

## NET ZERO/CREATION CARE, OUR FRIDAY PRAYER THEME FOR APRIL – collated by Godfrey Armitage, Colin Angus and Rev Clive Hicks

### Creation Care and Net Zero are parts of the same jigsaw puzzle ...

**As a Diocese – including churches and schools - we can be advocates of the net-zero by 2030 goal. Will we, prayerfully, recognise that drastic action is necessary to reduce and mitigate the worst impacts of climate change? As a church we could be well placed to see the moral and ethical arguments and to stand with vulnerable, impoverished and deprived communities, working for social justice. It is important to set ambitious targets to accelerate the transition to renewable energy sources. Let us pray that as we aim high this can inspire collective action and spur the use of new technologies and policies.** Colin Angus adds: "Remember that switching to renewable tariffs (away from fossil fuel tariffs) is an example of a quick win."

[Net Zero - Colin Angus, Diocese of Coventry](#)

[Diocesan Environment Group \(DEG\) - Godfrey Armitage, Diocese of Coventry](#)

Congratulations to St John Baptist, Berkswell & St James, Alveston ([EcoChurch & Churchyard - Alveston, St. James](#)), on their new Eco Church Silver Awards! Congratulations St Mary Magdalene, Lillington, St Peter's, Alveston and St Mary and All Angels, Haselor on your new Bronze Awards! To date (March 2024) we have 55 churches with Bronze, 13 Silver and one Gold in the Diocese.

**The number of churches that have registered with Eco Church is 99 (40.4%) to date!**



St Peter's, Alveston

### What does Net Zero mean?

[National Grid video](#) (1:30)

Put simply, **Net Zero** refers to the balance between the amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) that's produced and the amount that's removed from the atmosphere. It can be achieved through a combination of emission reduction and emission removal. Net Zero is the intended outcome of decarbonization. It will be achieved when we purposefully reduce our use of fossil fuels, lower our overall use of energy and invest in renewable energy. This investment can either be through our own direct action or by careful selection of energy suppliers who are committed to reducing their carbon footprint.

*Let's pray this month,*

- > For Deanery Environment Reps across the Diocese of Coventry
- > For many younger people to be included and involved in churches
- > For scope for our churches to contribute to Net Zero by 2030
- > To understand the environmental impact of our churches
- > To build hope for environmental recovery (eg through rewilding)
- > Reconcile conservation efforts with established farming practices
- > Local initiatives we can take an interest in – Wildlife Trust, other groups

### General Synod is backing action to tackle the biodiversity crisis

Introducing the debate, the Bishop of Norwich, the Rt Revd Graham Usher emphasized the impact of the devastation of UK biodiversity – with 26% of mammals facing extinction, 97% of wildflower meadows lost since the 1930s, and 41% of species in decline since 1970 >>>>

**The motion passed by General Synod in February 2024 stated:** 'That this Synod, recognizing the need to respond urgently to the ecological crisis, in line with the global scientific consensus that the climate change and biodiversity loss crises are intricately linked:

- a. welcome the work being done by the Church Commissioners, the NCIs, and many dioceses, parishes, cathedrals, and schools to manage all or part of their land for climate and nature, in urban and rural communities alike
- b. request **Diocesan Secretaries** to task a named person/committee in their dioceses to create an action plan to achieve the 'Land' section of Eco Diocese at Silver level by 2026 at the latest.
- c. request Chairs and Secretaries of **all diocesan property/finance committees** to incorporate nature-positive objectives into their asset management policies within the next 6 months.
- d. call on all parishes, cathedrals, TEs, NCIs offices with land they manage or influence to:
  - create a simple land management plan, with reference to the guidance and examples from **Caring for Gods Acre**,
  - work towards an increasing level of **Eco Church**, including the actions in the 'Land' section, and
  - record the biodiversity of their green spaces, through taking part in **Churches Count On Nature** each year.
- e. call on all **Diocesan Boards of Education** to work in accordance with the Department for Education Sustainability Strategy.
- f. request the Church Commissioners to report back to General Synod within three years about their own progress ... in achieving these objectives.'

**VACANCY IN SEE PRAYER - Heavenly Father, Please help us as we appoint a new Bishop in our diocese. Give us wisdom to see as you see, to hear your voice and listen to one another. May Jesus' name be honoured. May your Spirit guide us in our decisions. May we do all this with your love, seeking your Kingdom and your glory, In the name of Jesus our Lord, Amen.**



Churches: AD area dean; C clergy; Chaplaincy: Ch chaplain; Schools: Ac Academy; H headteacher; E executive head; AH acting head/all Church of England schools

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Rugby Deanery</b> AD – Steve Gold	HMP Rye Hill & Onley 1 Ch Rosemary Lowden; Ch Sarah Gillard-Faulkner	2 Harris C of E Academy H – Roberta Harrison	3 <b>Draycote &amp; Leam Benefice</b> C – Phil Price	4 Leamington Hastings Ac H – Suzanne Marson	5 <b>Creation Care - local Farming Communities &amp; Environmentalists</b>	6 <b>Rugby East Benefice</b> C – Philip Morton
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY, EASTER 7</b> St Matthew’s Bloxham Academy PS H – Anita Timson	8 <b>Dunchurch &amp; Thurlaston</b> C – Pat Townshend Clergy Wellbeing Group	9 <i>Dunchurch Schools</i> Boughton School - Junior: Acting H Jo Donnellan; Infant: Co-heads, Danielle Read, Suzanne Marson	10 <b>Clifton-upon-Dunsmore, Newton &amp; Brownsover</b> C – Peter Bone	11 Clifton-upon-Dunsmore Primary H – Lisa Bernard	12 <b>Net Zero – Diocesan leadership from Colin Angus &amp; Godfrey Armitage</b>	13 <b>Hillmorton</b> C – Steve Gold; <b>Bishop’s Council Day Conference</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY, EASTER 14</b> St Gabriel’s Academy, Hillmorton H – Andrew Taylor	15 <b>Baginton, Bubbenhall &amp; Ryton-on-Dunsmore</b> C – Vacancy	16 Provost Williams Primary EH – Leah Baddeley AH Sherrise Cullen	17 <b>St Mark’s, Bilton</b> C – Vacancy <i>Bilton Junior School</i> H – Rebecca Ross	18 <i>St Andrew’s Benn Primary</i> H – Abi Huggins <b>Diocesan Environment Group</b>	19 <b>Creation Care - Diocesan Environment Representatives</b>	20 <b>St Andrew’s, Rugby</b> C - Edmund Newey
<b>4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY, EASTER 21</b> 16.00 Celebrating 30 years of ordaining women priests (service, Cathedral)	22 <b>Wolston, Church Lawford</b> C – Malcolm Ingham (from 8 May)	23 Wolston St Margaret PS H – Michelle Clemons <b>Cathedral Chapter</b>	24 <b>Rugby West Benefice</b> C – Alan Hulme <b>DAC meeting</b>	25 St Oswald’s Prim Academy E – Michelle Cuskelly H – Jayne Geran	26 <b>Net Zero - impact the top 20% of churches as emitters</b>	27 <b>The Revel Group</b> C – Martin Faulkner
<b>5<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY, EASTER 28</b> The Revel Primary EH - Mr A Edwards; H Patrick Luke	29 <b>Newbold-on-Avon with Long Lawford</b> C – Paul Wilkinson	30 Knightlow Primary H – Jill Vavasour <b>Clergy Wellbeing Group</b>	We praise and thank God that with support from central CofE, 12 people attended fully funded <b>Carbon Literacy training</b> in Coventry Diocese and each delegate made pledges to reduce their carbon footprint	We pray that those with responsibility to submit Parish Returns, including the <b>Energy Footprint Tool</b> are able to complete these by the end of July <i>What environmental matters can we pray about?</i>		

**PRAYER  
DIARY**



Chris Juby, from the album *Doxecology*

**Nature shines with beauty,** bringing us a revelation of the Maker's glory, leading us in adoration. *O God who made the stars and formed us from the dust, your plans are over ours and all your ways are love.* Nature groans in labour, longing for the revelation of the Maker's children on the day of liberation.

**DOXECOLOGY** Godfrey Armitage says there are some great creation care songs here: <https://www.resoundworship.org/projects/doxecology>.

Chris Juby, one of the contributing songwriters on the album has been a writer and worship leader at a Durham’s King’s Church for many years – his uncle, Peter Woodward, was for many years a tenor with the Coventry Cathedral Choir and Chorus.

**BEING HEALTHY CHURCH**

**ROOTS** – Psalm 1 says the person who meditates on the law, day and night, is “like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season.”

*Picture where your own roots are being nourished; are your roots plugged in to the moisture and nutrients you need?*

## SPECIFIC DAYS IN APRIL 2024

**1 – Rugby Deanery** Pray for **Anglican prison chaplains** Rev Rosemary Lowdon at **HMP Rye Hill** and Rev Sarah Gillard-Faulkner at **HMP Onley**. Please pray for both establishments as they are undergoing expansion, with Rye Hill due to commission a new Chaplaincy building by summer, and for recruitment of new Chaplains. Please also pray for safety for staff and residents, and that the hope found in Christ will be brought to many people.

**2 - Harris Academy (secondary)** – chaplain, Helen Bryant [Chaplaincy | Harris C of E Academy](#)

**3 - Draycote and Leam Benefice** C – Barbara Clutton R – Karen Hatch We're increasingly seeing congregation members being willing to travel around our Benefice to worship which is leading to stronger relationships across the benefice and that people are able to worship more often (as none of our churches meet weekly). We would value prayer for wisdom and understanding as we consider the best mechanisms to offer good, sustainable leadership and governance.

**6 - Rugby East** – Sara Bowie (PTO), Raymond Brown (PTO), Hilary Iredale (PTO), Allan Scrivener (PTO); Readers: Carol Davies (PTO), John Martin-Jones, Gail Richmond. We thank God for the growing connections with the local community and surrounding churches in the Rugby area, and especially the work with our local schools. Please pray for our benefice as discern where God is calling us to focus our efforts in the future.

**8 –St Peter's, Dunchurch with St Edmund's Thurlaston** - We thank God for the continuing spirit of love and fellowship in our church which welcomes all. We pray for the church as it prepares for a time of interregnum.

**10 – Clifton-upon-Dunsmore, Newton & Brownsover** – C – Ian Sweeney R Catherine Hammond (PTO),

**13 – Hillmorton** Curates – Ann-Marie Marsh, April Gold, Helen Merrigan Pray for our work with Thrive youth ministries as we seek to grow our ministry among young people, and for our new groups with St Gabriel's families and youth to be fruitful.

**15 – Baginton, Bubbenhall & Ryton-on-Dunsmore [Interregnum]** C – Penny Hughes R – Rosemary King (PTO) The churches look forward to welcoming their new priest-in-charge – Revd Malcolm Ingram - later in the year.

**17 – Bilton** C- Glenn Lowde

**20 – St Andrew's, Rugby** C – Sharon Crofts, Alison Baxter R – Sue Goddard (PTO), Sue Minton (PTO), Gwyneth Hickman Please join us in praying for May Blossom Care Farm, for Compassionate Rugby's continued flourishing, for our Mission Hub partnerships and especially Choir Church at St Andrew's, Benn, and for candidates to be confirmed by Bishop Ed Condry on the 5<sup>th</sup> May.

**22 – Wolston & Church Lawford [In interregnum]** –C Paul Simmonds (Associate Minister) R David Gadsby (PTO), Helen Simmonds, Jayne Hayward. Thanks for

the appointment of a new priest-in-charge. Please pray for Rev'd Malcolm Ingram and family to settle into the benefice prior to his licensing on 8<sup>th</sup> May

**24 – The Revel Group of Churches, Brinklow, Churchover, Harborough Magna, Monks Kirby, Pailton and Willey.** - C Rosemary Lowden Rev Peter Beresford and Rev Liz Cowley (PTO).

**27 - Rugby West** AM Jane Hulme; (PTO) Gordon Banks, Margaret Simmons, Hugh Priestner; (Readers) Mervyn Hill, David Long, Mairi Mowbray. We give thanks for the birth of two small New Worshipping Communities, one aimed at primary school parents and one in a retirement complex. Pray that our church Lenten Fast will lead, this term, to deepened relationships with Jesus.

**29 - Newbold-on-Avon with Long Lawford** C – Diane Bussey R - Jonathan Broom

C = Clergy; R = Reader; AM = Assistant Minister; H = Headteacher

## SCHOOLS - Requests for Prayer from April Gold, Diocesan Director of Education 76 CHURCH SCHOOLS, 18,500 CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

### I-sing-pop Diocesan Partnership

**Emma has begun working with schools.** Thanks for completed one day workshops at: **Lent** - St Margarets (Whitnash), Radford Semele, St Nicolas (Nuneaton) & Bidford on Avon; **Easter** - Bishop's Tachbrook, Abbey Infants (Nuneaton). She also supported with St John, Coventry After School, "World Changers" group.

Emma will be filming some **training for schools and parishes on making the most of the resources we are providing to all schools during the week of 8<sup>th</sup> April.** This will include:

- > Making best use of Classroom worship to encourage a rhythm of worship across the week.
- > Making best use of the Popbox to support child-led collective worship in schools and intergenerational worship in Church.
- > How to use the song catalogue from i-sing-pop in school and Church.

**During the first week in July we have allocated a week to Leaver's services.** We are going to focus some of these on Alcester Deanery as there are a number of schools who have been in vacancy for an extended period. If other parishes would like their schools to be involved and host a leavers service they are asked to get in touch with April Gold.

**New Agreed Syllabus for RE** - This will be launched in April. The syllabus takes a Worldviews approach and has already attracted praise from Professor Trevor Cooling from Canterbury Christ Church University as **the first of its kind.**

**Increasing SEND Needs - Schools are continuing to report an explosion in SEND needs amongst their cohorts.** This is particularly pronounced in children who were born in the pandemic. There are also increasing numbers of children and families with mental health needs who are being supported by schools. **We pray that this is an opportunity for the Church to come alongside and help support families in crisis.**

## PRAYER JOTTINGS – APRIL 2024

Extracts from Chris Webb *'God-Soaked Life'* (ch 4, *Close to the Father's Heart*) and Mark Oakley *'The Collage of God'* (ch 3, Poetry) ....

Chris Webb says, *'we long to experience God in silence, prayer and Scripture...the deepest yearning of our human hearts, whether we recognise it, or not, is for this experience of intimacy with God.'* The psalms say, 'In God alone my soul waits in silence' (62.1) and 'my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you' (63.1). There is a strong emotional component here ... the Welsh word *hiraeth* means 'my body is homesick for you.' It is a longing for the stories, the songs, the familiar faces that have shaped our entire lives. He says, **'we are a people of holy hiraeth'** (p. 82). In John 10, the sheep that follow, do so because they know his voice (v. 4), but so much over and above this, a mutual knowing, just as the Father and Jesus know each other, deeply. The Spiritual Canticle of St John of the Cross records his being 'driven more deeply into the heart of God' (p. 91) – through a holiness of life (turning), growth in knowledge (knowing) and being swallowed up in Christ's love (abiding)

Mark Oakley speaks of poetry as being like **'matches struck in the dark'** – 'The power of poetry is that by simply naming it can illuminate' (Elizabeth Jennings) He says **'I believe that the Church today needs to be a poetic Church.'**



*As soon as we encounter God we know that we are beginning a relationship in which our thoughts, feelings, words and grammar have to plead for a little forgiveness*

He is placing a higher value on language which is verbal, ritualistic, musical and figurative, believing that we should **'feel more able to befriend the artists, writers and poets of today with more open and trustful willingness'**.

**'Cathedrals (by their beauty of stone, liturgy, and music) are having some of the most reflective and lively partnerships between contemporary arts and faith'** (p. 36)

Human beings need intimacy as well as specification. At a church in busy Covent Garden, London, young people *'visit ... day by day, to pray, to draw upon the building's quiet, and sense of presence.'*



Appreciation for creation was a significant factor in the spiritual experience and writings of saints like John of the Cross, Hildegard of Bingen and

Francis of Assisi. In their own poetic writings, they were inspired directly by the Old Testament book, ***Song of Songs***; John of the Cross wrote *'A Spiritual Canticle'*, while St Francis wrote his own *'Canticle of the Sun'* right at the end of his life.

- New from the Cageless Birds [A Guided Prayer of Rejoicing](#) which is an exploration of prayer with visually stunning widescreen footage of a seashore.
- St Mark's, Coventry, used pastoral themes from the Bible in a stimulating Lent Prayer booklet **'Prepare the Ground'** this year – *Digging, Ploughing, Raking, Levelling, Fertilising, Planting* shaped prayer over a six-week period, concluding, **'As we have cooperated with the Holy Spirit over this Lent we have prepared our ground so it is more ready to receive what God may want to plant in us, the kingdom seed that will produce a crop that will bring glory to God.'**
- Each month **we focus on a different Deanery; this month it is Rugby.** *In May we will pray for Alcester Deanery, then in June Fosse Deanery, in July Coventry South, and August, Shipston Deanery. I look forward to receiving updates from area deans and clergy, and anyone else with specific prayer requests.*
- **And coming up – the Themes for the next 3 months are, New Worshipping Communities (May), Growing Leaders (June), and Healthy Churches (July).** *Do consider sending me your prayer suggestions, and any other jottings.*

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