
Prayer guide for the care of creation



September 2010

"Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain.
Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain."
(Psalm 127.1)

"If God did not continue to exert his creative will at every moment, the universe
would immediately lapse into non-being; nothing could exist for a second if God
did not will it to be.

(Kallistos Ware)

"I regard my research as a loving duty to seek the truth in all things, in so far as
God has granted."

(Nicholas Copernicus)



Wednesday 1st September

Today marks the beginning of Time for Creation – the period until October 4th when churches everywhere are called to focus on the protection of God's creation and the promotion of sustainable lifestyles. Prayers, sermon notes and other materials can be found at:

www.ctbi.org.uk/creationtime

Thursday 2nd September

The world has been shocked by the suffering of millions through flooding in Pakistan, China, North Korea and elsewhere. None of this can be firmly laid at the door of climate change, though climate scientists have warned for many years that extreme weather events such as flooding would result from rising temperatures. Longer-term results such as the melting of glaciers in South America have received less publicity. Experts predict that the majority of Peru's glaciers will disappear within 5 years, leading to a severe lack of water for drinking, industry, hydroelectricity and farming. Tearfund is among the charities helping communities to adapt to the changing climate.

Friday 3rd September

Bristol, Manchester and several London boroughs (representing 5 million people) have pledged to cut local carbon emissions by at least 40% by 2020. The benefits include:

- Well-insulated, energy-efficient homes
- Improved public transport
- Cleaner, greener energy.

It is vital that other local authorities adopt Local Carbon Budgets. FoE is asking us all to press our MPs to promote Local Carbon Budgets.

www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/climate/press_for_change/local_carbon_budgets_23718

Saturday 4th September

Peaceful demonstrations take place today at London's City Airport and Manchester Airport under the banner "End Domestic Flights Now" to highlight the climate emergency and the need to avoid high-emission forms of transport when viable alternatives exist. Currently aviation carries no obligation to bear the burden of emissions reductions which other sectors are bound to observe. www.campaigncc.org

Sunday 5th September

Father, forgive us for our greed and for the part we have played in so much destruction in your world. Forgive us for the way we have exploited the world's resources for ourselves while so many lack the basic necessities. Create in us a new heart and a new determination to follow a lifestyle that is gentle to the earth and just to the poor.

Monday 6th September

The Carbon Reduction Commitment requires all 4,000 British businesses to register with the Environment Agency by September 30th, but, according to PriceWaterhouseCoopers, only 1,200 have so far registered. "Missing the deadline will cost £5,000 plus £500 a day up to a maximum of £45,000. Companies who plan ahead and perform well could see their energy costs reduced by over 8% by 2015. For a company spending £1 million a year on energy costs, this would save over £85,000 in 2015 alone."

Tuesday 7th September

The world's biggest tidal turbine has been unveiled at the European Marine Energy Centre in Orkney. Acting like an underwater wind

turbine measuring 18 metres across and weighing 130 tonnes, it will when installed later this year generate 1 MW of electricity – enough for more than a thousand homes. With a low rotation speed, it is designed for the roughest seas found off the Scottish coast.

Wednesday 8th September

A new website is helping to cut landfill by offering instant valuations, cash and free collection for all types of electrical gadgets, including laptops, MP3 players, games consoles, mobiles, digital cameras, sat-navs, power tools and vacuum cleaners. For every basket of goods recycled, at least 25p. will help the Woodland Trust to plant native trees across the UK.

Website: www.weeebuy.co.uk

Thursday 9th September

The Scottish Government, Microsoft UK, Vodafone UK, Marks & Spencer and Sky have all signed WWF's One-in-Five Challenge – a programme which helps companies to cut 20% off their business flights within 5 years. A Scottish minister said: "Our air travel costs dropped by 24% in the period July-September 2009 compared to the previous six months. Our carbon emissions levy means that whenever a minister or staff member travels by air, we pay a carbon levy per journey to offset the emissions. Instead of travelling to meetings in the UK, we increasingly use videoconferencing when appropriate."

Friday 10th September

Figures from OFWAT show that just over a third of British households are on a water meter. WWF comments: "We pay for most things by quantity because it seems the fairest way. So it's ludicrous that most households have no idea how much water they're using – or wasting. Our

water charging system isn't just unfair and outdated. It's also piling huge pressure on our rivers and wildlife. A third of our river catchments are facing damage because we simply take too much of their water – a problem that's set to get worse with climate change and a rising population. Universal metering won't just make householders more aware of their water use, it will also give suppliers a better understanding of the demand, and so lead to more innovative demand reduction schemes." The Government's new Water White Paper is due out this autumn. Let's ensure that it includes a requirement for every home to have a water meter by 2020.

Saturday 11th September

According to a WWF report on "Toxic Fuels 2010", British oil and gas companies are deliberately not disclosing to investors the huge costs they will have to pay in future to continue emitting CO2 and other greenhouse gases. A Trucost report "Carbon Risks in UK Equity Funds" analysed £206 billion-worth of assets managed by 118 UK pension funds. Based on the current emissions of those companies, the annual cost of carbon emissions could rise to £7.5 billion at a carbon price of £57 per tonne if emissions regulations continue to tighten. BP's carbon liabilities, at a carbon price of only £12 per tonne, could be £7 billion for their proved reserves. Shell's carbon liabilities at the same carbon price could be £6 billion, excluding their tar sands reserves.

Sunday 12th September

Creator God, we commend to your care all the scientists and others who are engaged in finding new sources of energy, all who are seeking solutions to environmental problems and ways to provide enough food and water for our growing populations. Please be with them as

they search for solutions to the many environmental problems that the world faces.

Monday 13th September

The Canadian tar sands – a mixture of bitumen, sand clay and water now being exploited to produce synthetic oil – makes Canada second only to Saudi Arabia for its oil reserves. But production of oil from tar sands is a hugely expensive, energy-intensive and destructive process, producing three times as much greenhouse gas emissions as conventional oil production. According to the FoE report:

“Companies with big tar sands investments risk future losses by focussing on a business area that is only profitable if emitting carbon is cheap, oil prices are stable at a high level and there is a large market for the oil produced.”

Now an American-backed plan to extract oil shale from a vast deposit in the Adullam valley, west of Jerusalem, is opposed by the Israeli Union for Environmental Defence, which is seeking an injunction in the Supreme Court.

Tuesday 14th September

The Republic of Ireland could generate all the energy it needs if a plan proposed by Natural Hydro Energy is adopted. The €345 billion project comprises a 2 gigawatt peak power plant including 18 onshore wind farms, a hydro station and grid transmission connections. Coastal valleys from Donegal to Kerry would be flooded to provide hydro-electric power as a backup to the wind turbines, which generate the electricity used to pump seawater up to storage reservoirs. When the wind drops, the water is released to drive the hydro-electric turbines. Potential sites will be surveyed over the next 15 months. Question: Is there any limit to the lengths humanity will go to seek new sources of energy?

Wednesday 15th September

A €800,000 Millennium Technology prize has gone to Professor Michael Gratzel of Lausanne Federal Technology Institute for inventing a photo-voltaic cell in which the PV particles are so small that they don't scatter light. These microscopic sun-traps can collect light from all angles and can be incorporated into window panes, making heavy roof-top solar panels obsolete. Other innovative PV cells can be made from crystalline silicon capable of being coated onto surfaces and far cheaper to make than current models.

Thursday 16th September

A Greenpeace ship, the “Esperanza”, has set off from London on a voyage to confront the oil industry's reckless pursuit of the last drops of oil on the planet. “A handful of powerful companies are taking huge risks with the natural world and our climate instead of developing the clean tools we need to fight climate change and end our crippling addiction to fossil fuels.” Greenpeace supporters are lobbying DECC Secretary Chris Huhne to impose a moratorium on deep-sea drilling in UK coastal waters – as the US has done in the Gulf of Mexico. As EU Energy Commissioner Gunther Oettinger said: “Any responsible government would practically freeze new permits for drilling.”

Friday 17th September

Waiting lists for allotments in some parts of the country now exceed ten years. The Local Government Association is calling for a change in the rules to enable the Landfill Communities Fund to be used to fund new allotments on disused land near landfill sites. This fund, paid for through the Landfill Tax, pays for social and environmental schemes near rubbish dumps, but specifically excludes allotments. In the last

30 years some 20,000 allotments have been lost – an area three times the size of Hyde Park. “Urgent action must be taken to meet the growing demand and allow councils to use money raised from the landfill tax to bring derelict land and empty spaces back into use.”

Saturday 18th September

“Growing Organically: Using Church Lands as a model for environmental change” is the title of a day conference from 10 am to 4.40 pm today at Carrs Lane URC Church, Birmingham B4 7SX.

Keynote speakers: James Jones Bishop of Liverpool and Sir Ghillean Prance, Science Director of the Eden Project. There will be workshops on churchyard wildlife, practical management issues and some thinking on why Christians should concern themselves over “God’s Acre”. For details, contact: kajsa.britts@arocha.org or ring Eco-congregation on 0114 2636421.

Sunday 19th September.

Car-free Sunday.

Help us, dear Father, to see the connections between our use of transport, energy and our buying habits, with the evidences of climate change that are forcing themselves on the world’s attention. May we not be afraid to stand up and take a lead in making the lifestyle changes which we are all being called to make.

Monday 20th September

Recent flooding in the UK has led the Environment Agency to promote sustainable drainage systems, such as green roofs, to help manage surface water runoff. These typically consist of a carpet of plants supported by lightweight growing media and overlying a drainage layer. 14% of flat roofs in Germany

now support green roofs. The University of Sheffield has published data on the impact of excessive rainfall, leading to flooding, in June 2007 on its experimental green roof, showing that green roofs can provide significant stormwater retention and attenuation in the UK climate. Concrete roofs have significant capacity for retrofitting, while lightweight steel- and timber-framed structures may require a structural survey (CIWEM Water & Environment Journal Vol.24 No.3)

Tuesday 21st September

Tomorrow church bells will ring across Britain as the UN General Assembly for the first time discusses the human crisis caused by the loss of global biodiversity. The debate will focus on the fact that plants, animals and humans are closely linked and that the loss of one species through human actions can have knock-on effects over many others. Next month the 193 signatories to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity will meet at Nagoya, Japan, to make binding agreements to stem the loss of biodiversity. For further information ring Rachel Harden (CofE) on 020 789 81459 or Marie Clements (International Year of Biodiversity) on 020 7942 6655. Website: www.christian-ecology.org.uk/bellringing-for-biodiversity.htm

Wednesday 22nd September

Today at Portland in Dorset, a national demonstration against agrofuels takes place at the site of a proposed palm oil-burning agrofuel power station. If approved, it will increase by one-third our imports of palm oil for energy use. An even bigger palm oil-burning power station is planned for Bristol. Both projects are subsidised by our Government since, strangely, agrofuels are classified as “renewable energy”. In effect, the Government is subsidising massive deforestation in South East Asia and elsewhere,

thereby accelerating the destruction of rainforest and further destabilisation of the global climate. For details, ring 0207 833 9311.

Thursday 23rd September

Water desalination plants have been widely used in Australia and elsewhere to cope with water shortages. A Monash University study finds that a planned A\$3.1 billion desalination plant in Victoria State would be greenhouse gas-neutral (GGN) only if the annual growth in GGN electricity generation (currently from wind turbines) grew at least 6-9% up to 2070. The study recommends:

Measures for collection of stormwater, re-use of wastewater and use of groundwater, plus

- 1) A government programme to ensure long-term GGN energy generation;
- 2) A programme of energy conservation to slow down growth in electricity consumption;
- 3) Measures to offset the greenhouse gas contribution of desalination plants, such as a floating nuclear power-generation and water-desalination unit.

For the rest of us, the study seems to suggest that water desalination eases one problem (water shortages) while aggravating another (climate change).

Friday 24th September

Intensive agriculture is currently dependent on fossil fuels for fertilisers, tractors, transport and refrigeration. Four-fifths of us live in urban areas, so urban agriculture makes good sense. The UK company Valcent is building a 100 sq. metre glasshouse farm at Paignton Zoo where leaf vegetables are stacked in trays eight layers high, which are continually rotated to ensure adequate access to air and sunlight. The plants are grown in nutrient-rich solutions which, if not

taken up by the plants, can be collected and re-circulated, so reducing usage and minimising waste.

The charity Sustain has launched a programme called "Capital Growth" to create 2,012 new food growing spaces in London, encompassing "all sorts of nooks and crannies" from school grounds and canal banks to roof terraces.

Saturday 25th September

Discarded plastic bags pose a threat to livestock and wildlife, which may be suffocated or poisoned by eating them. The Indian state of Rajasthan has imposed a total ban on the manufacture, storage, import, sale and transportation of polythene and plastic bags, following concerns that they block sewers, drainage systems and water distribution pipes, so creating breeding grounds for malarial mosquitoes. (Source: Wells for India newsletter)

Sunday 26th September

Father, we lay before you the needs of the world's poor, the need for food, clean water, sanitation and fuel. Help us to stand with them in the search for renewable resources that do not destroy your creation. Empower those who are working on gentle technologies appropriate to small communities and give to industrial leaders the grace and integrity to promote such developments; in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

Monday 27th September

Last March, eleven of the world's leading sustainable banks, including Triodos, met in Bangladesh to set up a Global Alliance for Banking on Values, to create a positive alternative to a global financial system in crisis, and to unite in a common determination to use money as a tool for enhancing quality of life.

The banks ranged from a green bank in the US to a Mongolian microfinance institution with total assets of over \$10 billion serving 7 million customers. They pledged to reach the lives of 1 billion people by 2020 by empowering entrepreneurs in the developing world and financing renewable energy projects to meet global power needs. See www.gabv.org and www.triodos.co.uk

Tuesday 28th September

Currently nobody seems able to tell householders how much energy solar panels or ground-source heat pumps can provide and what payback time to expect. A study by the Energy Saving Trust called "Location, Location, Location" has shown that the UK has the potential to generate 3,250 GWh of electricity from domestic wind turbines alone. Now the EST is carrying out similar studies on ground-source heat pumps, solar water heating, solid wall insulation, advanced heating controls and LED lighting, to identify technologies particularly suited to the domestic sector and to enable householders to access solid data to encourage take-up. www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Wednesday 29th September

A study for Ecover has found that, in some cases, the packaging of a product has as big a carbon impact as the product itself, and that plastics sourced from fossil fuels have 75% more embedded carbon than plant-based plastics. In the region of Sao Paulo, the first 20,000 recyclable bottles made from sugarcane residues will be produced this year. Ecover aims to use a 30:70 mix of renewable and oil-based plastics for all its bottles from 2011. Its refillable bottles were launched in health food shops last year and will soon be distributed more widely.

Thursday 30th September

Forum for the Future's new report "Growing Pains" warns that the UK will struggle to meet the needs of a population predicted to reach 70 million by 2030. "When rich countries discuss population control, a commonly voiced fear is the cost of an ageing population. But, as Adair Turner, former Chair of the Pensions Commission, pointed out, raising children represents a far greater cost to families and to the state than caring for the frail and dying." Globally, up to 40% of pregnancies are unplanned, yet improved access to contraceptives and advice in Iran, Thailand and Rwanda, for example, has been welcomed by women and has proved successful in reducing growth rates. Rich countries in Europe have a special responsibility. A child born in Europe accounts for eleven times more greenhouse gas emissions than one born in Africa. "Ultimately," writes Sara Parkin, "With increasing pressures on resources such as land, food and water, planning our family is a personal responsibility, as well as a global dilemma."

Sources:

Green Futures

CIWEM

Wells for India

www.edie.net

Additional Prayers

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by [email](#) (free), please email prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk

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