

HOPE COUNTRYSIDE

Seeds of Prayer

www.hopecountryside.uk

A hope and a future

The environment and climate change are never far from the headlines. The secular discourse is pessimistic and threatening. But the Bible offers a message of hope, for both mankind and the earth. Jesus' resurrection inaugurated a process that culminates in the redemption, liberation and transformation of creation, for which both the "children of God" and the "whole creation" are eagerly waiting ([Romans 8:19-24](#)). Give thanks that the future of God's creation is not gloom, but glory, and that Jesus comes both to "destroy those who destroy the earth" and to "restore all things" ([Revelation 11:18](#); [Acts 3:21](#)).

For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God ([Romans 8:19-21](#)).

Caring for creation

The destiny of creation is secured 'in Christ'. But we are called to care for God's creation as His viceroys and stewards ([Genesis 1:26-28](#); [2:15](#)), to love His creation as He does Himself ([John 3:16](#)), and to show compassion to animals ([Psalm 147:9](#); [Jonah 4:11](#); [Matthew 6:26](#), [10:29](#)). Pray that Christians will have a godly and biblical understanding of our relationship with, and responsibility for, God's creation, and not just conform to the culture and the spirit of the age, and that this will issue in practical care and compassion for all God's creatures (see bit.ly/kindevangelicals).

Hope for the earth

This issue of Seeds centres on the themes explored at our 'day on the farm' on 2 July, and in the recent Summer 2022 issue of 'Village Link'. Contact us as above (with your name and postal address) if you would like a copy of the latter.

Our daily bread

In June, UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, warned that war in Ukraine, climate change, the pandemic and inequality have combined to produce an "unprecedented global hunger crisis" already affecting hundreds of millions of people (bit.ly/agunfamime). In the UK, inflation in April was the highest in 40 years, and food costs increased by nearly 9% and the number of people using food banks doubled in the last year (bit.ly/fsaukfood). Yet, tonnes of produce have been ploughed back due to labour shortages (bit.ly/fwilabour). Jesus told us to pray collectively and daily for the Father to provide "our daily bread" ([Matthew 6:11](#)). Pray for leaders working to combat the global food crisis, for all who are suffering drought and hunger, and for ourselves, to "be generous and give" ([Psalm 37:21](#)).

Biblical farming and eating

The Bible provides a framework for farming and food, emphasising: our dependence on, and gratitude to, God for 'our daily bread', stewardship of the earth, and respect for one another. But our priorities easily become skewed in favour of "selfish gain" ([Psalm 119:36](#)), harming consumers, workers and the land itself. Pray for our attitudes and actions to be more conformed to 'farming and eating God's way'. Pray that the government's new 'Food Strategy' will lead to just and sustainable policies that improve food self-sufficiency, create jobs, and care for the land.

Town and country

This summer sees the return of many agricultural and countryside shows. Pray that these will help build good relationships between town and country and greater respect and enjoyment of the countryside. Pray for organisations, such as Farming Christian Link (farmingchristianlink.co.uk) and Counties (countiesuk.org), and local churches, who will share the gospel at these. Pray that the current turmoil in the world and in our own nation will prompt many to ask 'existential' questions and find the Lord Himself as the answer to these.

'The Bible speaks'

Scripture says much about God and His creation, which he loves and which is always praising Him ([Psalm 145:10](#)). Studying creation and scripture deepens our understanding of our place on this earth and in His purposes (see our new bible studies - bit.ly/hccscmq). In a world fearful about the future of the earth, pray that many will turn to the Bible and find the creator and sustainer of all life, in Whom all things hold together ([Colossians 1:17](#)).