

Prayer guide for the care of creation



April 2024

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

“But ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you; or the bushes of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind.

Job 12 v7-10, ESV

Picture on front cover: Weybourne beach, Emma King

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by email (free), please fill in the sign up form at <https://greenchristian.org.uk/about/contact-us/> or email: prayer-guide@greenchristian.org.uk

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 **Green Christian**
Ordinary Christians, extraordinary times

Monday 1st April

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 April 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/>

Tuesday 2nd April

Schools across South Sudan have been ordered to close as a heat wave of 45°C sweeps across the country, writes Caitlin Prentice. In recent years, severe flooding has already caused major disruptions to

schooling in South Sudan where, on average, children complete less than five years of formal education across their lives... In a recent paper published in *Nature Climate Change*, [Prentice et al] reviewed studies linking climate change-related events or “climate stressors” to education outcomes. One of the clearest connections was between heat exposure and reduced academic performance. A study in the US found that adolescents’ maths scores decreased significantly on days above 26°C. In China, hotter day-of-test temperatures were associated with a drop in exam performance equal to losing a quarter of a year – or several months – of schooling... [The] review also highlight[ed] how climate-related regional disasters like wildfires, storms, droughts and floods are keeping many children out of school entirely... [A]nalysis suggests that climate change will exacerbate existing inequalities in global education access and attainment, with already disadvantaged groups facing the largest learning setbacks.

chemical alternatives to toxic agrochemicals and facilitate a transition towards better practices. <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/new-initiative-aims-curb-toxic-impacts-agriculture>

Tuesday 30th April

‘Seize this chance’: Supermarkets press UK Government for mandatory food waste reporting, writes Sarah George. The businesses, convened by surplus food redistribution platform Too Good to Go and the British Retail Consortium, have penned an open letter to Ministers this week. The letter emphasises that mandatory food waste reporting would be a “key step in reducing food waste”, because it would force businesses to understand their waste hotspots and use this information to design and implement effective waste reduction plans. It acknowledges progress made under voluntary initiatives but said that a mandate would be “necessary” to “tackle this pressing issue at scale”, emphasising that food waste costs the UK economy almost £22bn each year. Signatories of the letter

include Aldi UK, Cook, Danone, Gousto, innocent Drinks, Lidl, Nestle, Ocado, Oddbox, Princes, Quorn, Sainsbury’s, Tesco, the Co-Op and Waitrose.

<https://www.edie.net/seize-this-chance-supermarkets-press-uk-government-for-mandatory-food-waste-reporting/>

such as Bangladesh, India and Cambodia. While about 80% of the sector's carbon footprint stems from manufacturing, well-known global brands take a bigger share of the profits, are less indebted and have more financial clout for green investments.

<https://www.context.news/just-transition/how-can-fashions-net-zero-future-be-paid-for-fairly>

Sunday 28th April

Father of Creation,
God of Peace,
Grant us the courage to speak out against increased militarism.
Grant us the courage to speak out against the arms trade.
Grant us the courage to speak out against increased nuclear capability.
Grant us the courage in a world of increasing violence to stand fast to the peaceable kingdom and the peaceable King.
Grant us the courage to seek the path of peace until that day when all weapons of war are turned into ploughshares, and

War will be no more.

Except from prayer no 11 "*Lay down the sword, take up the cross*", from Lament and Hope, Jon Swales
<https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-hope-40-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency/>

Monday 29th April

The governments of Ecuador, India, Kenya, Laos, Philippines, Uruguay, and Vietnam have come together to launch a \$379 million initiative to combat pollution from the use of pesticides and plastics in agriculture. Chemicals play a crucial role in farming, with nearly 4 billion tons of pesticides and 12 billion kg of agricultural plastics used every year... The Financing Agrochemical Reduction and Management Programme – or FARM – led by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) with financial support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), seeks to change that, elaborating the business case for banks and policy-makers to reorient policy and financial resources towards farmers to help them adopt low- and non-

<https://theconversation.com/schools-out-how-climate-change-is-already-badly-affecting-childrens-education-225737>

Wednesday 3rd April

Tonight at 7pm is the first in a series of Green Christian workshops on food, using the LOAF principles. The first workshop is on L, 'local'. Free to join, register via <https://greenchristian.org.uk/gc-campaigns/green-christian-workshops/>

Thursday 4th April

A reef that has been degraded—whether by coral bleaching or disease—can't support the same diversity of species and has a much quieter, less rich soundscape. But new research from Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution shows that sound could potentially be a vital tool in the effort to restore coral reefs. A healthy coral reef is noisy, full of the croaks, purrs, and grunts of various fishes and the crackling of snapping shrimp. Scientists believe that coral larvae use this symphony of sounds to help them determine where they should live

and grow. ...In a paper published [in March] in Royal Society Open Science, the Woods Hole researchers showed that broadcasting the soundscape of a healthy reef caused coral larvae to settle at significantly higher rates—up to seven times more often.
<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/broadcasting-audio-of-healthy-reef-sounds-can-spur-degraded-coral-to-new-life/>

Friday 5th April

The first ever Buildings and Climate Global Forum, organised by the French Government and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), concluded [in March] with the adoption by representatives of 70 countries of the *Declaration de Chailot*, a foundational document for international cooperation that will enable progress towards a rapid, fair, and effective transition of the sector. The Forum, which brought together over 1,400 participants in the French capital, was dedicated to the decarbonisation and climate resilience of buildings. According to the latest Global Status Report for

Buildings and Construction, released this week by UNEP and the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC), the building and construction sector represents over a fifth of global greenhouse gas emissions. The report indicates that in 2022, the sector accounted for 37 per cent of global operational energy and process-related CO2 emissions. <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/buildings-and-climate-global-forum-declaration-de-chailot>

Saturday 6th April

A new report from the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has highlighted that food waste remains a significant detriment to the global economy and a driver of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, resulting in an estimated economic loss of \$1trn. Sidhi Mittal continues: This is according to UNEP's Food Waste Index Report 2024, co-authored with the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP), which provides the global estimate on food waste at retail and consumer

levels. In 2022, global food waste reached 1.05 billion tonnes, including inedible parts, averaging 132 kilograms per capita and representing nearly 20% of all available food for consumers. Households accounted for 60% of this waste, followed by food services at 28% and retail at 12%... According to the UNEP, food loss and waste generates 8-10% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions – almost five times the total emissions from the aviation sector.

<https://www.edie.net/food-waste-inflicts-1trn-economic-loss-on-global-scale-un-report-warns/>

Sunday 7th April

Father of Creation,
God of Peace,
We praise you for your son Jesus,
The Lamb upon the Throne.
We praise you that your son Jesus said,
'Blessed are the peacemakers'
and called us to love our enemies.
We thank you that your son rules
and reigns
through self-giving sacrificial love.

Thursday 25th April

[Volunteers at] Dovestone Reservoir [near Oldham] are celebrating after planting their one millionth sphagnum moss at the reservoir, writes Jack Fifield. Volunteers gathered with RSPB and landowner United Utilities to mark the moment on a rainy and windy Wednesday morning. According to site manager Kate Hanley, who has been with the RSPB for 14 years, the moss has biodiversity benefits and flood management benefits. The moss can trap more than 20 times its weight in water, making the landscape more resistant to fires and resilient to drought.

<https://www.theoldhamtimes.co.uk/news/24183492.oldham-water-quality-improved-volunteers-planting-moss/>

Friday 26th April

Suriname President Chan Santokhi confirmed to local media this week that he shuttered a pilot program setting aside 30,000 hectares (74,131 acres) for 50 Mennonite families, easing some fears that the country was on the verge of

destroying large parts of the Amazon Rainforest, writes Maxwell Radwin. Mennonite colonies have a history of contributing to widespread deforestation in other parts of Latin America, including Belize, Mexico and Bolivia. But many conservation groups said there are bigger challenges than the Mennonites, including the development of around 467,000 hectares (1,153,982 acres) of land for agricultural activity.

<https://news.mongabay.com/2024/03/suriname-cancels-controversial-mennonite-pilot-program-but-bigger-problems-loom/>

Saturday 27th April

As the fashion world races to cut its carbon emissions, garment makers are calling for a global fund to share the cost of the green transition between big brands and manufacturers in the Global South, writes Md Tahmid Zami. The investment needed for the industry to meet its goal of net-zero emissions by 2050 is estimated at \$1 trillion. So far, most of the bill is being paid by manufacturers in leading garment-making countries

Tuesday 23rd April

The Mekong River's dazzlingly diverse fishes are critical for the health, food security and livelihoods of tens of millions of people across the region as well as the overall health of the river system, but they are under ever increasing pressure with one in five already threatened with extinction, according to a report published today by 25 regional and global organizations. *Mekong's Forgotten Fishes* details the extraordinary variety of fish species in the river – with at least 1,148 making the Mekong the third most biodiverse river after the Amazon and Congo. The first-of-its-kind report celebrates this wealth of species – from the world's most massive freshwater fish to one of its most minute, from fishes that 'talk' and 'walk' to fishes that spit water to knock unsuspecting prey into the river... But the Mekong's fishes continue to be undervalued and overlooked by decision makers and at least 19 per cent of assessed species are now estimated to be heading towards extinction.

https://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/press_releases/?10858966/Critical-

[Mekong-fishes-threatened-with-extinction](#)

Wednesday 24th April

The UK continues to lead the way in cutting emissions after provisional data released [in late March] show a reduction of 53% between 1990 and 2023 – down 5% from 2022 as shown in last month's official statistics. After becoming the first major economy to halve its emissions, territorial greenhouse gas emissions fell further across several key sectors between 2022 and 2023 as the reliance on gas decreases. The electricity supply sector saw a drop in emissions of 19.6%, homes had a fall of 7.2%, and industry had a 8.0% drop. The latest stats reflect the UK's world leading record on renewable electricity – with the five largest operational offshore wind farm projects, and nearly half of its electricity generation now coming from renewables, compared to just 7% in 2010.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-half-way-to-net-zero>

Except from prayer no 11 “*Lay down the sword, take up the cross*”, from Lament and Hope, Jon Swales <https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-hope-40-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency/>

Monday 8th April

Antarctic sea ice is “behaving strangely” and might have entered a “new regime”, the director of the US National Snow and Ice Data Centre (NSIDC) tells Carbon Brief. Ayesha Tandon writes: Following an all-time low maximum in September 2023, Antarctic sea ice has been tracking at near-record-low extent for the past six months... Dr Mark Serreze, director of the NSIDC tells Carbon Brief that more warm ocean water is reaching the surface to melt ice and keep it from forming. He says that we “must wait and see” whether this is a “temporary effect” or whether the Antarctic has entered a “new regime”. Meanwhile, Arctic sea ice has reached its maximum extent for the year, peaking at 15.01m square kilometres (km²) on 14 March. The provisional data from the NSIDC shows that this year's Arctic winter

peak, despite favourable winds that encouraged sea ice formation, was 640,000km² smaller than the 1981-2010 average maximum.

<https://www.carbonbrief.org/antarctic-sea-ice-behaving-strangely-as-arctic-reaches-below-average-winter-peak/>

Tuesday 9th April

The depleted Panama Canal needs new water sources as climate-driven drought spotlights global warming risks to world's waterways, writes Anastasia Moloney... [T]he critical water cushion that lifts and lowers ships through a series of locks along the canal is deflating because of repeated droughts, disrupting a key global trade route and slashing revenues that underpin Panama's economy. What is happening along this artificial waterway on the Isthmus of Panama shines a spotlight on how global warming and extreme weather caused by climate change might affect the ocean shipping industry that moves 80% of world trade. The Panama Canal handles nearly 3% of all maritime trade - moving roughly \$270 billion worth

of cargo each year - and restrictions on shipping because of water shortages caused by drought have far-reaching consequences.

<https://www.context.news/climate-risks/long-read/we-all-need-water-panamas-canal-and-people-thirst-for-more>

Wednesday 10th April

Since the 2015 Paris climate agreement, European banks have lent about €256 billion to corporations that put forests, savannahs and other climate critical natural ecosystems at risk, according to new research. The study, published by Greenpeace International, Milieudefensie (Friends of the Earth Netherlands), and Harvest and supported by other NGOs, is based on data compiled by the independent research organisation Profundo. The study focuses on JBS, Cargill, Sinar Mas and other top global producers, processors and traders of soy, cattle, palm oil, rubber, timber and other commodities that carry a high risk of ecosystem destruction, and the financial institutions that finance them. The

EU is the second-largest global financial hub bankrolling these commodities sectors.

<https://www.greenpeace.org/international/press-release/66013/eu-banks-have-poured-e256-billion-into-sectors-that-threaten-nature-and-climate/>

Thursday 11th April

Kelp spores are being seeded and grown on small rocks and scallop shells – a seafood waste product – in efforts to regenerate the UK’s coastal kelp forests. Unlike many other restoration techniques, this method is cheap and easy to carry out. There’s no need for expensive, labour-intensive dive teams to install kelp onto the seabed. Once gravel or shells have been seeded with kelp in aquariums, teams can simply drop them over the side of a boat where they sink, allowing the kelp to attach to the seabed where it grows to maturity. This is as effective as hand-deployment by divers and far more economical.

<https://theconversation.com/attaching-seaweed-spores-to-used-scallop-shells-could-restore-uks-coastal-kelp-forests-224281>

challenges... This was deemed to be a bigger challenge than the cost-of-living crisis and recession, plus the fact that physical climate risks have escalated in recent months, presenting challenges across international business operations and supply chains.

<https://www.edie.net/political-instability-undermining-sustainable-business-investments-in-uk-survey-finds/>

Sunday 21st April

Lord have mercy,
Christ have mercy.
And so in the coming months, and through whatever follows, we commit ourselves afresh to Kingdom Peacemaking.
In our homes,
Blessed are the Peacemakers.
In our churches,
Blessed are the Peacemakers.
In our cities,
Blessed are the Peacemakers.
For our nation's leadership,
Blessed are the Peacemakers.
For global leaders,
Blessed are the Peacemakers.

Except from prayer no 11 “*Lay down the sword, take up the cross*”, from Lament and Hope, Jon Swales
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Monday 22nd April

Today is Earth Day. The first Earth Day in 1970 mobilized millions of Americans from all walks of life, giving birth to a broad new movement to protect the planet. On April 22, 1970, 20 million Americans — 10% of the U.S. population at the time — took to streets, college campuses and hundreds of cities to protest environmental ignorance and demand a new way forward. The first Earth Day is credited with launching the modern environmental movement. Since then, Earth Day has evolved into the largest civic event on Earth, activating billions across 192 countries to safeguard our planet and fight for a brighter future. It was the day that the Paris Climate Agreement was signed, in 2016.

<https://www.earthday.org/>

the iconic toymaker [Lego] has inked a \$2.4 million deal to capture carbon, writes Grant Brown. Lego Climeworks is an initiative for direct air capture and storage. The agreement aims to permanently remove hard-to-abate carbon dioxide emissions from the atmosphere, accelerating LEGO's progress toward achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050... "We want children to inherit a healthy planet – and we're determined to play our part in making that happen," said Annette Stube, Chief Sustainability Officer at the LEGO Group. "To succeed, we must take action to drive systemic change." <https://happyeconews.com/lego-climeworks-announce-carbon-capture-partnership/>

Friday 19th April

Norway is leading the world when it comes to making the transition to electric passenger cars, writes Steve Hanley. In February, 2024, over 92% of new passenger car sales in Norway were battery electric (90%) or plug-in hybrids (2%). But according to Enova, an agency formed by Norway's

Ministry of Climate and Environment, only 2% of trucks on the road in the country are electric, although electric trucks are now about 10% of new truck sales. Norway has set a target for all new trucks sold in the country to be electric by 2030. That will require adding many new charging stations capable of providing at least one megawatt of power.

<https://cleantechnica.com/2024/03/27/norway-is-taking-the-lead-in-electric-trucks/>

Saturday 20th April

Sustainability professionals in the UK have ranked political instability and uncertainty as the biggest challenge they face in developing and delivering impactful projects, with eight in ten waiting for the general election in the hopes of renewed green ambitions from policymakers. Sarah George continues: These are some of the headline findings of the most recent edition of edie's Sustainable Business Tracker – a quarterly survey polling sustainability professionals and energy managers to track their pressing priorities and

Friday 12th April

In Walikale, a territory located in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Indigenous Twa people accuse the Canadian and South African-owned mining company Alphamin Bisie Mining SA of obtaining mining rights without consulting all the communities affected by the company's activities, write Didier Makal, and Latoya Abulu. An analysis by Mongabay highlights several inconsistencies in the process of receiving mining and exploration permits that violate the law. For years, the Indigenous communities of Banamwesi and Motondo have been unsuccessfully calling on the mining company to recognize that it is occupying part of their community forests. In an exchange with Mongabay, Alphamin Bisie denies they are affected and says they will clarify these matters with the communities. In light of the conflict devastating the eastern DRC and government officials' silence in addressing the communities' situation, inhabitants and civil society representatives say the conflict is being used as a cover for

the violations of the law taking place around them.

<https://news.mongabay.com/2024/03/under-the-shadow-of-war-in-the-drc-a-mining-companys-actions-face-impunity/>

Saturday 13th April

Governments have ignored a recommendation by UN experts and decided to host a network advising on the loss and damage caused by climate change in the expensive Swiss city of Geneva rather than the Kenyan capital Nairobi, writes Joe Lo. In January, the two United Nations agencies that will manage the Santiago Network on loss and damage recommended that its headquarters should be in Nairobi as it is a relatively cheap location and home to other UN environmental bodies... Swiss climate ambassador Felix Wertli called the decision an "honour". "Geneva will offer great added value to the network" because of the wide range of relevant organisations in the city, while the network will in turn help strengthen that international ecosystem, he added ...

Mohammed Adow, the Nairobi-based founder of the Power Shift Africa think-tank, called the decision “*yet another stitch-up by the Global North to keep power away from the places where the impacts of climate change are being felt*”.

<https://www.climatechangenews.com/2024/03/21/african-dismay-at-decision-to-host-loss-and-damage-advice-hub-in-geneva/>

Sunday 14th April

Father of Creation,
God of Peace,

We stand on the brink of climate breakdown,
which will lead to an increase in conflict and war.

Humanity will reap what it sows,
Those who live by the sword will die by the sword.

Lord have Mercy.

Except from prayer no 11 “*Lay down the sword, take up the cross*”, from Lament and Hope, Jon Swales
<https://greenchristian.org.uk/lament-and-ecological-emergency/>

Monday 15th April

Aruba has drafted a constitutional amendment that would make it the second country in the world to recognize that nature has inherent rights, writes Cristen Hemingway Jaynes. The amendment also affirms that people are entitled to a “*clean, healthy and sustainable environment*,” reported Inside Climate News. The draft bill was announced by the country’s nature minister Ursell Arends earlier this month. It would require the government to “*take preventive measures to protect against the negative consequences of climate change*.” If the amendment is approved, Aruba will be the second nation in the world after Ecuador to recognize the rights of nature in its constitution. About 30 countries — including Uganda, Bolivia and Spain — have recognized the inherent rights of particular species or ecosystems.

<https://www.ecowatch.com/aruba-nature-rights-constitution.html>

Tuesday 16th April

Speaking in Copenhagen, at the first climate ministerial since

COP28, hosts of COP28, COP29 and COP30 unveil vision to help ensure the next crucial round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are 1.5°C. The first of its kind COP Presidencies’ Troika was agreed in the historic UAE and will work closely to drive climate ambition between COP28, COP29 and COP30. The Troika issued a letter to all 198 UNFCCC Parties, advocating “*strongly for early submissions of high ambition NDCs, that decisively take forward the UAE*” ... NDCs should be economy-wide, cover all greenhouse gases - including methane - and include policies which deliver emission reductions of 60 percent compared to 2019 levels, before 2035, he said. Al Jaber urged parties to “*follow the science*” and ensure energy transition pathways are “*just, orderly and responsible*” at a panel with COP29 President-Designate Mukhtar Babayev and André Corrêdo Lago, Secretary for Climate, Energy and Environment for COP30 host Brazil.

<https://www.cop28.com/en/news/2024/03/COP28-President-unveils-COP28-COP29-and-COP30Troika-Vision>

Wednesday 17th April

Tonight at 7pm is a talk in the Joy in Enough series of monthly talks. Jeremy Williams and Tony Emerson will talk *on Stories to change our world – how fiction can help us create a better future*. What is the role of fiction in creating a fairer and greener economy? How can we use stories to open up imaginative possibilities in a world losing its way? Tony Emerson will share insights from his novel *Unlikely Alliances*, and its hopeful scenario, and why he turned to fiction as a tool in his campaigning; while Jeremy Williams will look at the wider world of climate fiction and novels with Joy in Enough themes.

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

Thursday 18th April

In a bold move to continue to reduce its environmental impact,