



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

Green Mountains, Blue Water

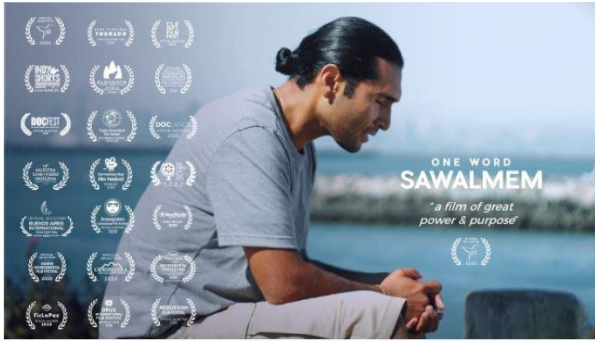
Earth Care News - May - Water is Life!



Photo courtesy Gerald Lee Hoffman

VTIPL *Water is Life!* June 3 Virtual Event Features Short Film & Panel

- *Ecological Conversion & Solidarity*, NPR's Living on Earth
- Montpelier Update - With New Federal Funding, We Must Act on Climate
- VT House Declares Racism a Public Health Emergency in State
- Stowe Jewish Film Festival, *Sustainable Nation*. May 16-18
- *Energy, Equity & the Economy*, EAN Progress Report. May 17
- GreenFaith & Bill McKibben, A Moral Fight Against Fossil Fuels. May 19
- National IPL Invitation to Stop Line 3 Action with MN IPL. June 5-8
- Federated Church of East Arlington's Energy Efficiency Efforts
- VTIPL Invites New Board Members & Congregational Liaisons
- *Indigenous Lifeways, Cosmologies & Ecology* - CIIS Conference recordings



Water is Life!
**VTIPL Virtual Event with
Film & Panel on June 3 Mark
World Environment Day &
World Oceans Day**

Thursday, June 3, at 7 p.m.
join VTIPL for *Water is Life*, a

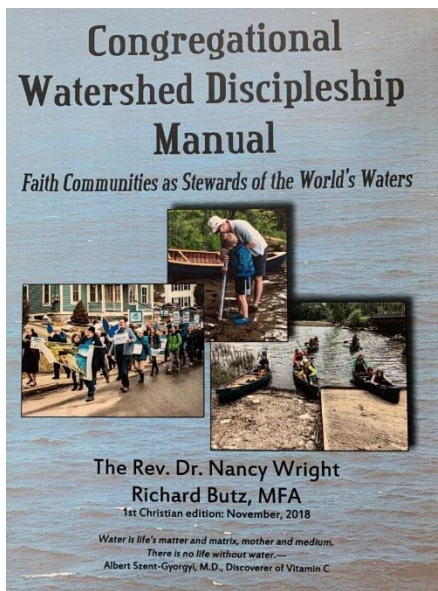
special water-themed virtual film screening and panel discussion marking and celebrating World Environment Day, on June 5, and World Oceans Day, on June 8.

Our evening will open with a community screening via Zoom of the short film, *One Word – Sawalmem*, about indigenous perspectives on water in a beautifully moving story about the West coast Winnemem Wintu tribe (Mt. Shasta, CA) and their activism to save wild salmon.

After the screening, we will be joined by panelists including:

- One Word-Sawalmem* filmmakers;
- Jon Groveman, Vermont Natural Resources Council's Director of Policy & Water Program, to share about campaigns to keep toxic PFAS out of our water;
- VTIPL Vice-President Rev. Dr. Nancy Wright, a waterkeeper and co-author of the *Congregational Watershed Discipleship Manual*, published with VTIPL.

Pre-register for the event to receive a Zoom link on our [website](#).



The following is an excerpt from the Watershed Manual.

"Water & Spirituality - We live in a watershed moment for the planet and for religious congregations. A threatening planetary water crisis asks now for a strong response. Ascension Lutheran Church of South Burlington, VT, engaged in water-focused activities, education, and worship to respond faithfully to God's call to care for Earth and its water. In so doing, the church developed a potential model for watershed stewardship that enhances

a congregation's ministries, spreads the vision of creation care through watershed stewardship, and offers practical guidance. This project, and other national and international water protection projects, offer insight into congregational leadership and education for water care. Caring for water orients a congregation in a new and deep way to its social, cultural, and ecological community, while also positioning it to develop supportive ties to other congregations and groups in the area to foster watershed health. When a congregation cares for its local watershed, it potentially promotes awareness and action to ameliorate worldwide water justice issues, including climate change and the feminization of poverty, both of which reflect and create water justice issues." **Access a PDF of the [Watershed Manual](#).**

Learn about VNRC's water program. [VNRC](#).

Access info on U.N. World Environment Day [here](#).

Access info on U.N. World Oceans Day [here](#).



Ecological Conversion & Solidarity - NPR's Living on Earth program

National Public Radio's Living on Earth environmental news magazine recently aired a wonderful 15-minute program on April 23. "Science and policy are vital in building a more

sustainable world, but they often don't convey the values we need in order to engage people to do so. With spiritual guides who carry diverse traditions and teachings, Host Steve Curwood surveys the values that can guide us along this path towards ecological harmony." The program opens by interviewing a member of the Cheyenne River Lakota Nation who spoke of, "the living relationship between you and I, and all things is what we call water. And water has consciousness," and, as we heard at Standing Rock, "Water is Life". The next guest, of the Nulhegan Abenaki Nation, said "we must think in terms of seven generations, what will happen seven generations from now, if I do this. And that goes way beyond ideas of investment...short-term politics..." Other spiritual leaders and professors' comments are interwoven in the program, from a rabbi who directs the Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development, to the founder of the Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Science. Listen to the [program](#).



Update from Montpelier

by VT IPL Board Member Richard Butz

As Vermont Legislative Season Winds Down with New Federal Funding, We Must Act on Climate

This has been a session of great promise and some progress, made

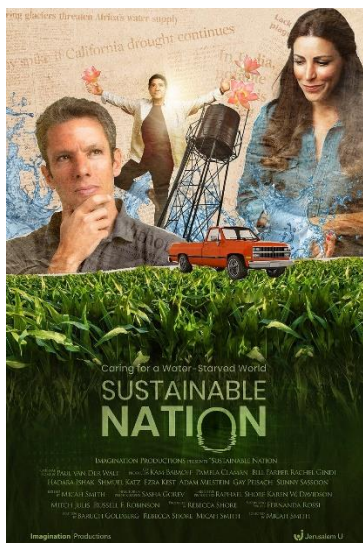
more difficult by the uncertainties of the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) which has sent \$1 billion to Vermont. Governor Scott's plan allocates most of the money on large one-time projects such as Economic Development, Climate Change, Water/Sewer Infrastructure, Housing, and Broadband/

Telecom. The legislature’s Budget Bill, now in reconciliation, takes a different approach, but with many of the same priorities, and it will be interesting to see how this all shakes out. It is difficult to allocate funds when the feds haven’t solidified all the regulations yet. And the possibility that more may be coming in the fall if the federal infrastructure bill passes, makes it even more difficult to determine how to spend the funds already in hand. Read a more complete version of this story on our [website](#).

Vermont House Declares Racism a Public Health Emergency in Vermont From May 11, 2021, VT Digger

“A joint resolution declaring racism a public health emergency in Vermont has received preliminary approval from the Vermont House. The two-page document, J.R.H.6 lists a variety of data points on racial disparities in health outcomes for Vermonters who are Black, Indigenous and people of color. It resolves that the Legislature commit to the ‘sustained and deep work’ of eradicating racism and race-based health disparities.”

Read full VTDigger story [here](#).



Stowe Jewish Film Festival, *Sustainable Nation - Caring for a Water-Starved World*. May 16-18

The 6th annual Stowe Jewish Film Festival continues to be re-imagined as a virtual and free experience in 2021. On May 16-18, the film, *Sustainable Nation - Caring for a Water-Starved World*, follows “three innovators who are bringing valuable lessons learned from Israel’s water shortage to the rest of the world”. Films are available for home viewing for a 3-day period. Registrants will receive a link to view the film. [Register](#).



National IPL Invitation to Stop Line 3 Action. June 5-8

A message from national Interfaith Power & Light President Rev. Susan Hendershot: “Our faith and spiritual traditions teach us that

we must care for this sacred earth. That is why I invite you to join me in northern Minnesota to stand in solidarity with Indigenous water protectors working to stop the Line 3 tar sands oil pipeline. The Enbridge Line 3 pipeline in Minnesota would carry 700,000 barrels of tar sands oil from Canada each day, having a climate impact on par with the Keystone XL pipeline, which was canceled by President Biden on his first day in office. Line 3 is being built through Anishinaabe land, violating treaty rights and putting drinking water, fish, wild rice, and the health of all beings at risk.

Indigenous women are leading the fight against Line 3. Construction on the pipeline began in December and has been met by prayer and courageous resistance. Pipeline opponents have been calling on everyone to come to the frontlines in Minnesota and stand with them. Now is the time for us to answer that call. Join me, religious leaders, and pipeline opponents from across the country in coming to Minnesota June 5-8 for the *Treaty People Gathering: Rise, Protect, Stop Line 3*. IPL’s Minnesota affiliate, MNIPL, is organizing an affinity group for people of faith and conscience who are attending. They are coordinating faith community recruitment and participation and will be briefing and training those who sign up to attend.” [Inquire here.](#)



Energy, Equity & the Economy, EAN Progress Report. May 17

Join Vermont Energy & Climate Action Network on Monday, May 17, at 12 Noon for the monthly Lunch and Learn to get a

first glimpse of the Energy Action Network’s latest annual progress report. With the passage of the Global Warming Solutions Act turning our state’s climate goals into requirements, Vermont has a new framework to ensure we do our part to mitigate emissions and adapt to a warming planet. Energy

Action Network will share its analysis of what it will take to do this work strategically, swiftly, and equitably. EAN Executive Director Jared Duval will preview the "Vermont Annual Progress Report on Energy, Equity, and the Economy", with data on where we stand on reducing greenhouse gas emissions relative to our renewable energy goals and emissions reduction commitments, with implications on future climate policy and the work of the Vermont Climate Council. [Register.](#)

GreenFaith & Bill McKibben - A Moral Fight Against Fossil Fuels. May 19

Join GreenFaith's Eco-Theology call on May 19 at 12 noon or 7 pm E.T. for moral inspiration and to learn why one of their "Ten Demands" is no new fossil fuel infrastructure. "Not only is fossil fuel pollution the primary cause of climate change; it's also responsible for 1 in 5 deaths worldwide." Author/activist Bill McKibben joins with activists of faith from the U.S. and Africa. Participants will connect in small groups and commit to action together. GreenFaith will soon "unleash multi-faith power to reject a raft of proposed fossil fuel projects. From Enbridge's Line 3 in Minnesota to the East Africa Pipeline in Uganda and Tanzania, our grassroots, multi-faith community is gearing up to put faith into action. " [Register.](#)



Federated Church of East Arlington's Energy Efficiency Efforts

VTIPL recently asked Alyson Ruby Grzyb of Federated Church of East Arlington about their efforts to save energy and reduce their Church's carbon emissions, which were partially supported by the Katy Gerke Memorial Program (KGMP) grant administered

by VTIPL.

"How did you decide to proceed with your energy efficiency project? A grant from Efficiency Vermont allowed us to conduct a deep energy retrofit. We thought it was the right time for the project knowing that a big portion would be covered, and it would reduce our energy costs in coming years. To further save on out-of-pocket costs, we utilized the VTIPL matching grant to cover most costs of new LED light bulbs for the sanctuary and gathering hall

of the Church building.

What obstacles did you have to overcome? The grant was spread out over a couple of years so there were fairly significant upfront costs that got paid back over two years. We had some savings that we used for those upfront costs and felt the long-term energy savings would be worth it.

Can you share about changes in your energy use after the project?

Although our energy savings were not as significant as we'd hoped (we were hoping for a 50% decrease in energy costs), we still had a 30-40% decrease in costs that have continued over the years." Read more of this and other stories on congregational energy savings, and about the KGMP at [VTIPL](#).

WANTED! New Board Members & Congregational Liaisons for VTIPL

Vermont Interfaith Power & Light is seeking people of faith or spiritual perspective who feel that addressing climate change is a moral responsibility. VTIPL's mission is to inspire and mobilize people of faith and conscience to take bold and just action on climate. We'd like to meet individuals who share this perspective and can bring to our Board skills and passion for climate action.

VTIPL asks that your congregation name a member as a point person to receive VTIPL communications, including occasional advocacy alerts. Please contact us with the liaison's name. This person can then share VTIPL's info with your congregation. We're on an outreach mission to improve communication with congregations, providing channel for your feedback and input. Thanks!

For inquiries about joining our Board and to share names of congregational liaisons, please [email VTIPL](#). Learn more about VTIPL and our [Board](#).

Finally...

Indigenous Lifeways, Cosmologies & Ecology Conference Recordings

Recordings of sessions are now available from the 5th Annual Religion & Ecology Summit, hosted by the Ecology, Spirituality, and Religion Program of California Institute of Integral Studies, held in March 2021. It was a truly

extraordinary Conference. These recordings are a very special gift to us all!
[Access conference recordings.](#)

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

[Donate Now](#)



Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts

