



Green Mountains, Blue Water

Earth Care News April

Happy Earth Month & Faith Climate Action Week



Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts

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IPL's Faith Climate Action Week, April 16-25 & *Kiss the Ground* film

For 10 days during Earth Month, IPL holds its annual Faith Climate Action Week, a time for our affiliated organizations and congregations to focus even more keenly on the moral need to protect Earth and our climate. The 2021 theme, *Cultivating connections: Food, Faith, and Climate*, asks us to see how our food systems contribute to injustice and climate change, and how we are called to respond through practical solutions. The way we grow our food largely determines how we treat the world and one another. IPL is providing abundant resources to help shape these discussions, including sermons drawing connections among our faith, food practices, climate change, and environmental justice. Please consider making this a focus of your Earth Month, Earth Day activities, and/or worship services, and pin your event on the IPL map on the [Faith Climate Action Week website](#).

IPL's digital Organizer's Kit includes:

- Sacred Ground Guide* on how healthy soil helps solve the climate crisis while supporting food justice
- Garden Blessing Ceremony
- postcards to the Sec. of Agriculture
- shoppers wallet guide identifying food grown in healthy soil
- link to National Climate Prayer & other worship resources
- climate change fact sheet

[Organizer's Kit](#).



Enjoy a free online viewing of *Kiss the Ground* through April 26. [Register here.](#)

This feature film of Faith Climate Action Week demonstrates how

regenerating the world's soils can stabilize Earth's climate, restore ecosystems, and create abundant food supplies. The documentary makes a strong case for transitioning to regenerative agriculture as key to rehabilitating the planet. It also instills in viewers a much-needed sense of hope. After registering, you'll receive a viewing link for three options: a full-length film (84 mins.), a mid-length version (45 mins.), and an educational version for schools. You may share the link to register but not the "link to view".

On Wednesday, April 21, at 2 pm ET IPL hosts a webinar, *Sacred Ground: a Message of Hope* with filmmaker, Josh Tickell, and Veronica Kyle of IL IPL/Faith in Place, discussing how congregations can be part of the solution to food justice and climate justice. You'll receive the Zoom link for the webinar when you register to view the film.



Vermont Congregations & Faith Climate Action Week

For your inspiration, here are some activities shared by a few VTIPL-affiliated congregations:

-St. Thomas & Grace Church, Brandon, will structure its online worship service, prayers, and

sermon to honor Earth on April 18, 10 a.m.;

-Christ Church Presbyterian, Burlington, will hold an Earth-themed online service with communion on April 18, at 4 p.m.;

-United Church of Dorset and East Rupert has invited as guest preacher climate activist/author the Rev. Jim Antal, to present its April 18 sermon, including prayers from IPL's resources, special hymns, and a congregation-wide viewing of *Kiss the Ground*. Their Green Team says, "The home-viewing film offer is perfect for a COVID version of our 'Second Hour', a monthly after

church educational program.” In May, the Church holds a book study based on Rev. Antal's book, *Climate Church Climate World*;

-Beth Jacob Synagogue, Montpelier, uses Earth Day to envision possibilities related to the Jewish year known as Shmita, a year of allowing the Earth to lie fallow. An April 25 event includes an Earth Day Recognition and panel *Exploring Shmita in Our Modern World*. Beth Jacob will host three follow-up meetings in May to think more deeply on how to build on the Shmita year to inspire Jewish learning and connection;

-Unitarian Church of Montpelier's Climate Action Team is creating a complete online worship service for Earth Day, *Protecting the Earth, Our Home: Climate, Hope and Action*, on April 18, at 10 a.m.;

-Ascension Lutheran, South Burlington, will celebrate by sharing a recorded Earth Day service on April 29, provided by Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC) featuring its national leader Bishop Elizabeth Eaton giving the homily. Pastor Nancy Wright says, “We plan to send to parishioners IPL's advocacy cards with a letter from Ascension's Care for Creation committee, as well as a personal inventory sheet from LRC materials.”



The Bristol Community Solar Project Tithe Program & VTIPL

The Addison County Interfaith Climate Action Network (ICAN), and Vermont Interfaith Power & Light are collaborating on a groundbreaking project to engage Vermont faith

communities in addressing climate change, reducing electricity costs, and supporting a Vermont racial justice organization. Soon to be built on the former Bristol town landfill, a community-owned solar array will generate clean, sustainable electricity.

Structured on a per-panel basis, investors purchase "units" and become part of a coop that will manage the system. Electricity generated will be allocated

to Green Mountain Power with revenue credited to purchasers through their electric bills based on the number of units owned. For detailed info., contact Acorn Energy Systems [by email](#).

Of the 1840 units (panels) in the array, 20% are designated to ICAN and VTIPL to offer to faith organizations and members, and VTIPL friends and members. VTIPL and ICAN purchasers are asked to donate a tithe (10%) over the cost of each unit to support Clemmons Family Farm, a 148-acre historic Vermont farm which serves as a model for African-American owned land, culture and assets, and its programming. [Learn about Clemmons Family Farm.](#)

Interested parties who are Green Mountain Power customers will determine electrical needs based on annual KW use, then purchase units to cover those needs. The VTIPL administered Katy Gerke Memorial Program's matching grants are available to Christian churches to help offset associated costs. For more information, contact VTIPL with the subject line "Interested in Solar Project" at [our email](#). **Access a recording of a recent Zoom info session on [VTIPL's website](#).**



**Update from Montpelier by
VTIPL Board Member Richard
Butz**

Ben Edgerly Walsh, Climate and Energy program Director at Vermont Public Interest Research Group, distributed to VTIPL and other organizations Governor Scott's "Proposed Investment of

American Recovery Plan Funds", dated April 6, 2021.

Some highlights from the document:

- Of the \$2.7 billion aid package sent to Vermont, more than half is to be allocated to federal agencies, individuals, local governments, education institutions, and others, leaving \$1 billion for the State to expend over the next four years.

The proposal outlines 5 major Buckets (in millions):

- Economic Development \$143
- Climate Change \$200

-Water/Sewer Infrastructure \$170

-Housing \$249

-Broadband Telecom \$250

The document stresses, “This is about foundational and transformational change, and resists the temptation to use one-time dollars to fund programs”, and that, “the Governor hopes the legislature will work with the administration to create a single American Recovery Plan Act budget, wait on expending these dollars in anticipation of more federal guidance, and use general fund and Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) first when crafting budgets and legislation”.

A longer summary of can be found at [the VT IPL website](#).

Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC) asks us to please take a moment to call Governor Scott at 802-828-3333 to thank him for proposing these meaningful climate investments and urge him to support ongoing action and funding at the scale needed to address the climate crisis.

VIA Affordable Housing/Homelessness Action – April 15

Vermont Interfaith Action is taking action on affordable housing and homelessness, and invites the public to join its virtual Action on Thurs., April 15, from 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. VIA’s Organizing Committee seeks to build on the rapid housing of our precariously housed neighbors during the pandemic to create long-term solutions to homelessness in Vermont. VIA will present research, hear personal stories, and request commitments from the State House and Senate Appropriations Committees to make this goal a reality.

[Register.](#)



One Earth Film Festival, April 19-25

One Earth Film Festival is holding a mini-film festival for Earth Week, April 19-25, including films such as *I am Greta*, *Dolores*, *Closing the Loop* about the circular economy, and other terrific films to inspire, and create more understanding and a sense of urgency. [See the schedule & get tickets.](#)



Gardening as Spiritual Practicum, April 24

Mission Farm, in Killington, VT, invites us to a 10 a.m.-1p.m. on-site class with Lisa McCrory of Earthwise Farm & Forest to focus on listening to the land,

responding, and learning about the energies in a landscape, while creating a holistic management plan for any size of land. [Register and learn more.](#)

VTIPL Board Membership Open

Vermont Interfaith Power & Light is seeking new Board members who have a passion for effecting climate solutions and understand the connection of faith to Earth stewardship. We're also interested in folks with website design skills. More information about our VTIPL and our Board is on our [website](#).

For EARTH DAY, let's take some inspiration from our turtle allies and move a bit more intentionally to allow us to notice the profound wonders of the natural world.

Thank you so much for your interest in and support of our work!<-

[Donate Now](#)



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