

<https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/feature/2024/08/15/ecocide-resource-stripping-wars-collateral-damage-planet>

Picture on front cover: Goldenacre Park, Leeds, Emma King

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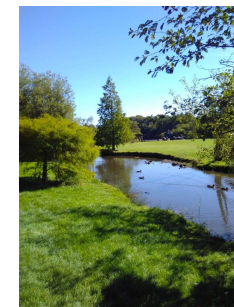
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Prayer guide for the care of creation



September 2024

“The Earth is what we all have in common.”
—Wendell Berry

God of truth and justice:

Fill us with your spirit of compassion so we may live and act with and in solidarity with Creation.

Guide us in paths of righteousness that help us to tread softly on the land and sail gently on the sea.

 **Green Christian**
Ordinary Christians, extraordinary times

Sunday 1st Sept

The Season of Creation, which starts and runs until October 4th, is a time to renew our relationship with our Creator and all creation through celebration, conversion, and commitment together. During the Season of Creation, we join our sisters and brothers in the ecumenical family in prayer and action for our common home. The theme for 2024 is “*To hope and act with Creation*” and the symbol is “The first fruits of hope”, inspired by Romans 8:19-25.

We confess that we do not relate to the Earth as a Mothering gift from you, our Creator. Our selfishness, greed, neglect, and abuse have caused the climate crisis, loss of biodiversity, human suffering as well as the suffering of all our fellow creatures. We confess that we have failed to listen to the groans of the Earth, the groans of all creatures, and the groans of the Spirit of hope and justice that lives within us. May your Creator Spirit help us in our weakness, so that we may know the redeeming power of Christ and the hope found in him. (taken from the 2024 prayer, found in the celebration guide)

<https://seasonofcreation.org/>

Monday 2nd September

Global food prices have seen huge fluctuations in recent years, soaring to record highs in 2022 before dropping in 2023 and rising again slowly this year, writes Orla Dwyer. Extreme weather events, geopolitical conflict, high input costs and increased demand all contributed to these spikes. [For example], in 2023, the UK experienced its second-warmest and seventh-wettest year since records began in 1836, according to the Met Office. England also had its wettest 18 months on record from September 2022 to February 2024... All of this had a major impact on farming, with high rainfall levels leaving soils waterlogged and affecting crop planting times. UK production of vegetables dropped by 4.9% in 2023 compared to the year prior, according to figures from the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. In 2023, cauliflower yields fell by just over 9% and the lowest area of bulb onions in “several decades” was planted, the figures showed.

<https://news.mongabay.com/2024/08/indonesian-islamic-behemoths-entry-into-coal-mining-sparks-youth-wing-revolt/>

Sunday 29th September

God of truth and justice:
Fill us with your spirit of compassion so we may live and act with and in solidarity with Creation.
Guide us in paths of righteousness that help us to tread softly on the land and sail gently on the sea.

Give us wisdom and courage to recognise our role in the evil of systemic exploitation and extraction and to speak truth to power.

Give us strength of heart and arm to be agents of the ecological conversion the world so desperately needs.

Taken from the prayer in the Season of Creation Celebration Guide
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12M3weSD4D2mvjCil3Mxen3JQZ5Razz3/view>

Monday 30th September

The death and destruction that conflicts cause are visible and immediate tragedies, but often

overlooked are the long-term environmental consequences of that violence – insidious, poisonous legacies, writes Obi Anyadike, Senior editor of The New Humanitarian. Even before a shot is fired, standing armies are climate-hostile. Voraciously energy-hungry and wasteful, military establishments are believed to account for 5.5% of all global greenhouse gas emissions. The globe-spanning US Armed Forces, with their fleets of ships, tanks, and high-performance aircraft, are the world’s largest institutional users of petrol. As a result, their carbon footprint is greater than most countries, bigger than Sweden, Denmark, or Portugal. Then there are the logistics chains that keep militaries supplied to factor in and, if we are being thorough, the emissions of the arms manufacturing industry as well. But it’s the devastation of war that supercharges environmental ruin. This story was originally published by The New Humanitarian, which puts quality, independent journalism at the service of the millions of people affected by humanitarian crises around the world.

High-level plenary meeting commemorating and promoting the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Achieving global nuclear disarmament is the highest priority of the United Nations.

<https://www.un.org/en/high-level-week-2024>

Friday 27th September

Human-caused climate change made the “unprecedented” wildfires that spread across Brazil’s Pantanal wetlands in June 2024 between four and five times more likely, according to a new rapid attribution study. South America’s Pantanal – the world’s largest tropical wetland – experienced exceptionally hot, dry and windy conditions in June, causing blazes in the region to soar. The World Weather Attribution (WWA) service finds that the month was the hottest, driest and windiest year in the 45-year record. The team conducted an attribution study to find the “fingerprint” of climate change on these weather conditions. They find that, in a world without climate change, these conditions would be very rare – occurring only once every

161 years. In today’s climate, which has already warmed by 1.2C above pre-industrial temperatures as a result of human-caused warming, these conditions are a one-in-35 year event.

<https://www.carbonbrief.org/climate-change-made-the-supercharged-2024-pantanal-wildfires-40-more-intense/>

Saturday 28th September

In early August, several youth organizations affiliated with Muhammadiyah, Indonesia’s second-largest Islamic organization, released a public petition calling on its leadership to cancel its plans to operate coal mines, writes Asad Asnawi. The decision by the Muhammadiyah leadership board was made in July after Indonesia’s president, Joko Widodo, amended mining rules to enable religious organizations to enter the mining industry. Grassroots activists and some senior member of the organization told Mongabay the move threatens to undermine Muhammadiyah’s extensive charity and advocacy work, in addition to environmental commitments the group made in recent years.

<https://www.carbonbrief.org/five-charts-how-climate-change-is-driving-up-food-prices-around-the-world/>

Tuesday 3rd September

[Last month] marked the first anniversary of one of the most significant victories for the global climate movement in the past decade. On August 20, 2023 millions of voters in the South American nation of Ecuador overwhelmingly voted to halt oil drilling in the Amazon’s Yasuni National Park, one of earth’s most biodiverse places. To date, the Ecuadorian government has failed to respect the people’s democratic will and to meet the 12-month deadline for state-run oil company Petroecuador to cease oil activities in Yasuní, close the wells, dismantle infrastructure, and restore the area... Despite being the first country in the world to enshrine the Rights of Nature into its Constitution, Ecuador continues to build on its alarming track record for disregarding legally binding sentences in landmark cases for rainforest protection, with Yasuni being one example among several. Other unresolved cases include the

Waorani people of Pastaza and the Kichwa people of Sarayaku who won battles against oil drilling and the A’i Cofan of Sinangoe who triumphed against gold mining interests.

<https://amazonfrontlines.org/chronicles/one-year-on-ecuadors-failure-to-comply-with-yasuni-victory-undermines-democracy-indigenous-rights-climate-justice/>

Wednesday 4th September

Tonight is another workshop evening, at 7pm, Environmental Restorative Justice with Tanya Jones. Tanya lives in Dundee and works as a researcher on justice issues for Green MSP Maggie Chapman in the Scottish Parliament. She is also completing a PhD in global restorative climate justice and has written a chapter for the *Palgrave Handbook of Environmental Restorative Justice*. Before coming to Scotland, Tanya lived for 12 years in Northern Ireland where she was active in campaigning against fracking and in peace and reconciliation work. She is the book review editor for Green Christian magazine and is involved in the Borrowed Time initiative. On

zoom, and free, but register using the link below:

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

Thursday 5th September

Sainsbury's has committed to planting an additional 1.5 million trees by 2025, many of which will be added to farms within its supply chain, in a bid to enhance climate resilience, soil health and biodiversity, writes Sarah George. The supermarket has announced the commitment, taking its total tree-planting pledge through to 2025 to 6.5 million trees, as it marks 20 years of partnership with The Woodland Trust. Since the start of the partnership, Sainsbury's has raised more than £14m for the Woodland Trust through a 1p contribution from every 12-pack of eggs sold, plus contributions from the sales of apples, greetings cards and carrier bags... Now, Sainsbury's and the Woodland Trust want to support more farmers across the retailer's broader supply chains to adopt agroforestry i.e. integrating trees, hedges and shrubs on their land... Farmers are being assured that they

can integrate trees, hedges and/or shrubs while maintaining their yields and other 'essential land services'. They will have access to land-mapping tools from Land App and the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology to help them balance habitat creation and food production. <https://www.edie.net/sainsburys-increases-2025-tree-planting-target-with-focus-on-british-farms/>

Friday 6th September

[In mid August] six young climate activists, Natur og Ungdom (Nature and Youth) and Greenpeace Nordic submitted additional arguments to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in Strasbourg, France. In 2021 the parties filed an application to the ECtHR, challenging Norway's fossil fuel expansion in the Arctic region. Europe's highest court for human rights will assess whether Norway's fossil fuel expansion in the Arctic region violates human rights and a ruling could be issued later this year. The organisations initially sued the Norwegian State before domestic courts in 2016, arguing that its decision to expand oil and gas extraction in the Arctic region in the midst of the climate crisis is in

poverty and inequality, while also tackling the impacts of ongoing conflicts and global health crises. This Summit aims to reaffirm commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the United Nations Charter. The Summit will result in a negotiated Pact for the Future, <https://www.un.org/en/high-level-week-2024>

Tuesday 24th September

Starting today, as part of the 79th UN General Assembly, world leaders will gather to engage in the annual high-level General Debate under the theme, "*Leaving no one behind: acting together for the advancement of peace, sustainable development and human dignity for present and future generations*". Heads of State and Government and ministers will explore solutions to intertwined global challenges to advance peace, security, and sustainable development. <https://www.un.org/en/high-level-week-2024>

Wednesday 25th September

Also, as part of the 79th UN General Assembly, today sees the High-Level

Meeting on Sea-Level Rise [which] will convene global leaders, experts, and stakeholders to address the urgent and escalating threat of rising sea levels. This meeting will focus on building common understanding, mobilizing political leadership, and promoting multisectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration and international cooperation towards the objective of "*addressing the threats posed by sea-level rise*". Participants will work towards developing comprehensive solutions and actionable commitments to combat sea-level rise, ensuring a resilient and sustainable future including for small island developing states and low-lying coastal areas. <https://www.un.org/en/high-level-week-2024>

Thursday 26th September

Today at the UN General Assembly are two the High-level Meetings, one on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and the other on the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The first presents an opportunity for countries and stakeholders to renew efforts and accelerate progress in combating the growing threat of AMR. The second is the annual

Saturday 21st September

Today is World Cleanup Day and also Zero Emissions Day. It is also a day of action to call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation treaty. After decades of climate negotiations, fossil fuels have finally been dragged centre stage. Despite this, many governments are still approving new coal, oil and gas projects — threatening our chances of limiting warming to 1.5°C. It's crystal clear: we now need a concrete, binding plan to end the expansion of new coal, oil and gas projects and manage a global transition away from fossil fuels. To protect people from the threat fossil fuels pose to our climate, our health and our future, a growing bloc of 13 countries are seeking a negotiating mandate for a Fossil Fuel Treaty.

<https://fossilfuel treaty.org/>

Sunday 22nd September

God of Light, Life and Love: Help us to seek and find your presence in all Creation. Help us to understand the roots of the ecological crisis and give us the wisdom to live resiliently in harmony with your Creation.

Keep us firm in the faith that the gift of life in all its fullness is for all Creation.

Help us to maintain hope that your reign of love is manifested in our common love for you, for ourselves, and for our neighbour - both human and non-human.

Taken from the prayer in the Season of Creation Celebration Guide
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12M3weSD4D2mvjCil3Mxen3JQZ5Rrazz3/view>

Monday 23rd September

The 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly [is on at the moment, and it] marks a crucial milestone in the global effort to accelerate progress towards the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Heads of State and Government will gather at UN Headquarters in New York...to address the critical challenges and gaps in global governance exposed by recent global shocks. The highly anticipated Summit of the Future, held [yesterday and today as part of the UNGA], underscores the urgent need for enhanced international cooperation to address pressing challenges such as climate change,

breach of the Norwegian constitution. After the Norwegian Supreme Court majority ruled against them in 2020, six young climate activists, Nature and Youth and Greenpeace Nordic filed an application to the ECtHR.

<https://www.greenpeace.org/international/press-release/69336/youth-and-environmentalists-climate-lawsuit-against-arctic-oil-progresses-in-the-european-court-of-human-rights/>

Saturday 7th September

The new, rapidly growing, youth gaming market is being targeted by big oil and major climate polluters, writes Andrew Simms. ... Fossil fuel companies, car manufacturers, the military, and even petrostates are all spending heavily in esports [a multiplayer video game played competitively for spectators, typically by professional gamers] to bolster reputations among younger audiences. Dozens of significant deals have been struck between the esports industry and high-carbon polluters since 2017. At the same time regulation is lagging behind the growth and development of esports, leaving young adults vulnerable to misleading messaging from polluting sponsors. The findings come after

UN Secretary General, António Guterres, called for "*tech companies to stop taking fossil fuel advertising*" during a major speech where he accused fossil fuel companies of "*distorting the truth, deceiving the public and sowing doubt*". Younger audiences have the most at stake in terms of the worsening climate crisis, and will of course have future leaders and activists among their ranks.

<https://theecologist.org/2024/aug/24/big-oil-griefing-young-gamers>

Sunday 8th September

The Affirmation of Faith
We have faith
in one God, one Source of all life,
one Ground of the whole Earth,
who created all things good.
And we have faith
in Christ, in whom we have been
shown the special role of humanity to
bear God's likeness in working and
caring for Creation,
in seeking to understand her
mysteries and powers,
in working with these powers
for the wellbeing of life on Earth.
And we have faith

in God's Spirit who leads us to a meek, unselfish and compassionate life-style.

So that the Earth is inherited in peace,
her life is transformed for all creatures and her bounty shared justly.
So be it. Amen.

(Adapted From India. Source: Sinfonia Oecumenica, Gütersloher Verlag-shaus, Gütersloh 1998. Reproduced by ECEN for Creation Time 2003)
Taken from the prayer in the Season of Creation Celebration Guide
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12M3weSD4D2mvjCil3Mxen3JQZ5Rrazz3/view>

Monday 9th September

Tomorrow the next Deep Waters course starts. People often have complex emotional responses to the climate crisis, including grief, anger, blame, and many others. Deep Waters aims to help people navigate these responses through a Christian lens of love, wisdom, and justice, and to lead people into a place of active hope. Pray for the organisers

and the participants, that they find the peace and hope that they need.

To join, see link below:

<https://borrowedtime.earth/programmes-of-mutual-support/deep-waters-programme/>

Tuesday 10th September

Whistleblowers speaking to Mongabay have reported instances of poaching over decades in Tanzania linked to a luxury hunting firm catering to the United Arab Emirates' elites and royals. The insiders are from Ortello — sometimes spelled Otterlo — Business Corporation (OBC), which operates shoots in Loliondo, part of Tanzania's northern Ngorongoro district. Interviews with the sources, who requested pseudonyms due to safety concerns, provide a rare insight into OBC-organized hunting expeditions, which attracted members of UAE royalty and their associates at least once or twice a year from the 1990s until as late as 2016. They report that some of these trips culminated in live animals being flown abroad. Exports of live wildlife have been outlawed in Tanzania since 2016 to protect rare animals and birds. In 2022, lawmakers swiftly

comparable study on an older, mature forest (an Australian eucalyptus forest) found no link between extra CO₂ and tree growth. [The] work shows the link really does exist – at least in some common broadleaf forests.

<https://theconversation.com/wepumped-extra-co-into-an-oak-forest-and-discovered-trees-will-be-woodier-in-future-236617>

Thursday 19th September

New research has revealed that the number of net-zero projects and the achievement of sustainability targets in the built environment sector are on the rise, writes Sidhi Mittal ... The research, now in its fourth iteration, surveyed nearly 600 professionals in the built environment to assess attitudes and practices around sustainability. Key findings from the report include:

- 70% of construction projects now incorporate sustainability targets.
- 43% of industry professionals report successfully achieving sustainability goals, up from a third in 2022.
- A 13% increase in net-zero projects compared to the previous year's report.

- 64% of professionals have worked on a net-zero project in the past year, a significant rise from 49% in 2022.
- 16% growth in the number of organisations measuring their carbon footprint, with 70% now tracking emissions.
- 14% rise in firms setting carbon reduction goals, with 76% now doing so, compared to 62% previously.
- 53% of companies have adopted carbon offsetting strategies, up from 38% in 2021.

<https://www.edie.net/sustainability-targets-surge-in-britains-built-environment-sector-research-finds/>

Friday 20th September

Sunday is the start of New York Climate Week. The theme this year is *It's Time*, which highlights the urgent need for progress, to triple renewable capacity and double energy efficiency. ... At the Opening Ceremony, climate leaders will come together to discuss their plans and the steps taken to meet this moment and accelerate progress on global climate action goals.

<https://www.climateweeknyc.org/about-us>

We may now be seeing a turning point,” said Yuhe Gao, project lead for Greenpeace East Asia, in the press release.

<https://www.ecowatch.com/china-coal-plant-approvals-2024.html>

Tuesday 17th September

Road verges should be used as wildlife corridors to increase biodiversity, says campaign group Nature 2030 in its new ‘*Restoring a Green Britain*’ report. Brendan Montague writes: the report launch, supported by global charity Plantlife, comes as the new Labour government has set nature recovery as one of the five priorities for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Road verges have particular significance in Britain’s efforts to reverse its biodiversity decline, making up nearly 45 percent of the UK’s total plant diversity and being home to 87 species threatened with extinction... Pledging his support for the new report, Chris Packham, broadcaster and activist, said: *“With every mow and every cut, we are destroying the essential habitats, food and carbon-capturing environments needed for our country to thrive. Councils are at*

the heart of change in our communities. However, they are facing this battle for biodiversity alone. The report by Nature 2030 gives councils the confidence and support they need to implement necessary change.”

<https://theecologist.org/2024/aug/15/road-verges-can-save-britains-biodiversity>

Wednesday 18th September

Oak trees accumulate more wood when there is more carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere, writes Rob MacKenzie. That’s the key finding from [a] new study, carried out in a long-established forest in Staffordshire, England, that [was] turned into a huge field experiment by injecting with extra CO₂. After [the researchers] increased CO₂ levels to what will be the planetary level in the 2050s, trees took more of it from the atmosphere and their wood production increased by 10%. In some ways, this result is reassuring. We know that more CO₂ in the atmosphere can often help plants grow bigger and faster, since photosynthesis captures the carbon from which plants are largely made. However, until now, the only

reversed a controversial decision to lift the ban that had been in place for six years. The sources’ testimony comes as Tanzanian authorities have served waves of eviction notices affecting Maasai pastoralists in and around Loliondo, as part of efforts to lease 1,500 square kilometers (580 square miles) of ancestral land to OBC.

<https://news.mongabay.com/2024/08/luxury-hunting-firm-linked-to-decades-of-poaching-in-tanzania-whistleblowers-say/>

Wednesday 11th September

As diplomats get ready to restart talks [later this] month over the new UN climate finance target, the question of who should be putting money into the pot looms large over the negotiations writes Matteo Civillini. Most developing countries offer a straightforward answer: keep the status quo, meaning only the countries classified as industrialised when the UN climate treaty was adopted in 1992. But this club of developed nations, vocally led by the European Union and the United States, argues that the world has changed dramatically over the past three decades. They now want other

countries that have become wealthier – and more polluting – to pitch in for the post-2025 New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG), set to be agreed at the COP29 climate summit in Baku this November... Switzerland and Canada have been the first nations to propose precise criteria to expand the list of contributors beyond developed countries... Under this measure, Saudi Arabia and Russia would be included. China would too. <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2024/08/16/as-swiss-propose-ways-to-expand-climate-finance-donors-academics-urge-new-thinking/>

Thursday 12th September

Ireland’s greenhouse gas emissions decreased by 6.8 per cent (4.0 Mt CO₂eq) in 2023 with reductions in almost all sectors. This is the lowest that greenhouse gas emissions have been in three decades, and below the 1990 baseline. Emissions data show the largest single year reductions in the energy and agriculture sectors and the lowest level of residential emissions since 1990, while transport emissions were below pre-Covid levels.

- Power generation emissions decreased by 21.6 per cent (2.2 Mt CO₂eq)
- Agriculture emissions decreased by 4.6 per cent (1.0 Mt CO₂eq)
- Residential emissions decreased by 7.1 per cent (0.4 Mt CO₂eq)
- Transport emissions increased marginally by 0.3 per cent (0.03 Mt CO₂eq)
- Emissions per capita decreased from 11.4 tonnes CO₂eq/person to 10.4 tonnes CO₂eq/person in 2023.

<https://www.epa.ie/news-releases/news-releases-2024/irelands-greenhouse-gas-emissions-in-2023-lowest-in-three-decades-.php>

Friday 13th September

If we changed the world's consumption patterns to focus more on plants and less on meat, we could reduce global emissions by almost 20%, a new study shows. Emma Bryce continues: crucially, this reduction would be driven by changes in the way the world's wealthiest eat. In fact, high earners changing their diets would free up enough emissions to offset the rising output from the world's poorest as

they start to eat more in line with global recommendations for a more balanced diet. The study, published in *Nature Climate Change*, departs from other studies that consider dietary impact only at the country level: this study considers that there can be huge discrepancies in income within nations, which may drive very divergent eating patterns.

<https://www.anthropocenemagazine.org/2024/08/changing-how-wealthy-people-eat-would-free-up-twice-the-emissions-needed-for-the-diets-of-poor-populations-to-grow/>

Saturday 14th September

For several years, plastic pollution has been a major issue raised at the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) and other global fora. In March 2022, a historical resolution was adopted at the 5th session of the United Nations Environment Assembly – End plastic pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument (UNEA 5/14), recognizing that *“the high and rapidly increasing levels of plastic pollution represent a serious environmental problem at a global scale, negatively impacting the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable*

development”. It mandated the UN Environment Programme Executive Director to convene an International Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop and adopt a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastics. This landmark decision thus launched the process towards a global plastics treaty, which should be developed by the end of 2024.

The next INC (INC-5) is in Korea in November this year
<https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/resources/updates/road-to-plastics-inc-5/>

Sunday 15th September

To hope and act with Creation

God of the land, the sea, the sky:
Creator of all that is seen and unseen.

Open our hearts to the rhythm of Creation in the swells of the ocean, the movements of air and wind, the breath of all living things.

Open our eyes to the fragile beauty of the biodiversity of which we are a part.

Open our ears to the sounds of life around us.

Open our minds to the awareness of our deep relationship with all your Creation.

Taken from the prayer in the Season of Creation Celebration Guide
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12M3weSD4D2mvjCil3Mxen3JQZ5Rrazz3/view>

Monday 16th September

The first half of 2024 saw new coal-fired power plant approvals fall significantly in China, a new report by Greenpeace East Asia said... Cristen Hemingway Jaynes continues: an analysis of project documents found that, from January to June, 14 new coal plants had been approved, with at least 10.34 gigawatts (GW) of total capacity. That reflects a 79.5 percent decrease from 50.4 GW during the same time period last year, a press release from Greenpeace East Asia said. *“China has pumped the brakes on coal so far in 2024. Wind and solar expansion continues to be strong. Since 2022, we saw a troubling trend of coal approvals increasing despite renewable energy growth which should displace coal.*