

Prayer points – August 2021



One hundred days to COP26

The 23rd of July was the 100th day before the opening of the UN climate talks in Glasgow – and [numerous organisations drew attention](#) to the progress that needs to happen between now and then. There are concerns that the UK's climate diplomacy as COP host is being undercut by some high-profile issues relating to its domestic and international policy, including, for example, the ongoing questions around [fossil fuel exploration and production](#), as well as cuts in aid – and allegations that climate [finance will be taken from the existing aid budget](#). Pray that those seeking better UK policies may be successful. There are concerns, too, because [of delays to India's and China's revised national commitments](#). Pray for all working on these. And pray for everyone working on climate finance: the failure of both the G7 and [the G20](#) to make progress is unhelpful, given that movement towards increased climate finance in line with Paris Agreement is an essential prerequisite for the summit's success. Pray for a breakthrough.

Treating a crisis like a crisis

One hundred and fifty weeks on from the first school climate strike, Greta Thunberg [reflected on](#) her frustrations with people in power: *“As more and more people around the world have woken up to the climate- and ecological crisis, —people in power started to act. Not acting as in taking climate action. But acting as in role-playing. Playing politics, playing with words, playing with our future. Pretending to take responsibility... But this is communication tactics disguised as politics.... And when the empty words are not enough, when the protests grow too loud — you respond by making the protests illegal.*

But the gap between your actions and words is becoming impossible to ignore. While more and more extreme weather events are raging all around us.... You say we need to move slowly to bring the public along. However, how do you honestly expect to bring the people along if you don't treat this crisis like a crisis?

The climate crisis is today — at best — being treated only as a business opportunity to create green new jobs, new green businesses and technologies...We will not be able to solve a crisis we do not treat as a crisis and that we do not understand the magnitude of.... The audience has grown weary. The show is over.”

We pray for all in positions of power. May God give them courage and wisdom to turn away from short-term political objectives and to focus their attention on ensuring the long-term safety of the earth and its peoples.

Global Wierding

[‘No safe place’](#) – was the headline of *The Economist*, commenting on the potential for a three-degree world. But the heating we have has already caused enough disruption to challenge anyone's sense of safety. In the past month alone, extreme weather events have come one after the other; [record-shattering heatwaves](#), torrential rains, flooding, landslides, and another [major ice melt](#).

While many different areas – including India, Greenland and Siberia – have been affected, the rush of events in developed countries has particularly forced the media there to confront the realities of climate impacts. The sight of water rushing down the streets of German and Belgian towns and [overwhelming the subway system](#) in Zhengzhou; ongoing heat extremes in the Pacific West; and the [wildfires](#) raging in the western part of North America – which have [wreaked destruction](#) locally and caused intense haze as far away as [New York City](#) - have led to headlines such as [The New York Times](#) ‘Climate change comes for the wealthy nations.’

We pray for all who have been affected by the recent disasters, and all who are working on relief and recovery. We also pray that the destruction will move individuals, businesses and governments to, as Greta Thunberg has said, “treat this crisis like a crisis”. And we pray that any action taken will be just, protecting not only the powerful but also those who have contributed least to climate change and are often most vulnerable.

www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk

A Prayer from Laudato Si'

All-powerful God ... bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. *Pope Francis*

Tipping Points – Negative and Positive

A new study found that 16 out of 31 indicators of the planet's health are in crisis – and the author [states](#) that, as a leaked IPCC report [had earlier suggested](#), “there is growing evidence we are getting close to or have already gone beyond tipping points associated with important parts of the Earth system.” Pray that action will be taken to avert dangerous tipping points.

At the same time, the report highlights potential solutions, such as a global carbon price linked to a fund that would finance adaptation and mitigation in lower-income countries. The G20 finance ministers recently mentioned the need for carbon pricing – pray that we move towards a just system for this. The report also notes developments which could lead to some positive tipping points. In particular, it shows that, while there are still [blockages to ending fossil fuel subsidies](#), the subsidies have reached new lows – and divestment new highs. Pray that we continue to move investments out of fossil fuels and increase pressure on banks that fund fossil fuel exploration, creating a tipping point of finance away from the fossil fuel sector.

Joys and Concerns

- It's brilliant to see so many joining and supporting the [Young Christian Climate Network's](#) 'Rise to the Moment' climate justice relay from the G7 to COP26. The organisers' work is extraordinary, as is the way in which they are also spending their daily lives seeking climate solutions – for example, helping colleagues in small island states get their story heard or working out new ways to predict demand for renewable energy, so as to allocate it better. Thank God for these young people and pray that, as the relay continues towards Glasgow, it may inspire more and more people to act for climate justice.
- Give thanks for – and pray for – [legislation introduced in the UK](#) to create legally binding targets for decarbonising homes. [Continue to pray](#), too, for climate-related infrastructure legislation in the US.
- Shell has announced that it has [no intention of changing its strategy](#) in order to comply with the Dutch courts' ruling that it should cut its emissions 45% by 2030 – and overall [fossil fuel use is surging](#). Pray for action by governments and industries to accelerate away from fossil fuel use.

The beauty of butterflies

UK butterflies, along with many invertebrate species, have been in decline over the past four decades.

Numbers of some species have declined severely, though others are holding their own, and some threatened species have actually increased due to the efforts of conservationists to protect their habitats.

This year, the UK's unseasonably cold and long Spring delayed butterflies' emergence, but in the current heat and sun, most are thriving. This provides a wonderful opportunity for people to take part in the [Big Butterfly Count](#). Pray that many people download the Big Butterfly Count's ID guide and enjoy 15 minutes surveying butterflies wherever they are. Give thanks to God for these delightful and beautiful creatures. And pray for all who are continuing to work to conserve butterflies' – and other species' - habitats and protect them.