



Prayer points – September 2024

The 1st of September is the start of [Season of Creation](#). This year's theme is 'To Hope and Act with Creation', which is the focus of our prayer points this month.

An affirmation of faith (from the [Season of Creation Celebration Guide](#))

We have faith

in one God, one Source of all life, one Ground of the whole Earth, who created all things good.

And we have faith

in Christ, in whom we have been shown the special role of humanity to bear

God's likeness in working and caring for Creation,

in seeking to understand her mysteries and powers,

in working with these powers for the wellbeing of life on Earth.

And we have faith

in God's Spirit who leads us to a meek, unselfish and compassionate life-style.

So that the Earth is inherited in peace, her life is transformed for all creatures and her bounty shared justly.

So be it. Amen

(Adapted From India. Source: Sinfonia Oecumenica, Gütersloher Verlagshaus, Gütersloh 1998. Reproduced by ECEN for Creation Time 2003)

To hope and act WITH creation

Prepositions matter! The 'with' in this year's theme is a reminder that, [as theologian Richard Bauckham has written](#), we are part of the 'community of creation' and can gain inspiration from the other members of the community. This Season of Creation we look around us and see signs of hope: an endangered species recovering, the [felled Sycamore Gap tree sprouting new life](#), a tiny plant reaching out through a gap in the pavement ... We pause, reflect, take inspiration, and, together with our fellow creatures, give thanks to God, who has reconciled all things in Christ and given us all hope for our common home.

No contest

The UK Government [has announced it will not contest a legal challenge](#) to its predecessors' decision to grant licenses for development of the Rosebank and Jackdaw oil and gas fields in the North Sea. It is likely that the judicial review, brought by Greenpeace and [Uplift](#), will follow the precedent set by a [recent Supreme Court ruling](#) and find the decision illegal because emissions from use of the oil and gas were not taken into account. The licensees would then have to submit new environmental assessments and the new government would have to take a decision on the licenses. We give thanks for the Supreme Court ruling and pray for wisdom for all involved in the judicial review. We pray more generally for an end to fossil-fuel exploration and development.

International Court of Justice

From the journal '[Nature](#)': "In the next few months, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the United Nations' principal judicial organ ... will begin hearing evidence on two broad questions: first, what are countries' obligations in international law to protect the climate system from anthropogenic greenhouse-gas emissions, and second, what should the legal consequences be for states when their actions — or failure to act — cause harm? This could be one of the most consequential developments in climate policy since the Paris agreement itself." The Nature article emphasises that the decision could provide hope of legal recourse against polluters — but could also lead to accusations of judicial overreach. We pray for the members of the ICJ as they deliberate and ask God to help their decision be a means of bringing climate justice.

New climate leaders

There is much concern about the US elections, and we pray for candidates at all levels, asking God that they – and the electorate – may understand the urgent need for climate action and support it. Meanwhile, we give thanks that other elections this year have led to what [Pilita Clark has called a generation of new climate leaders](#), people like the President of Mexico and environment minister of Taiwan (both climate scientists), the President of Iceland (a sustainable business leader) and several long-term climate advocates in the UK Parliament. Lord, thank you for the hope of a new generation of informed leaders – and we ask you to give them strength and wisdom to help their governments tackle climate change locally and contribute to global progress.

This month's negotiations

This month sees several key climate-related gatherings, including the next meeting of the group working on a post-2025 climate finance goal. Documents the UN has released [show significant differences in](#) approach: poorer countries are primarily concerned with increasing the funding on offer; [wealthier countries are seeking to broaden the donor base](#). Pray that all parties may be willing to listen to each other and to work together for the common good. Pray, too, for the meetings of the [UN General Assembly](#), including the UN's [Summit of the Future](#). Preparations for the latter have [already seen off an attempt to backtrack on the commitment to transition](#) away from fossil fuels. Pray that the meeting and its declarations enhance ambition and reduce opportunities for delay.

Pope's Asian Tour

On the 2nd of September, Pope Francis [will start](#) a tour of Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, East Timor and Singapore. The journey [has many themes](#), including interreligious cooperation, hope, prayer, evangelization and living faith. It also has a [climate focus](#): as the Pope visits areas suffering from climate impacts, he is expected to press for climate action. We pray that the trip will be a blessing to the region's Christians and to progress on tackling climate issues.

Fair Trade

The World Fair Trade Organization's [Fair Trade Summit](#), the annual meeting of [Fairtrade towns](#) and national celebrations of Fairtrade, including the [UK's Fairtrade Fortnight](#), all take place this month. In the UK, the theme is 'Be the Change' – a reminder that producers and consumers have the power, through Fairtrade, [to benefit people by increasing incomes and improving working conditions and to benefit the planet by enhancing the environmental sustainability of farming](#). We give thanks for the hope Fair Trade offers and pray that individuals and communities – including churches - will continue to promote and support it.

Lament and Hope

We continue to pray for all who are suffering because of extreme events worldwide. This month we pray especially for people affected by floods in [India](#), [Pakistan](#), [Bangladesh](#), [Japan](#), the [Philippines](#), [Taiwan and China](#), [West and Central Africa](#), [Sudan](#), [Yemen](#), and [the US](#); by wildfires in [Brazil](#), Canada and [Greece](#); by [drought and the hunger it causes in Southern Africa](#), and by other events around the world. Lord, we lament the iscale of extreme weather and pray that you will give those affected strength in their time of mourning and a spirit of hope instead of despair.

Grenada Debt

Amidst the devastation caused by Hurricane Beryl, Grenada [has triggered a 'hurricane clause' to suspend some interest payments on its bonds](#). This enables the government to use its funds to respond to the devastation of homes, businesses and infrastructure the hurricane caused. While such clauses are widely available, countries have been reluctant to use them for fear of incurring higher borrowing costs. Elizabeth Perry [has written](#) about the impacts of Beryl and the need to end the cycle of disaster and borrowing: we pray for all suffering from Beryl's impacts and pray that Grenada's action may provide a starting point for tackling the cycle of damage and debt.

Closing Benediction (from the [Season of Creation Celebration Guide](#))

The Lord is our hope. And may the Triune God sprinkle into our hearts the dew of his grace and bless us all.

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