



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

Green Mountains, Blue Water

Earth Care News - July 2021



Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts

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**-Sacred Waters Event
Returns September 11 -
Save the Date!**

After canceling plans for last year's event due to the pandemic, VT IPL is thrilled to be hosting with other partners

a *Sacred Waters* event at Shelburne Bay Park on Saturday, September 11, 2021, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. All are welcome to this facilitated exploration of the land and water with the addition of a "creative offering" this year. Please save the date for this morning of appreciating and "BEing" in nature together. We will soon provide additional details and a registration link. (Fun fact: VT IPL Coordinator Donna Roberts first encountered our organization at the 2019 *Sacred Waters* event.) Visit our website for a [registration link](#). If you have questions, [contact VT IPL](#).

-Water is Life! Panel & Film Available for Viewing

If you missed our June 3 film and panel discussion, you can access them via our website. The film, *One Word - Sawalmem* is available with a 7-day free access thanks to the filmmakers; a separate recording of the post-film conversation is also available. The film explores indigenous perspectives on water in a moving story about the West coast Winnemem Wintu tribe and their activism to save wild salmon. The panel included a compelling conversation with the filmmakers and local advocates including Jon Groveman of Vermont

Natural Resources Council who shared about campaigns to keep toxic PFAS out of our water. Access the film and panel discussion via our [website](#).

-Supporting the Clemmons Family Farm

Many of us have read about the Vermont Human Rights Commission report about Vermont law enforcement agencies' discrimination against the Clemmons family during an ongoing problem with a disruptive tenant. It has been found that law enforcement was guilty of racial and gender discrimination in their response to the Family's calls for help. The Clemmons Family Farm (CFF) is an African American-owned and operated farm and cultural center in Charlotte offering programs, art exhibits, and workshops related to the African-American experience. Their goal is to "build a loving multicultural community around the African/American Diaspora history, arts, and culture."

We at VTIPL are particularly concerned about this situation as we fundraise to purchase solar units for Clemmons Family Farm through a tithe program connected with the Bristol Community Solar project. Those who tithe add 10% to the cost of the units they purchase for themselves to help pay for units for the Farm. **We can also help in another way:** donate directly to purchase solar units by downloading a Donation Form to enable you to send a check to support this project. Donating solar units will provide low-cost electricity to the Farm for years to come. The link is attached to our [website](#).



*Photo features Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown,
Rev. Rachel Field & Rev. Lisa Ransom*

-Mission Farm Awarded Grant for Abenaki Foodways Project

Congratulations to Mission Farm and former VTIPL Board member and current Farm Priest The Rev. Rachel Field for being awarded a \$23,750. grant from the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church to support Mission Farm's Abenaki Ancestral Foodways Project. Using the grant funds and in-kind support from the Diocese and other organizations, Mission Farm will collaborate with the Nulhegan and Missisquoi Abenaki to teach Indigenous food techniques and provide meals using traditional ingredients to the Abenaki community. The grant is one of ten recommended by the Episcopal Church's Task Force on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism, which was created by General Convention in 2018. Learn more about [Mission Farm](#). Read about the [grant program](#).



**-Forest
Reforestation:
Healing Forests for
Spiritual Renewal**
Religious
communities have a
rich opportunity to

contribute to a global goal of restoring forest ecosystems as part of the current U.N. Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Recently, the Interfaith Rainforest Initiative published an issue primer for religious leaders and faith communities on forest restoration. It shows how these groups can support and participate in forest restoration projects while explaining what the projects can accomplish. Forest restoration activities can be organized on mosque, temple, or church lands. The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, a global yet decentralized effort, spans 2021-2030, and aims to reverse degradation of forests, and other land and sea ecosystems. Access reforestation [primer](#). Learn about [UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#).



-Urge Congress to Support Equitable Infrastructure Plan to Cut Carbon

As you may have noticed, the White House has recently begun referring to the bipartisan infrastructure bill as the "American Jobs Plan". However, we in

the Interfaith Power & Light network believe the bill falls far short of the \$2.3 trillion of climate and justice investments that are desperately needed. As such, VT IPL and other IPL's will be calling on Congress to pass a bill that makes the big, bold, and ambitious investments needed to tackle the climate crisis, achieve true environmental justice, and accelerate the transition to clean energy. To meet this moment, to heed the science, and to make good on President Biden's promises, Congress must act to deliver on climate, justice, and jobs. Please contact your members of Congress and urge them to support a just, equitable, and bold infrastructure plan that cuts carbon pollution. [Email your representative.](#)



-IPL-sponsored film, *Other Side of the Hill*, available July 10-25

Where can East and West, Republicans and Democrats, find the common ground needed to address climate change? How can industry and

environmentalists work hand in hand? How can local economies find opportunity in a lower emissions future? *Other Side of the Hill* is a hopeful, inspiring look at local leaders on the ground in rural America who are leading climate action in their communities. The film is also about coming together, finding common ground and new climate frameworks, and lifting up rural voices as we envision a path forward. Register for free individual, group, or congregational screenings July 10 - 25. View the trailer, register to view or host the free film, and/or purchase screening kits [here](#).



-New Film Features the Dalai Lama

On July 6, Mind & Life Institute honored the Dalai Lama's birthday with the release of *Evolution of the Heart*. The 37-minute film chronicles

conversations among the Dalai Lama, evolutionary biologist David Sloan Wilson, and social scientist Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela. The film emerged from a 2019 Mind & Life event, Conversations on Compassion, Interconnection, and Transformation, in Dharamsala, India. *Evolution of the Heart* explores questions at the heart of the human condition. Can we consciously evolve to be kinder and more compassionate? How do we reconcile the needs of individuals with those of society? What makes true forgiveness possible? David points to a sea change in evolutionary science toward a focus on altruism and prosociality. Pumla describes the African philosophy of ubuntu that laid the groundwork for healing after apartheid in South Africa. All speakers point to steps we can take to advance the Dalai Lama's call to create an "ethics for the whole world." [Access film.](#)

-Big Oil and Gas Kept a Dirty Secret for Decades. *The Guardian* (June 30, 2021) "After a century of wielding extraordinary economic and political power, America's petroleum giants face a reckoning for driving the greatest existential threat of our lifetimes. An unprecedented wave of lawsuits, filed by cities and states across the U.S., aim to hold the oil and gas industry to account for the environmental devastation caused by fossil fuels – and covering up what they knew along the way. Coastal cities struggling to keep rising sea levels at bay, midwestern states watching 'mega-rains' destroy crops and homes, and fishing communities losing catches to warming waters are now demanding the oil conglomerates pay damages and take urgent action to reduce further harm from burning fossil fuels." Read the [article.](#)



-HEAT Squad Helps Vermont Homeowners

Did you know that HEAT Squad helps Addison, Bennington, Caledonia, Essex, Orleans, and Rutland County homeowners save on their energy bills, making homes warm and affordable? Their work includes complete weatherization projects, starting with a home energy audit. An audit report will recommend weatherization projects that are eligible for rebates and prioritized based on individual concerns and budgets. HEAT Squad also applies for rebates on clients' behalf and more. Interested parties should contact HEAT Squad to schedule an [audit](#), 802-438-2303.

-Energy Action Network's Annual Progress Report

How many dollars leave Vermont each year to support our "fossil fuel habit"? Can electric vehicles break our "addiction"? If you're interested in the answers to these and other questions, and want more information about Vermont's climate actions to reduce our fossil fuel dependence, you'll be interested in the Energy Action Network's (EAN) 2021 Annual Progress Report. It provides an in-depth analysis of where Vermont stands relative to its climate commitments and energy goals. New in this report is a summary of the EAN Emission Reduction Pathways Model which lays out the scale and pace of change needed for 2025 and 2030. Access the [full report](#). Review [Key Findings](#). You can also view a recent presentation by Jared Duval, Executive Director of EAN. [Access recording](#). Passcode for recording: nrm%7F83

-Citizen Climate Lobby & Unitarian Universalists

This one-minute video from the recent Unitarian Universalist conference offers information on the Citizen Climate Lobby. [Video on Citizens Climate Lobby](#).

-Other Upcoming Activities:

Wild Sacrament: Living in Ceremony with Holy Earth (July 30-31)

Virtual weekend intensive to help us "re-member" and reclaim the deep, sacramental rhythms of life. The Sacraments (mysteries) were designed to invite us into a life of sacred reciprocity with the wild, magnificent divinity in Earth and Self. We know our present ecological crisis has spiritual roots. In this age of nature-deficit disorder, disillusionment, and ecological destruction, we may benefit from re-learning ceremonial ways of living in right relationship with Earth, including the network of biodiversity that sustains all. Sacrament is an ever-present urge and invitation to live in relationship within a vast and enchanting web of inter-being of which we too are related, in the words of Thomas Berry, as a 'communion of subjects.' Connect with Seminary of the Wild to [learn more](#).

Vermont Half-Earth Alliance & VNRC Host Doug Tallamy (August 26 & 27)

Vermont Natural Resources Council and the Vermont Alliance for Half-Earth are thrilled to welcome conservation scientist and communicator Doug Tallamy to Vermont in August. He'll advise on what people can do to transform their yards, forests, and farms into havens for wildlife and biodiversity. Read *Smithsonian* article about [Doug Tallamy](#). Learn about Vermont Alliance for [Half-Earth](#).

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

[**Donate Now**](#)



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