

# Prayer points – November 2017



## COP 23 in Bonn

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP 23) runs from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> of this month. Fiji holds the presidency, and Germany will host the talks. Fijian Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama's [vision for COP23](#) is for a meeting that is "transparent and inclusive of all, advances the Paris Agreement and accelerates climate action for vulnerable countries" He also hopes for a 'grand coalition' to advance climate action before and beyond 2020. He comments; 'Unless we tackle the underlying causes of climate change, we already know that some places will become unliveable and others will disappear altogether.'" Sober words coming from a country already threatened by rising sea levels.

Since the massive high of the Paris Agreement agreed two years ago, there has been much progress. 195 governments have signed the Agreement leaving only Syria and the USA outside the global agreement. A total of 169 countries have now ratified making their commitments legally binding.

But alongside encouragements, there have been depressing times – notably President Trump's withdrawing the US from the Agreement and his efforts to [undo the US Clean Power Plan](#). Continued high temperatures, wildfires around the world, and the recent disastrous hurricane season have also helped to underline the serious reality of climate change.

This year the focus will be on the development of guidelines regarding how the provisions of the Paris Agreement will be implemented across a wide range of issues including transparency, adaptation, emission reductions, provision of finance, capacity-building and technology. These guidelines will then be finalised next year in Prague at COP 24. Strong and united efforts are needed to keep rising temperatures well below 2 degrees, let alone at 1.5 degrees, and to ensure that vulnerable countries secure the funding they need.

We give thanks for Fiji's leadership, already seen in the run-up to COP and [at the UN](#). And let's pray now – and resolve to pray each day during the COP summit - for a spirit of unity, resolve and vision, so that real progress can be made on key areas. Pray especially for policy makers from all levels of government (including the US, which is [still present](#) ) to cooperate so that they, together with civil society and businesses, can play their role moving forward ... and for substantial and even surprising progress to be made during these two weeks

## 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.

## Renew Our World

[Renew Our World](#) is a collaboration of Christian groups from around the world who believe that God is on the move, renewing our world. They seek to follow Christ by "living simply, calling for urgent action on climate change, seeking justice, challenging inequality, and praying together." Do read and sign their open letter to all [world leaders](#), asking them to keep the promises they made in the Paris Agreement - and encourage your friends and others in your church to do the same.

## The gift of insight

Lord, you gave us the gift of insight to understand  
The meaning of your creation and our responsibility to care for it.  
You gave us eyes to see the beauty of the world  
The gift of empathy to understand others and their needs.  
Lord, forgive us for not caring for your creation  
Forgive us that we seek to become masters of your work  
Forgive our inner blindness and deafness to the needs of our neighbour  
*Part of a prayer by Jaqueline Ryle, 2009*

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

## Action on Renewable energy

Renewable energy is growing rapidly: that's the message the International Energy Agency [underlined](#) when it recently revised upwards its projections for renewables' growth over the next five years. It's now expecting a 43% rise in capacity by 2022, much of it in India and China. China, in fact, has already reached its 2020 targets for solar PV and now accounts for 60% of solar cell manufacturing capacity.

The shift the IEA predicts would mean that globally, by 2022, renewables would account for 30% of all power generation. And the actual numbers may be even higher, as renewables are becoming more competitive financially with fossil fuels: solar power is already the [fastest-growing source of new energy](#) globally.

In the UK, we're already at the point where over half of the UK's electricity came from low carbon sources this summer, according to the National Grid, making it "[the 'greenest' summer on record](#)". And the trend looks set to continue as renewable prices fall. Offshore wind is already not only [cheaper than new nuclear energy](#) but [even than new gas](#) – and the UK's [new 'Clean Growth Plan'](#), although it has flaws which leave the UK short of meeting even old carbon targets - both recommits to the complete phase-out of coal and sees renewables as providing over 80% of UK power generation by 2050.

Give praise for these really encouraging developments and pray for all who are working on the technology and policy to take the renewables revolution forward. Pray also for more and more people and churches to use the ['Big Church Switch'](#) and other renewable tariff schemes run by denominations to switch their household and church accounts to green tariffs.

## Mission 2020

Former UN climate talks chief [Christiana Figueres](#), has launched the pressure group [Mission 2020](#). This group of leading experts sees the year 2020 as a critical turning point in bending the emissions curve and fighting climate change. It's calling on businesses, investors and policy-makers to take urgent action in six key areas from renewable energy to sustainable transport and land use. Working with Figueres' trademark "radical collaboration and relentless optimism" it has produced a funny and inspiring [two minute video](#) that uses scenes from famous films to show the need for urgency. Do watch and share the video and pray the movement has real, positive impact.

## An issue that cuts across all we do

*"We need an imaginative commitment to new ways of approaching the subject of climate change that does not accept a deterministic or selfish nationalistic policy. We cannot simply look at ourselves and say, 'we must do better', and kick the ladder away from the vast majority of humankind that is struggling to find the prosperity that we enjoy so richly. This is not a standalone issue. It cuts across all we do."*

Archbishop Justin Welby (2015)

## Alarming drop in insect numbers

A new report from scientists in Germany published in October in the [journal Plos One](#) warns of serious and alarming decreases in flying insects. Overall the amount of insect life has dropped by three-quarters over the past 25 years. Though the research was done in Germany, its [implications are widespread](#). The reasons for these shocking losses are still unclear but the loss of wild areas, the widespread use of pesticides and climate change may [all play a role](#). All kinds of flying insects were included in the 63 separate sites involved in the study.

Give thanks for the work of all involved in the study for showing us the risks to insects and our ecosystems. Pray that this research will inspire further work, with sufficient funding, to discern for the reasons for such a shocking decline. And pray for action to protect the full diversity of insect life – and all living things.