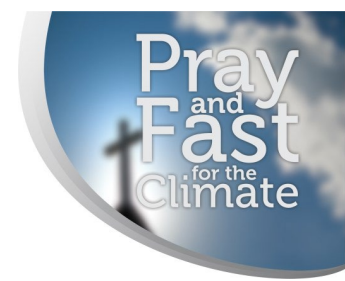


# Prayer points – June 2022



## Come Holy Spirit – fill the hearts of your faithful!

This year World Environment Day coincides with Pentecost. The Anglican Communion Environmental Network has prepared a [reflection and liturgy](#), focusing on the transformation that came to the disciples at Pentecost as an example for us today. We start with their prayer: “Let our work be based on love for God and love for God’s creation. [And] in our Mission to renew this Earth, the only Earth we have, let us be filled with these marks of the Spirit - be courageous, have a purpose, become united, be generous and be full of joy.” May God grant this!

## Time to ‘end the climate wars’ in Australia

Over the past ten years, Australia’s Coalition government has downplayed the climate crisis and limited climate action. This was popular with voters in the past – but after damage caused by recent wildfires and storms, climate concern is increasing, and in May, Labour, Green and [‘teal’ candidates](#) – independents with a focus on climate and political integrity – [made major gains](#), allowing Labour to form a government.

As Carbon Brief outlines, this result will [raise Australia’s level of climate action](#). Labour have pledged to ‘end the climate wars’ and said they will submit a goal of 43% emissions cuts by 2030, far above the Coalition’s plan of a 28% reduction. They’ve pledged a focus on renewable energy and electric vehicles, though not an end to new coal or gas. But the result is also important because it involves voters coming together from different backgrounds to choose climate action. This is a gain for consensus and a loss for those who seek to profit by making climate a divisive ‘culture war’ issue. We thank God for this public evidence of Australians’ desire for action. We pray for the incoming legislators as they formulate and debate new climate policies: may God grant them wisdom and courage to be as ambitious as the climate crisis demands.

## Carbon Budgets and Carbon Bombs

In 2015, the world’s countries agreed to protect people and ecosystems worldwide by seeking to keep global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius, with an ambition to hold it to 1.5 degrees. Turning that pledge into reality requires us to reduce our carbon emissions so that the total emitted fits within our ‘carbon budget’. But new investigations by the UK’s Guardian newspaper show that, whatever pledges countries may be making, a range of fossil fuel companies – some private and some state-owned - are planning projects that would release massive amounts of carbon: indeed, the paper [has identified](#) 195 projects that could release more than 1 billion tonnes of carbon *each* over their lifetimes.

If fully implemented, these ‘carbon bomb’ projects would, The Guardian [notes](#), “drive the climate past [internationally](#) agreed temperature limits with catastrophic global impacts.” It poses key questions to governments: “Will [they] close the book on the oil companies’ giant climate gamble?” What is the role of shareholder action and company employees. We pray that companies will, whether because of legislation, internal or external opposition, turn from projects that could have such a damaging impact on us all.

## Finding food and fuel

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has affected access to [food](#) and fuel globally, sending prices skyrocketing. With double and even triple digit rates of inflation for key food products and energy prices, those of us who are economically vulnerable are finding it more and more difficult to work out where the next meal or energy to cook it will come from. We pray solutions will be found to resolve Russia’s [blockade of Ukrainian ports](#) and that good harvests in other places will provide much needed grain. We pray that anxiety about energy security will lead to increased reliance on renewables, rather than encouraging exploration for new coal, oil and gas. And we pray for all who fear losing access to the basics of life. Lord, help us as individuals and churches to do all we can to support each other in these times.

## Making the Change

Will climate concerns among employees and potential employees help force change at fossil fuel companies? “Don’t work for climate-wreckers. Use your talents to drive us towards a renewable future” UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres recently [advised new graduates in a commencement address](#). Immediately before that Caroline Dennett, who had worked with Shell on safety issues for 15 years, [sent a very public resignation email](#) to over 1400 of Shell’s employees, including the CEO. In her email she accused the company of causing “extreme harm” to the environment and of “ignoring all the alarms and dismissing the risks of climate change and ecological collapse.” “The United Nations and the International Energy Agency are clear: there is no safe level of new oil and gas extraction, any new projects commit us to global overheating and an un-liveable world,” she wrote. She went on to say that despite Shell’s “public expressions around Net Zero .... Shell is not winding down oil and gas, but planning to explore and extract much more.” Dennett said the fossil fuel giant “disregards climate change risks” and that she “can no longer be a part of it.” Addressing her former colleagues directly [in an accompanying video](#) she said: “The fossil fuel industry – it’s the past, and if you can find a way out, please walk away while there’s still time.”

The Financial Times [has noted](#) that growing unhappiness with fossil fuel companies is creating a potential human resources crisis in the industry – and called on companies to clarify their plans for a good transition. Pray that moves like Caroline Dennett’s bring forward genuine planning for the transition away from fossil fuels.

## Psalm 101: 6-7 and Psalm Prayer from the [Platinum Jubilee Liturgy](#)

My eyes are upon the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me,  
and only those who lead a blameless life shall be my servants.

Those who act deceitfully shall not dwell in my house,  
and those who tell lies shall not continue in my sight.

*Purify our hearts, O Lord, and teach us to seek your Kingdom first; that the world may see our good works and glorify you, our Father in heaven, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## Urgent need and urgent responses

Recent [Met Office research](#) shows a 48 per cent chance that the average global temperature will break the barrier of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels by 2026. The report comes as ‘extraordinary’ [heatwaves](#) become ever more common in different areas of the world – and [while a single year above the mark doesn’t mean](#) that we have definitively breached the 1.5 degree threshold, it is a sobering warning. We pray for action.

We also give thanks for positive changes. In the UK, for example, churches, businesses and local authorities are not only making net zero declarations but are investing significantly to make targets accessible. The Church of England recently [announced a fund of £30 million to help initiate its net zero programme](#), and churches of all denominations across the UK are campaigning for funds to help address needs around mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage in vulnerable communities globally. Lord, take these mustard seeds in each of our countries and make of them trees that will shelter your whole earth.

## Butterflies and more

Isabel writes: “My heart always lifts at the sight of butterflies fluttering by, especially if they are a more unusual species. But Inkcup Journal notes that half of Britain’s butterfly species are now classed as Threatened or Near Threatened in the latest update to the ‘Red List’, published in [Insect Conservation and Diversity](#). Time is [running out](#) to save many of our 58 resident British species: however, two of the species most threatened with extinction, the large blue and the high brown fritillary, have moved out of the most at-risk category after targeted conservation work.”

What endangered species in your area need to be cherished? Where do you see signs of hope for threatened plants and animals? We give thanks for the stunning diversity of God’s handiwork – and pray that God will grant us and others wisdom to care for our fellow creatures.