



Vermont Interfaith Power & Light
A faith-based response to global warming

Green Mountains, Blue Water

Earth Care News January

Happy New Year!

VTIPL Winter Climate Justice Events Begin



"First snow of the year". Photo courtesy Donna Roberts.

- VTIPL Event *A Just Transition for All*. Jan. 14, 7:00 p.m.
- VTIPL Black History Month Film & Discussion
- VTIPL Board Membership Open

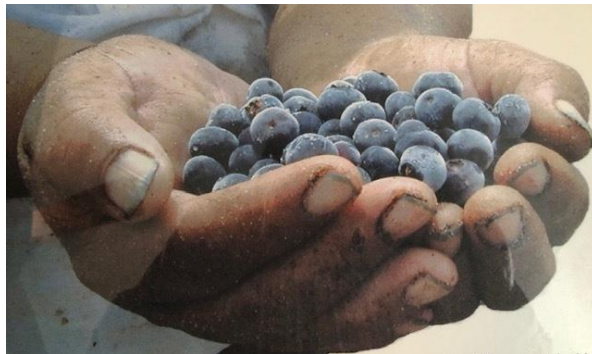
- A Conversation with The Dalai Lama & Greta Thunberg. Jan. 9, 10:30 p.m.
- Three Climate Webinars Next Week
- Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration. Jan. 17, 3:00 p.m.
- IPL Film *Unbreathable* & Discussion. Jan. 19, 6:30 p.m.
- New Initiative Mobilizes Muslims to Help Save the Planet
- Renewable Energy VT Update
- Final words....Pr. Nancy Wright & Leonard Cohen

We would like to briefly share that Vermont Interfaith Power & Light is deeply disturbed and saddened by the events at our nation's Capitol last Wednesday. This is not who we are as a country. We pray for peace, and we ask our fellow citizens to join in healing the divisions among us.

VTIPL Winter Events

A Just Transition for All
Thursday, January 14, 7 p.m.

In a continuation of our *Climate Justice Series* which began last fall, Vermont Interfaith Power & Light invites you to our first virtual event of 2021 exploring how faith and labor leaders can work with local communities toward a more *Just Transition for All*.



"Working Hands". Photo courtesy Gerald Lee Hoffman.

Since the 1970s, the environmental movement's relationship with labor has at times been tense often due to a false assumption of "jobs versus the

environment.” But environmental degradation has always affected the health and well-being of human communities. Now more than ever, our awareness of environmental injustice coupled with a worsening climate crisis makes the interdependence of human and planetary health all the more apparent. Organized labor recognizes that climate change threatens job security and the economy; environmentalists understand that ethical solutions must promote equity and incorporate labor concerns. We need mutually beneficial solutions. Please join us and invite your friends to explore what it means to create a just, equitable, and ecologically vibrant future for all.

Panelists include:

David Van Deusen, Pres. VT State Labor Council AFL-CIO; Rev. Jim Antal, United Church of Christ, climate activist/author; and Kate Logan, Dir. of Programming and Policy for Rights & Democracy VT.

Moderator: VT IPL Board Member Rebecca Kneale Gould, Ph.D., Assoc. Prof. of Environmental Studies & Co-Chair of the Philosophy, Religion, and Environmental Focus, Middlebury College.

[PRE-REGISTER FOR EVENT.](#)

To learn about past events in our series please visit [VTIPL's website.](#)
[For more information, contact VTIPL.](#)



*Festival of Yemanjá as celebrated each February in Bahia, Brazil.
Photo by Gerald Hoffman*

**VTIPL Film &
discussion,
*Yemanja: Wisdom***

from the African Heart of Brazil

Feb. 23, 6:30 p.m.

In recognition of Black History Month, VTIPL will host a screening and discussion of the award-winning documentary about the Candomblé spiritual tradition in Bahia, Brazil, often called the religion of nature.

Following the screening, there will be a discussion featuring The Rt. Rev. Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont, VTIPL Board Vice-President The Rev. Dr. Nancy Wright, and The Rev. Rachel Field. Narrated by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Alice Walker, the film was created by VTIPL Coordinator Donna Roberts. The documentary explores this Afro-indigenous tradition through the voices of distinguished elder women faith leaders of color. During the panel, the film's multiple themes will be discussed including Candomblé practitioners' reverence for the natural world, the religious intolerance and violence they often experience, and implications of women-led faith communities. Registration link to come. [Film website and trailer.](#)



March 22, World Water Day

VTIPL is also planning an activity to coincide with World Water Day commemorated on March 22. Details to come!

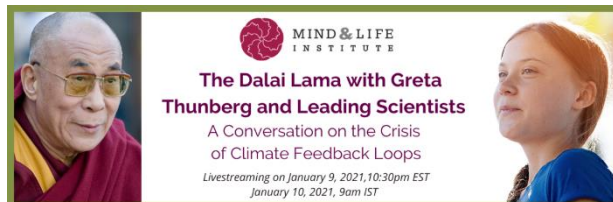
For information and links to past events in our *Climate Justice Series*, please visit the [VTIPL website.](#)

VTIPL Board Membership Open

Vermont Interfaith Power & Light is seeking Board members! If you have a passion for effecting climate change and understand religious or spiritual faith's connection to Earth stewardship you may be a candidate for Vermont

Interfaith Power & Light's Board. More information about our organization and Board can be found on our [website](#). Please share with any friends or colleagues who may be interested. Thanks!

The Dalai Lama with Greta Thunberg and Scientists: A Conversation on the Crisis of Climate Feedback Loops. Sat., Jan. 9, 10:30 p.m. ET



The Mind & Life Institute is honored to host a special live stream event with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, climate activist Greta Thunberg, and leading scientists to explore steps for addressing this urgent set of challenges. Moderated by Diana Chapman Walsh, the discussion is grounded in a new series of educational films, “Climate Emergency: Feedback Loops,” narrated by actor Richard Gere. Contributing expertise to the conversation will be Susan Natali, Arctic Prog. Dir. at the Woodwell Climate Research Center, and William Moomaw, Prof. Emeritus of International Environmental Policy at Tufts University and lead author of several reports for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The Dalai Lama speaks to the urgent need for climate action in his new book, *Our Only Home: A Climate Appeal to the World*, where he also praises Greta Thunberg and other young climate activists for their determination to effect positive change.

[For more information.](#)



Three Climate Webinars Next Week!

The Climate on Capitol Hill: Roadmap for Jewish Climate Advocacy. Jan. 12, 8:00 pm

In national Interfaith Power & Light's first event of the year, we are reminded that the first 100 days of the new Administration and the 117th Congress can be a breakthrough moment for action to put us on a sustainable and just path. Learn what Jews can do from Rep. Mike Levin (CA49), Rebecca Leber, Climate Reporter for Mother Jones and Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin, Co-founder of the Maryland Campaign for Environmental Human Rights. [Register here.](#)


What's Possible? Faith and Climate Policy in 2021. Wed., Jan. 13, 1:00 pm With the new legislative landscape for Congress, what will be possible for climate policy? What might President Biden accomplish through executive orders? Join this webinar hosted by Rev. Dr. Brooks Brendt of the United Church of Christ and Alabama Interfaith Power & Light Executive Director Rev. Michael Malcom to consider what faith communities can do to press for policies that reflect our values. Panelists include: Anthony Rogers-Wright of the Climate Justice Alliance; Emily Wirzba from the Environmental Defense Fund; and Clarence Edwards from the Friends Committee on National Legislation. Even if you can't make the webinar, register and you will receive a recording.

[Register here.](#)

Virtual Meeting with Rep. Castor. Wed., Jan. 13, 4:00 pm

We are all are invited to join a virtual meeting with Rep. Kathy Castor, Chair of the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis. The virtual meeting will examine the climate crisis, and opportunities for action with a new Congress and a new administration, as well as hearing about the Select Committee's

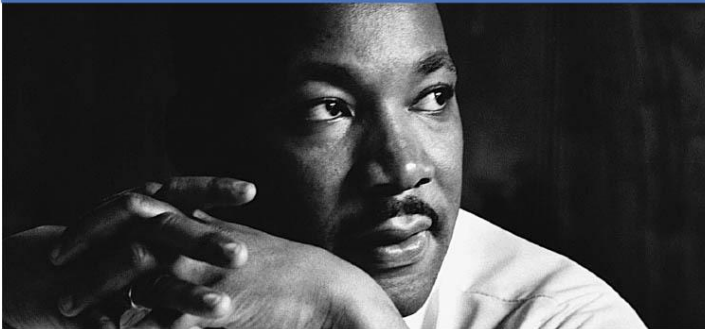
agenda for 2021. Event organizers invite us to spread the word with our networks. [RSVP here.](#)



The Greater Burlington
Multicultural Resource Center

**DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
REMEMBRANCE**

January 17th, 2021 3:00 p.m.



Keynote Speaker: Tim Wise

Tim Wise is among the most prominent anti-racist writers and educators in the United States. He has spent the past 25 years speaking to audiences in all 50 states, on over 1500 college and high school campuses, at hundreds of professional and academic conferences, and to community groups across the country.

MLK SPONSORS:
Association of Africans Living in Vermont, Champlain Housing Trust, City Market, First Unitarian Universalist Society, Fountain Fund (Vermont Community Foundation) Howard Center, KeyBank, Mace Engravers, People's United Bank, Spruce Mortgage, Vermont Humanities.
Special Thanks to St. Joseph's Cathedral.

Live streamed from St. Joseph's Cathedral
29 Allen Street, Burlington, VT

**IPL Screening and discussion,
Unbreathable. Jan. 19, 6:30
p.m.**

National IPL is hosting a free screening of the short film, *Unbreathable: The Fight for Healthy Air* a timely, powerful look at fifty years of the Clean Air

Act and the challenges we still face to ensure healthy air for everyone.

Weaving historical milestones with current stories of environmental injustice, the film is an excellent tool for educational and community engagement. The



30-minute film will be immediately followed by a 60-minute webinar featuring IPL President Rev. Susan Hendershot speaking with Rev. Melanie Mullen, new IPL Board Member and Director of Reconciliation, Justice, and Creation Care in the office of the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church. The right to clean air is an environmental justice issue, affecting communities of color and low-income communities at much higher rates. Air pollution directly contributes to asthma, heart ailments, and cancer. Justice calls people of faith to work in solidarity with these communities to create a world where all can thrive. [Register for film & IPL webinar.](#) *Unbreathable No More: The EPA and Clean Air in 2021.*



How a new initiative is mobilizing Muslims to help save the planet

In December, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) interviewed Iyad Abumoghli, director of its Faith for Earth Initiative, on the recent launch to convene Islamic institutions worldwide to combat pollution, climate change, and ecological degradation. This charter, named “Mizan” (Arabic for “balance”), is designed to showcase Islamic teachings on the environment and inspire the planet’s 1.8 billion Muslims to integrate ecological sustainability as a part of everyday life. As Abumoghli noted in the interview, “We also aspire that Mizan will help foster an understanding between religions that we have a common responsibility towards the Earth.” Read the full

interview: “How a new initiative is mobilizing Muslims to help save the planet.” We are grateful to the Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology for keeping us informed of so many important initiatives such as this. Read more about Islamic and other faith-based responses to environmental issues on the [Yale Forum website](#).

Update from Renewable Energy VT

After a tough year, we're delighted to start 2021 with some good news for renewable energy and climate action. After eight long months, and thanks to strong leadership from Senator Leahy, Senator Sanders and Congressman Welch, we finally have a COVID-relief and budget package that begins to address the climate crisis. Making local renewable energy more affordable, this bill translates directly into good jobs, less climate pollution and more resilient communities. What a good way to start the new year! Among the most significant measures are extended tax credits for renewable energy.

- Solar: The investment tax credit (ITC), which was scheduled to drop from 26% to 22% in 2021, will stay at 26% for two more years. ^[L]_[SEP]
 - Advanced Wood Heat: For the first time, a 26% investment tax credit applies to the installed cost of home heating and hot water systems that utilize wood pellets, chips, and cordwood at efficiencies greater than 75% high heat value.
 - Geothermal Heat Pumps: The 26% tax credit was also extended for geothermal heat pump projects that begin construction in 2021 and 2022.
- Overall, the bill includes \$600 million for wind energy, \$1.35B for solar, and \$1.35B for grid-scale energy storage. It also includes a plethora of stimulus measures for small businesses.
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And finally, a word of inspiration from The Rev. Dr. Nancy Wright of Ascension Lutheran Church.

As we enter into a new year, I am moved by the refrain of Leonard Cohen's song *Anthem*

Ring the bells that still can ring

Forget your perfect offering

There is a crack, a crack in everything

That's how the light gets in

We are not perfect vessels or bells, are we? God's love and grace comes into our cracks and renews our hearts, spirits, and minds, creating a beautiful musical note, harmonizing with that of others.

Blessings in this new year!

VTIPL is very grateful to everyone who contributed to our year-end funding appeal. Some VTIPL friends donate monthly and find it a nice way to spread the gift over the year making it easier on the pocketbook, while still having a meaningful impact. Another donor calculates his quarterly carbon footprint and gives to VTIPL as a form of carbon offset. How creative! Why not consider one of these options as a New Year's Resolution?

Thank you!

[Donate Now](#)



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