



Prayer points – June 2024

Opening Prayer (Prayer for Environment Sunday, 2 June, which is the Sunday nearest World Environment Day, 5 June. [Salvation Army Environment Sunday Resources](#))

Lord, we thank you for the beauty and wonder that can be seen in all of creation. As you breathed life into this world and into our beings, we ask you to breathe life into us once again.

We pray for you to give us the strength to respond to creation in a way which reflects your loving care and concern for all things.

As we breathe in your love, help us to breathe out your love.

As we breathe in your grace, help us to breathe out your grace.

As we breathe in your beauty, help us to breathe out your beauty.

May we reflect your nature in all that we do. Amen.

Elections ([links are to information on climate policies](#))

This year's elections [offer key risks to – or opportunities for – climate progress](#). [India's voting](#) finishes on the 1st of June; [Mexico's](#) voting takes place on the 2nd. [South Africa's](#) election results will force the ANC to pick coalition partners. The European elections, [where the bloc's green policies are often an election issue](#), run from the 6th to the 9th of June. The [UK's election](#) is scheduled for the 4th of July. And the US elections, which pit a candidate who has made climate legislation a priority against one who has offered [to remove it](#), look ever more contentious. We pray that people who have yet to vote will take the time to understand candidates' and parties' positions on climate issues and that God will help them to discern how best to vote. We pray that all involved in forthcoming campaigns will be respectful and will not seek to polarise or to spread disinformation. We pray that all politicians will recognise the importance of climate and environmental action and that newly elected governments will prioritise facilitating climate justice, a just transition, and care for creation.

Extreme events

We pray knowing the world cannot afford delay. April 2024 was the [eleventh consecutive month of record-setting global temperatures](#): the global average for May 2023 to April 2024 was 1.61 degrees Celsius higher than the pre-industrial average. Many regions are experiencing particularly extreme weather events. Asia's brutal heat waves have seen temperatures over 50 degrees Celsius (122F) in Pakistan, while in India's capital, New Delhi, *"It's difficult to even stand outside"* [one resident told the BBC](#), and in the Indian state of Odisha, 87 people [were recorded as dying of heat stress in 48 hours](#), as humidity pushed the heat index over 50 degrees. In Latin America, Mexico's weeks under a heat dome [have led to power outages and killed dozens of people; dehydrated howler monkeys have toppled from trees](#). Other regions have had strong rains and floods: flooding in Brazil's [Rio Grande del Sul province](#) has [displaced almost 600,000 people](#) and [killed over 160](#), while heavy rains in Papua New Guinea led to a landslide that [killed hundreds, if not thousands, of people](#). Lord, we pray for each person suffering, asking you to grant them comfort and help to recover. Help us to hear people's stories and to be moved by love of neighbour to greater action.

Bonn Climate Conference

From the 3rd to the 13th of this month, [negotiators will meet in Bonn](#) to take forward the outcomes of COP28 and prepare for COP29. [Key items on the agenda](#) will be the new climate finance goal, the development of new national commitments to reduce emissions, and the operations of the new Loss and Damage Fund, including where it will be based. The meeting will also provide a chance for the UAE, Azerbaijan, and Brazil to work towards a road map for the next two climate talks. We pray that negotiators will work in a spirit of ambition and cooperation, seeking to [further a just transition](#) – and that progress will be made that will lead towards positive action at both country and international levels.

World Oceans Day

World Oceans Day is the 8th of June, with the theme '[Catalyzing Action for our Ocean and Climate](#)'.

Our world's oceans are in a dangerous state. [BBC analysis shows that ocean temperatures have broken records every single day for a year](#). Driven partly by global heating and partly by El Nino, [the heated waters are causing major coral bleaching and damage to marine wildlife](#): barnacles, for example, can't reproduce without [chilly water, so are vanishing from some coastal areas in the UK](#). Ocean heating is also a factor in extreme weather events, including [predictions of an exceptionally active Atlantic hurricane season](#).

For small island developing states, which are particularly vulnerable to sea-level rise and ocean-fuelled storms, addressing this heating is vital. They therefore took action through a legal route, [asking the tribunal which governs the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea for an opinion on whether excessive emissions could be considered a marine pollutant](#) – and, if so, whether countries could be held liable for the pollution. The [tribunal ruled positively on both counts](#) – and also noted the [obligation of major polluters to provide financial help and technical assistance](#) to small nations affected by warming seas.

Loving God, the Psalmist speaks of your creating "*the sea, great and wide, which teems with creatures innumerable*" (Ps 104: 25 ESV). Help us to see the wonder of your creation and to protect it from harm. We thank you for the tribunal judgement – and pray it will help protect the oceans and provide climate justice.

Celebrating local action

It's not just international and national action that matter; local action is important, too. What individuals and communities do makes a genuine difference in reducing emissions and also helps to change what people see as right, 'changing the wind,' [as Jim Wallis put it](#), and enabling broader political action. In the UK, the 8th to the 16th of June is '[Great Big Green Week](#)' [an annual celebration of community climate action](#). Communities around the country will be undertaking special activities, and many churches will be participating in '[Churches Count on Nature](#)'. We give thanks for all of these activities – and pray that they may inspire more.

Tax Justice

It's common to act as if taxes were an unjustified burden, ignoring or downplaying the positive role they play in funding public services that we all rely on and the investment that can help protect people and the environment. This is particularly true of green levies – despite the fact that, as Jess Ralston of the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit [notes](#), these levies "*help to install energy efficiency measures into low income and vulnerable households, fund the Warm Homes Discount which gives elderly people £150 off their winter heating bill, and support British renewable projects that have seen the costs of wind and solar power fall faster than any analysts predicted.*"

[Fair Tax Week](#) (9 to 16 June) and [Tax Justice Sunday](#) (9 June) provide a time to have deep conversations about what taxation is and does – and how it relates to our vision of God's Kingdom of justice, love, and truth. We pray that many churches and Christians will take up the opportunity – and help to change the conversation.

Refugees and Climate

World Refugee Day is the 20th of June. It celebrates the achievements and draws attention to the needs of [people protected under the UN Refugee Convention – people who have had to flee their country because of a well-founded fear of persecution, armed conflict, violence or serious public disorder](#). We pray that God will protect refugees as they journey and inspire host nations to shape policies and practices that welcome them.

But what of people who are [displaced because of climate change](#) – of whom [there were 32.6 million in 2022](#) and [could be as many as 1.2 billion by 2050](#)? At present, [there is no definition of 'climate refugee' and people displaced by climate impacts that destroy their homes and livelihoods have no right of protection](#). We pray for all who have been displaced by climate impacts. We pray, too, that adequate finance for adaptation will [help people to be able to prevent or recover from climate disasters and remain in their own home countries](#) ... and that for those who cannot do so, and whose countries cannot offer opportunities for rebuilding, a [new form of internationally recognised legal right to protection will emerge](#).