



Prayer guide for the care of creation

March 2010

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."
(Proverbs 3.5-6)

"In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried, and were saved; in you they trusted, and were not put to shame. All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him. For dominion belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations."
(Psalm 22. 4-5 & 27-28)

"Act as if everything depended on you: wait as if everything depended on God."
(St. Ignatius Loyola)

"God does nothing in the world redemptively except through prayer."
(Wesley)



Monday 1st March

The world's media have pounced on errors in IPCC and UEA reporting to cast doubt on the whole science of climate change. Lord Chris Smith, chairman of the Environment Agency, comments: "Let's not allow one or two errors to undermine the overwhelming strength of evidence that has been painstakingly accumulated, peer reviewed, tested and tested again, and that shows that our emissions of greenhouse gases are having a serious impact on the earth's atmosphere, and that as a result climate change is happening and will accelerate. . . We need to take the argument back to the sceptics and make the powerful, convincing and necessary case for climate change much clearer to everyone."

Tuesday 2nd March

Despite the disappointing outcome of the Copenhagen summit, six nations – the UK, USA, Norway, France, Japan and Australia – have pledged \$3.5 billion to support REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation & Degradation) activity between 2010 and 2012. The Prince's Rainforest Foundation is working on a consensus to finance rainforest nations by the Bonn UNFCCC meeting in June. It is working with the agricultural sector in those nations to provide finance for farmers for a shift in agricultural production to activities that do not entail destruction of forests. For more details, visit: www.rainforestsos.org

Wednesday 3rd March

Emissions from UK households are 5% higher than 10 years ago and are not falling. The Existing Homes Alliance (ExHA) 2010 manifesto from key players in the housing and construction industry seeks a Government commitment to a

national retrofit programme with these key demands:

- All homes to have a whole house retrofit by 2030
- £6 billion a year should be invested in retrofitting the existing housing stock
- A roadmap should set out minimum regulatory standards and voluntary aspirational standards for the energy performance of homes
- Energy Performance Certificates should be given greater prominence in marketing homes, to ensure energy efficiency is reflected in house prices
- Financing mechanisms should be made available to homeowners to cover the upfront costs of retrofitting
- A support and advice programme should engage homeowners in using less energy and seeking higher EPC rating.

Thursday 4th March

90% of the £1.75 billion contract for a giant windfarm off the Kent coast is going to foreign contractors. A Lib Dem manifesto calls for a £400 million investment in former shipyards to convert them into wind turbine factories, instead of seeing the turbines built abroad due to "out-of-date facilities". Nick Clegg MP said: "Our plans would act as a huge boost for Britain's budding wind industry and create nearly 60,000 jobs in many shipyard cities where unemployment is a huge problem. New off-shore turbines, with blades the size of the London Eye, need to be built and launched from modern docks, so we need to upgrade our shipyards to take advantage of this massive opportunity."

Friday 5th March

Redhill and Merstham in Surrey have launched a campaign supported by the Global Action Plan to encourage nearly 1,000 homeowners to take control of their energy and water bills by installing free energy monitors and energy-saving products, free water-efficient devices, aerated showerheads, shower adaptors and tap inserts fitted in bathrooms and kitchens. The campaign, known as "Tap into Savings" will be rolled out later this year in parts of the Midlands and East Anglia involving more than 10,000 people. Surrey residents are encouraged to join Ecoteams – an environmental version of Neighbourhood Watch – to develop ways of saving water and energy, wasting less and recycling more.

Saturday 6th March

Today from 9.30 to 4.30 a conference on Food Futures meets at Redcliffe College, Gloucester in partnership with the John Ray Initiative, CMS and the Agricultural Christian Fellowship. The speakers include Rev. Dr. Mike Rayner, Director of the British Heart Foundation, Patrick Mulvaney of Practical Action and Ruth Valerio, author "L is for Lifestyle". Workshops cover population, agriculture, food, aid and development. Cost: £35 including lunch. Booking forms can be downloaded from www.redcliffe.org/foodfutures or write to: Mrs D Carter, Redcliffe College, Wotton House, Gloucester GL1 3PT.

Sunday 7th March

Father, we have not been good stewards of the world that you gave us to tend. We confess and repent of the ways in which we have misused your creation. Teach us to treat all your creation

with care, compassion and dignity as the wonderful work of your hands. Amen.

Monday 8th March

Winners of the Low Carbon Communities Challenge have been announced:

- The West Oxford Community Renewables Industrial & Provident Society has been awarded £1.6 million for a range of renewable projects to achieve an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050
- The Ellen Macarthur Foundation is to receive funding to bring the village of Chale Green, Isle of Wight, out of fuel poverty and to reduce consumption of carbon emissions by social improvements, behavioural change and solar PV installations
- A Norfolk County Council project will allow the village of Reepham to reduce its CO2 emissions by 127 tonnes a year through energy efficient renovations, renewables, transport, behavioural changes and food initiatives. This scheme is well supported by the wider community and is replicable throughout Norfolk.

Tuesday 9th March

Other LCCC winners include

- A Community Hub building to be a centre for education on low impact living. The Lammas Low Impact Initiatives, Pembrokeshire, will use a combination of green technologies, permaculture cultivation methods and natural building techniques;

- Transition Streets in Totnes, Devon, whereby 12 streets undertake behavioural changes to qualify for subsidised retrofits, low interest loans for domestic renewables, harnessing feed-in tariffs to enable repayment of the loans.

Wednesday 10th March

A new report from the UK Industry Taskforce on Peak Oil and Energy Security, representing the Virgin Group, Stagecoach, Arup, Scottish & Southern Energy, Solar Century and other key businesses, warns that oil shortages, insecurity of supply and price volatility will destabilise economic, political and social activity potentially by 2015.

Key recommendations include:

- Acceleration of a “green transport revolution” to speed the introduction of low-carbon technology and sustainable biofuels for both private and public transport
- Changes to the power generation and transmission infrastructure to adapt to new demand patterns, price spikes and supply interruptions
- Measures to protect the public, especially the most disadvantaged, from the impact of rising fuel costs on food and other consumer goods.

Policies to address Peak Oil must be a priority for any new government after the election.

Thursday 11th March

A report from Datamonitor finds that Britain needs to build 2½ wind turbines each day to have any chance of reaching its target of deriving 35% of power from wind by 2020.

Currently the rate is 1 turbine every 11 days. Many proposed windfarms are caught up in planning delays or financing difficulties. Vestas, the world’s biggest turbine manufacturer, closed its only UK factory last year and says it will not invest in any UK factory until it is clear how the market will shape up.

Friday 12th March

A 1,200 km. gas pipeline will, when completed in 2012, carry enough Russian gas to supply 26 million homes in Western Europe for 50 years. It will be laid under the Baltic Sea where, during World War II, 50,000 mines were laid by the Russian and German navies – all to be detected and cleared by UK-based Bactec Ltd. using robots. 55 billion cu. metres of gas a year will be supplied to Germany, meeting 70% of the demand, while 4 billion cu. metres a year have been booked for Britain. The project is 51% owned by Russia’s Gazprom and is strenuously opposed by environmental groups who maintain that it will damage the marine ecology.

Saturday 13th March

The Carbon Trust has announced a £22 million Marine Proving Fund to support the development of six marine technologies:

- The Pelamis 750 kw. wave system already operates off Portugal, with a new version to be deployed this summer
- The Aquamarine 1.5 MW. Oyster wave system – a giant hinge that opens and closes with wave movements that drive water pumps that, in turn, drive turbines on land
- The Seagen 1.2 MW. tidal system already operating in Strangford Lough and the Bristol Channel

- Hammerfest Strom UK's 1 MW. tidal system, operating for several years with rotating blades held in place by ballast
- Atlantis 1 MW. tidal bi-directional turbines using high-efficiency blades
- WOITH 1 MW. tidal system already operating off Korea using propellor-style blades to drive turbines.

Most of the schemes will be based at the European Marine Energy Centre in the Orkneys.

Sunday 14th March

Lord, we know that while we in this country have an abundance of good things, much of the world is in terrible want. Give us courage to face these things and to think more deeply about them. May thought lead to action in whatever way is in our power; for the sake of your dear Son, our Saviour.

Monday 15th March

According to the National Grid, biogas brewed from animal manure, food waste and sewage sludge could supply 18% of the UK demand for gas. In Germany there are more than 3,700 biogas plants, employing 10,000 people. The new Renewable Heat Incentive will, from 2011, set a premium for energy companies producing biogas. Centrica, E.O.N. and Scottish & Southern are all exploring biogas projects, while Farmgen Ltd. has unveiled a £30 million investment programme to develop 1,000 small-scale biogas plants in the UK. They could provide a lifeline for hard-pressed UK farmers.

Tuesday 16th March

In April, the Government will unveil a wholesale reform of Britain's energy markets to boost long-

term investment in low-carbon energy sources, including wind parks, nuclear reactors and fossil-fuel stations with carbon-capture technology. New "capacity payments" will guarantee a return to developers of low-carbon power sources. Ed Miliband said that the reforms are to help Britain prepare for a doubling of electricity demand by 2050, driven partly by the spread of electric cars and a move from gas to electricity for heating.

Wednesday 17th March

The Environmental Audit Commission in its 3rd report on the EU Emissions Trading Scheme blasts the scheme for being too lax in setting caps on emissions and calls for a significant tightening of the caps. Currently the targets are so easy to meet that industry has no incentive to make investment decisions that would reduce emissions. "The Government should auction as many allowances as possible rather than giving them away free, thereby keeping carbon prices higher by ensuring greater scarcity." The CBI's director-general pointed out that it is the EU that decides on the level to be set for carbon caps.

Thursday 18th March

Britain holds just 16 days-worth of gas storage, compared with 77 days in Germany and 88 days in France. The £600 million Gateway gas storage project, 15 miles off the coast at Barrow-in-Furness, will store 1.5 billion cu. metres of gas in salt caverns 750 m. below the sea bed. But it will not be in service until 2014, and even then will only provide 5 days-worth of gas storage at average consumption levels. Major energy firms such as Centrica, National Grid and Scottish & Southern say that the Crown Estate, which holds a monopoly on sea bed developments, is threatening the financial

viability of projects such as this by tripling its leasing fees.

Friday 19th March

A Grocery Supply Code of Practice came into force last month, designed to promote fairer dealing between supermarkets and their suppliers and to prohibit unfair buying practices such as retrospectively changing the terms of trade. FoE comments:

“The New Code of Practice has the potential to stop supermarkets from abusing farmers, suppliers and ultimately consumers. But without a tough watchdog to police it, the new Code will fail just like the previous one. The Government must urgently establish an independent watchdog that can investigate the supply chain, guarantee farmers’ anonymity and impose fines on supermarkets that breach the Code.”

Saturday 20th March

Today at Tavistock Methodist Church, Devon Churches Green Action has arranged a programme of Worship, Stories, Networking and Planning from 10.30 to 4.00. Speakers include Tim Gorringe and Clare Bryden. The aim is to develop green groups around the county. For bookings, ring Joan Harris on 01392 294940 or email her at joanie.Exeter@anglican.me.uk/events/green-christian-gathering/

Sunday 21st March

Lord of all creation, we thank you for the good earth that supports our lives and for the food it yields for us and all life on earth. May we show our gratitude in our efforts to conserve the vitality of the soil and by our concern for the fair

distribution of the earth’s resources. This we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

Monday 22nd March

WWF’s Year of the Tiger campaign was launched last month to coincide with the start of the Chinese year of the tiger. The world population was 100,00 at the start of the 20th century and is believed to be just 3,200 now. Since 1998, tigers have lost 40% of their former habitat. Three sub-species have gone extinct since the 1940s and the South China tiger has not been seen in the wild since 1985. Current threats to wild populations include:

- Devastation of forests in Indonesia and Malaysia to make way for pulp, paper, palm oil and rubber plantations
- Hundreds of new dams and roads in the Mekong region
- Illegal trafficking in tiger bones, skins and meat
- Poaching of tigers and increased logging affecting Siberian and Amur tigers
- Conflict with the spread of humans in India.

“Tigers are being persecuted across the globe. But 13 countries where tigers survive have pledged to work for a doubling of tiger numbers by 2022. There has never been such an ambitious level of commitment from governments to work to save this iconic species.”

Tuesday 23rd March

Under the EU Large Combustion Plant Directive, Britain is obliged to close six coal-fired and three oil-fired power stations by the end of 2015. These generate about 15% of Britain’s

electricity. Energy generators E.ON and RWE argue that to force the oil-fired plants to close would imperil UK energy supplies, since the first of the new nuclear plants will not be completed before 2018. But any move to obtain exemption from the EU directive would trigger a storm of protest from other energy companies that have invested millions in fitting new equipment to reduce pollution and in bringing wind turbines as the least polluting alternative to fossil fuel combustion.

Wednesday 24th March

Figures from the US Department of Agriculture show that in 2009 a quarter of all maize and other grain crops ended up as biofuel in cars. Ethanol production rose to record levels, thanks to farm subsidies and laws that require vehicles to use increase amounts of biofuels. According to Lester Brown of the Earth Policy Institute: "The grain grown to produce fuel in 2009 was enough to feed 330 million people for a year at average world consumption levels." A 2008 World Bank report concluded that the drive for biofuels by American and European governments had pushed up food prices by 75%. Since then, according to the UN World Food Programme, the number of hungry people in the world has increased to over a billion. In Britain, it has been estimated that this year alone 17% of our wheat crop will be used for bioethanol production.

Thursday 25th March

The University of Aberystwyth has a project to produce bioethanol from sugar-rich varieties of perennial rye grass, using different fertilisers and companion crops such as white clover. The Grassohol Project studies every link in the production chain from the farmer to the biofuel

distributor to develop an environmentally-friendly way of producing biofuel. Early results show that up to 4,500 litres of ethanol a year can be produced from every hectare of rye grass – a figure comparable with other energy crops. But rye grass can be grown on poorer quality land and has significantly lower maintenance costs.

Friday 26th March

Plans to develop biomass-fired plants in Britain will require an increase in timber imports to 50 million tonnes a year by 2015. Yet scientists warn that, without measures to keep forests intact, we stand no chance of avoiding catastrophic climate change. CIWEM supports the Wood Panel Industry Federation in calling for extra incentives for the biomass industry to use waste wood rather than virgin forests as fuel, and for enforcement of the requirement that imported timber products must come from legal and sustainable sources. Nick Reeves, Director of CIWEM, said: "We need a new approach to energy use that is rooted in environmental sustainability. The UK's accessible offshore wind resource is among the greatest in the world and we also have significant tidal and wave resources. So the moral, ethical and environmental case for importing timber to burn in UK power stations deserves forensic examination."

Saturday 27th March.

Today at 8.30 pm – Earth Hour – up to a billion people around the world will switch off all lights as a sign that they are concerned about climate change. For more details, go to: www.earthhour.wwf.org.uk

Sunday 28th March

Dear Father, we acknowledge that too much human effort and ingenuity is directed to the accumulation of money and power in defiance of your commandment to seek first your Kingdom. Help us, as we face the increasing possibility of climate disaster, to repent and turn back to the ancient wisdom contained in your Word, and to resolve to choose life for ourselves, our children and the whole of your wonderful creation. Amen.

Monday 29th March

The New Local Government Network, an independent think tank, welcomes the Shadow Chancellor's pledge to offer incentives to households that recycle more, but believes also that councils should reward whole neighbourhoods that succeed in reducing non-recyclable waste. The rewards should take the form of funding for community projects. This would help build a better sense of community – so essential to an effective response to environmental challenges – and so to provide a more tangible public reward.

Tuesday 30th March

A Low Carbon Community Challenge Award has gone to the Haringey Council and Muswell Hill Low Carbon Zone. The Muswell Hill sustainability group provides strong community leadership with Haringey Council providing support and resources. Projects include solar PV installations on four schools for use as a learning tool and to encourage behavioural change, a mobile sustainable learning facility and a community renewable energy company to secure funding for carbon reduction measures in the community.

Wednesday 31st March

Brian Souter, chief executive of stagecoach, speaking at the launch of "The Oil Crunch: A wake-up call for the UK economy", said that the country was missing a big opportunity to get power from waste cooking oil. Scotland, his home country, had a plentiful supply of chip fat oil and he was working on using this in his buses. "All this stuff goes down the drain, builds up in the pipes and turns to a thick paste like concrete, yet it would make a really good biofuel. If we had a plant in London, we could run a large percentage of the Olympic bus fleet (about 3,000 buses) on the gunge that comes out of our sewers."

Sources:

CIWEM Business Briefing
www.edie.net

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by [email](mailto:prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk) (free), please email prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk For further information and requests for prayer, please write or email: Philip Clarkson Webb, 15 Valley View, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells TN4 0SY Email: pcw@christian-ecology.org.uk

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Picture on front cover: Snowdrops by Poppy Pickard

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