, petroleum, and gasoline. Salt in plastic recycling is used as a catalyst to pyrolyze polyolefins [and]...there was no undesirable wax.

<https://happyeconews.com/salt-in-plastic-recycling/>

Friday 23rd February

Seven out of 10 of the UK public are not confident that the Government will deliver policies to transition to net-zero by 2050, writes Matt Mace. The findings come from the latest *State of the State*, an annual report on attitudes to government and public services published by Deloitte and Reform, an independent think tank. The report features the results of a survey of almost 6,000 UK citizens. The main finding of the report is that less than a quarter (23%) are "very" or "fairly confident" that the UK will meet its net-zero target for 2050. In contrast, 70% do not believe the target will be met...Other priority actions for the Government cited by respondents include promoting clean transport. However, only 12% of respondents said they planned to switch to electric vehicles (EVs) in the next few years.

<https://www.edie.net/uk-public-pessimistic-about-reaching-net-zero-by-2050/>

Saturday 24th February

For nearly a year, hundreds of researchers fanned out across Bhutan with one goal in mind: to find living examples of the endangered royal Bengal tiger. It was a massive scientific expedition that saw them survey more than 26,000 square kilometres of territory, or two-thirds of the country. When researchers returned and tabulated their numbers last year, they were overjoyed. Bhutan, it turned out, was home

ratification. They've already shown leadership in opposing deep sea mining in the Pacific Ocean, and have now set the bar for what it means to be an ocean champion."

<https://www.greenpeace.org/international/press-release/64961/palau-first-nation-ratify-un-ocean-treaty/>

Sunday 11th February

Father of Creation, God of Compassion,
From mountain heights to ocean depths,
Across the seasons,
Non-human worshippers worship With a
stunning array of unique characteristics and
colours.

The willow tree bows in referent praise,
Whilst birds in flight perform a waltz of
wonder.

Since creation's dawn,
You, O Lord, have opened their lips;
A hiss, a screech, a bark, a purr,
A tweet, a song, a howl, a caw,
A neigh, bleat, a cuckoo, a buzz, a roar.

From prayer 10, Lament and Hope
<https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-hope-40-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency/>

Monday 12th February

As artificial intelligence advances at breakneck pace, the world's biggest tech companies face growing pressure to address the environmental and climate impacts of AI - which requires large amounts of electricity and water to run, writes Adam Smith. Tech giants such as

Amazon, Google and Microsoft have pledged to tackle the climate crisis, yet green experts say the sector is not doing enough to mitigate the rising consumption of resources. Electricity consumption from data centres, AI and cryptocurrency could double by 2026, according to a new report from the International Energy Agency.

<https://www.context.news/climate-risks/what-are-the-environmental-costs-of-ai>

Tuesday 13th February

Tomorrow, Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent, will see the start of the No Faith in Fossil Fuels Lent Vigil, a ten day event set to take place in Westminster. Christians from across the country will gather together holding vigil across ten days, day and night. The vigil starts Feb 14th at 2:30pm, runs for 10 days, ending on the 24th Feb at 3pm. Carriage Gate, outside Parliament, Westminster, London. See below for more details and how to join in.

<https://christianclimateaction.org/2023/12/08/join-us-for-the-no-faith-in-fossil-fuels-lent-vigil-for-climate-justice-14-24-february-2024/>

Wednesday 14th February

Ash Wednesday

Almighty God,
The Creator of All that is,
You created us from the dust of the earth,
And breathed upon us and gave us the gift of life.
In our fragility and weakness,

We marvel at the precious gift of life,
And the calling you have placed upon us to
Tend and keep your cosmic temple.
Almighty God,
The Creator of All that is,
Dust we are and to dust we will return,
Yet you dignified us with the gift of love.

From prayer 40 Lament and Hope
<https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-hope-40-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency/>

Thursday 15th February

World Hippo Day is celebrated every year on the 15th February. ... The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has classified the hippopotamus as Vulnerable, which means it is susceptible to extinction, because its population is in decline. Sadly, hippos are at risk from humans who kill them for a number of reasons, including to lower the chance of human-wildlife conflict, for food, and for their ivory tusks. Also, with the growth of the human population, hippos are suffering from habitat loss as settlements, roads and agricultural production sites are being set up on areas that were once these mammals' homes.

<https://www.ecokidsplanet.co.uk/blogs/news/world-hippo-day-five-top-facts>

Friday 16th February

The population of a critically endangered, truffle-loving native marsupial is bouncing back in a southern Western Australia (WA) forest, new monitoring has found, writes

Amanda Searson for ABC News. Woylies are small mammals native to forests and shrubland in Australia, but their numbers have dwindled because of foxes and feral cats. In 2019, the WA government's lead wildlife recovery program, known as Western Shield, recorded only two woylies living in Batalling State Forest, three hours south-east of Perth. But conservationists have seen a promising increase in the past year, with 34 woylies found in the forest. Western Shield program coordinator Ashley Millar said the results had been great to see. *"There are a lot of challenges for our native fauna and flora across Western Australia and Australia due to the threats to biodiversity, but these kinds of results are really promising,"* he said.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-01-20/woylie-population-bounces-back-after-predator-management/103365244>

Saturday 17th February

With reduced support in Brazil's Congress following the 2022 elections, the administration of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has been unable to prevent the passage of bills dismantling environmental safeguards in favor of agribusiness interests, writes André Schröder. Throughout 2023, the agribusiness caucus managed to push through legislation undermining Indigenous rights to land and slashing regulations on pesticides. The same election that brought Lula back to power in Brazil also led to a conservative Congress that's more right-wing, better organized, and aware of its powers,

according to experts. One bright spot is a drop in Amazon Rainforest deforestation, a headline figure for Lula's international diplomacy; but more progress is needed to give Brazil a prominent place in international environmental advocacy, experts say.

<https://news.mongabay.com/2024/01/lulas-ambitious-green-agenda-runs-up-against-congress-agribusiness-might/>

Sunday 18th February

Father of Creation,
God of Compassion
The cosmic temple has begun to sing a different song;
A lament for what has changed,
A requiem for what has been lost,
A lament for what will be.

From prayer 10 Lament and Hope
<https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-hope-40-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency/>

Monday 19th February

Internationally revered Icelandic songstress Björk has riled her homeland once again by leveraging star activist power against a burgeoning national industry – fish farming. Already fueling growing export markets across Europe and North America, Icelandic aquaculture has recently set sights on quintupling salmon production over five years through open-ocean cages seeded near fjords and sheltering bays. But Björk and over 100,000 citizens demand that these coastal encampments of penned

fish be purged from Iceland's precious seascape and wildlife sanctuaries... Having newly emerged with fragile stability after financial crashes, Björk suggests Iceland embrace this pivotal moment to redefine resilient futures around what communities value most beyond economic metrics – a pristine nature underlying national pride and creativity thriving through her music reaching global audiences.

<https://happyeconews.com/bjork-targets-icelandic-salmon-farms/>

Tuesday 20th February

Zimbabwe has Africa's largest reserves of lithium – a lightweight metal, which can store lots of energy and is used to manufacture batteries for electric cars. Chinese companies have invested millions to access Zimbabwe's lithium. And the Southern African nation sees this rush for the critical mineral as an opportunity for economic improvements. But in the past, Zimbabwe has failed to turn its vast diamond and gold wealth into revenue for development. This time, the country wants to add value to its lithium reserves by processing them into battery-grade metals that can find a place in the EV supply chain.

<https://www.climatechangenews.com/2024/01/26/zimbabwes-lithium-looks-to-china-to-secure-a-place-in-the-ev-battery-supply-chain/>

Wednesday 21st February

Tonight at 7pm is a Green Christian Joy in Enough talk – *Joy in a time of crisis*. In this talk Helen Stanton will draw upon Christian