

## Prayer points – February 2021



### Change in the United States

There was no time lost. On the first day of his presidency, President Biden signed an executive order recommitting the United States to the Paris Agreement. Another executive order cancelled the permit for the Keystone XL pipeline. And another asked agencies to review environmental regulations from the Trump administration and take action on those deemed scientifically unsupported.

The push on climate change continued throughout the following days. At the Climate Adaptation Summit, John Kerry, the presidential climate envoy, spoke of US action in terms of ‘humility and ambition’ and promised to pay the US’ \$2 billion pledge to the Green Climate Fund. Throughout the Cabinet, climate policy is being mainstreamed: as one writer put it; “every Cabinet job is about climate change now.” For example, Janet Yellen, nominated to head the Treasury, expressed support for carbon pricing and the Department of the Interior has suspended the granting of permits to drill for oil and gas on federal lands and waters.

These developments are hugely encouraging and have been welcomed worldwide. At the same time, they represent only an opening to a challenging task. Executive orders are not a stable form of governing: if there is to be full progress, the US Congress will need to pass climate legislation. We give thanks for the signs of hope – and pray that God will guide and lead the President, legislators, and the judiciary in the coming months.

### Climate Adaptation summit

The Netherlands has just hosted a virtual summit on Climate Adaptation. It brought together world leaders and local stakeholders. A comprehensive agenda was launched with clear commitments for countries to work in partnership to enable the world to become more resilient to the impact of climate change. Ban Ki-moon, former UN Secretary General said: “*We must remember there is no vaccine to fix our changing climate... Building resilience to climate change impacts is not a nice-to-have, it is a must, if we are to live in a sustainable and secure world.*”

Young people from around the world were also an important part of the summit launching a Global Youth Call to Action on Adaption. By 2025 this aims is to mobilise and equip young people to respond through five pillars; connect, educate, innovate, advocate and participate. The Youth Adaptation Network is working with organisations in over 110 countries. A key goal is to train up a million young people in countries around Africa for work in building up climate resilience. We pray for the success of this and for growing confidence in young people to speak out and demand the action that is so urgently needed.

### Bishop Ellinah Wamukoya

In January came the sad news that Bishop Ellinah of Swaziland died as a result of COVID-19. Elected in 2012, Bishop Ellinah was the first Anglican woman bishop in Africa. She was widely known for her advocacy of the integrity of creation and was both the liaison bishop for the environment in the Province of Southern Africa and Chair of the Anglican Communion Environmental Network. In 2016, she was named by the BBC as one of the world's 100 most inspirational and influential women. We pray for comfort for her family, friends and diocese, and that others will pick up the inspiring baton she extended – and we share here, with thanks for her life and work, the prayer she wrote before the Paris COP.

Loving God,  
Blessed be the work of your hands.  
Your Spirit inspires trees and birds and waves into song and dance.  
It is that same holy wind that breathed on your disciples and on all creation.  
Let your Spirit blow us to creative love and stewardship that shows reverence for your creation.  
Blessed be the works of your hands, O holy One, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
One God, now and forever. Amen

## Climate Emergency Toolkit

A new [Climate Emergency Toolkit](#), created by a partnership of 10 Christian organisations, has been designed to provide churches and Christian groups with a route map to respond to the climate emergency. Step by step, it contains simple but powerful actions that will have an impact within the church, local community and more widely. We pray that many churches and Christian groups will find this useful in planning actions.

## Hereford Cathedral gains 1000<sup>th</sup> Eco Church award

One thousand churches have now gained an Eco award as part of the Eco Church scheme run by A Rocha UK. The awards are given to commend churches that have been working to gain high environmental standards in a range of aspects of church life: worship and teaching, management of buildings, church land, community and global engagement, and lifestyle. The 1000<sup>th</sup> award went to Hereford Cathedral, showing that even complex, historic buildings can become sustainable. We pray for many more churches to sign up for this helpful approach to facilitate churches in their care for creation

## Electric Car take up

Globally, sales of electric cars are increasing beyond expectations. Norway is leading the way: last year more than half of all its car sales were Electric Vehicles, which now make up 15% of all cars on the country's roads.

Norway is on track to meet a government-set goal of banning sales of internal combustion vehicles by 2025. Others are also setting goals: the UK Government plans to end the sale of petrol and diesel cars by 2030, and hybrids by 2035; the states of [California and Massachusetts](#) in the US also have 2035 deadlines. New technologies make these deadlines more likely to be achieved: we are now seeing, for example, the first very fast-charging batteries, and one manufacturer hopes that by 2025, a 5 minute charge will deliver 100 miles of driving. We give thanks for these developments.

As we rejoice in good news, we also pray for the resolution of difficult questions associated with Electric Vehicles. A major issue is that batteries for EVs require rare elements such as lithium and cobalt, whose production often has high environmental and social costs. Another is that large-scale adoption of EVs requires infrastructure investment which is often lacking. Pray for justice in all aspects of EV production, and pray for investment in infrastructure for the common good.

## Show the Love

February sees two campaign focused around love. In the UK, the Climate Coalition's '[Show the Love](#)' asks people to focus on things they care about and want to protect from climate change. In Canada, CPJ's '[For the Love of Creation](#)' campaign calls people to commit to carbon reductions and advocacy. We can pray for these using Green Christian's [collection of Show the Love prayers](#) – including this beautiful blessing by Toni Bennett.

O God who is love

Let love empower our compassion

Let love embrace each and everyone

Let love unite humans and non-human

In restorative co-existence.

O Jesus, love come down to earth

May we honour the earth

May we honour all that dwells in the earth

May we be reconciled with the earth

Become what we are, of the earth.

O Spirit of love

Grant us a spirit of humility

Grant us a spirit of carefulness

Grant us a spirit of friendship

For the earth and all that dwells with us here.

[www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk](http://www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk)