



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

Green Mountains, Blue Water

Earth Care News - October 2021



Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts



**UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
CONFERENCE
UK 2021**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

-Global Faith Leaders & Scientists Issue Climate Statement before COP26

On the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, October 4, the Vatican organized “Faith and Science: Towards COP26”, where Pope Francis met alongside other religious leaders and scientists

from around the world to take a common stand for the protection of the environment, ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference scheduled November 1-12 in Glasgow, Scotland. The meeting was a Vatican initiative and developed via monthly virtual meetings starting early this year when religious leaders and scientists shared their concerns and wishes for greater responsibility for the planet and necessary change. The Pope and participants presented a joint declaration to Alok Sharma, President-designate of the COP26 summit. Address meeting participants, Pope Francis expressed gratitude for their presence which shows a “desire for a deepened dialogue among ourselves and with scientific experts”. The Pope proposed three concepts to guide reflections: "openness to interdependence and sharing, the dynamism of love, and the call to respect". The leaders released a joint message stating, “The world is called to achieve net zero carbon emissions as soon as possible, with wealthier countries taking the lead in reducing their own emissions and in financing emission reductions from poorer nations.”



Read the [Joint Appeal](#). Read [Reuters report](#).
Access [COP26 Website](#).

Also, read on VTIPL's website the Historic Joint Statement by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Pope Francis,

and Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby about the environmental and climate crises. This is the first time in the 2000 year history of Christianity that the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, the Pope of Rome, and the Archbishop of Canterbury have issued a joint statement. [VTIPL website](#).



Climate Council public information session at Airport Park, Colchester.

-Vermont Climate Council Sessions, Webinar, Survey

The Vermont Climate Council recently concluded a series of public events to discuss its soon-to-be drafted Vermont Climate Action Plan “considering pathways to address climate change while striving to integrate an equity perspective with a goal of ensuring that communities most impacted by climate change and an energy

transition will be considered “. VTIPL’s leadership has been and will continue to be engaged in this process. VTIPL signed a letter, along with 14 other VT organizations, urging the Council to prioritize several core principles when drafting the Action Plan that we all deem of high priority: the need to cut carbon pollution across Vermont’s economy; the need to do so equitably; and the need for funds to meet the first two goals. With anticipated federal funding from the Build Back Better Act, our state is well-positioned to make historic investments addressing the climate crisis. VPIRG recently hosted a webinar with members of the Climate Council discussing updates on the Climate Action Plan while Vermont climate advocates shared their priorities. The State asks you to complete its survey about the Climate Action Plan and the Comprehensive Energy Plan. This provides valuable input along with results from the Council’s public engagement process. Access [survey](#). Climate Webinar [recording](#). Letter to Council [signed by VTIPL](#).



-Can Public Transit Move to Meet Vermont's Emissions Deadline?

The transportation sector is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Vermont and the U.S. VTDigger's recent article outlined the current status of the state's public transit network and what

needs to change with bus and rail options to meet emissions targets. "As Vermont races toward its self-imposed deadline to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, there's an urgent push to get more people out of their cars and on public transit. The Global Warming Solutions Act...requires the state to reduce its carbon emissions to 26% of 2005 levels before 2025 or face potential lawsuits." [Read full VTDigger article.](#)



-Weatherization Wednesdays in October

Button Up Vermont wants you to think of weatherization as "the ultimate winter life hack." Buttoning up your home, church, or other building may mean air sealing and insulation or more

efficient heating options like heat pumps. If your place is losing heat, it's likely you're experiencing one or more common problem. Weatherization Wednesdays is a series of weekly events in October where Button Up representatives share tips and energy expertise. Events include live Q & A sessions as well as in-person events. [See full schedule.](#) To host an event, [contact Button Up VT.](#)



-VTIPL Welcomes Applications for Energy Grants from Churches

Vermont Interfaith Power & Light encourages Vermont churches to apply for our remaining 2021 matching grant funds geared to support energy improvements. The Katy Gerke Memorial Program (KGMP), administered by VTIPL, helps churches undertake energy projects to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and save money. To date in 2021, VTIPL has awarded grants to five churches. Since 2014, the Program has granted more than \$125,000 to churches in Vermont and 12 Upper Connecticut River Valley towns in New Hampshire. More information and downloadable applications are available on the [VTIPL website](#).



-VTIPL at STOP Line 3 March & Rally

VTIPL was out in full force for the recent STOP Line 3 protest march and rally in Burlington which we co-sponsored. Organized by 350VT, the rally started at City Hall Park and was followed by a march downtown and along Church Street. Protestors stopped along the way at TD Bank and Chase

Bank to deliver messages that these institutions must divest from fossil fuels. The march culminated at Battery Park where participants heard from several speakers including indigenous and youth protestors, as well as Bill McKibben, founder of 350.org. The event coincided with similar protests and climate strikes worldwide. Line 3 is a Tar Sands pipeline which Enbridge is constructing to carry oil from Canadian tar sands, traversing indigenous lands and waterways in Minnesota in violation of treaties. Tar sands are considered the most corrosive and carbon-intensive fossil fuel.



Photo courtesy Gerald Lee Hoffman



Photo courtesy Gerald Lee Hoffman

-Celebrating Sacred Waters a Success!

Some 50 people joined Vermont Interfaith Power & Light on a gorgeous Saturday morning at Shelburne Bay Park for a Celebrating

Sacred Waters gathering. Our morning began with an extraordinarily moving opening blessing offered by Chief Don Stevens of the Nulhegan Band of the Coosuk-Abenaki Nation, followed by other water-inspired readings, prayers, and information about the important LaPlatte River watershed from faith leaders, scientists, and nature interpreters.



Photo courtesy of Katherine Lee

Geologist Walter Poleman or canoe with Lake Champlain Maritime Museum's Education Director Elizabeth Lee. This would have been the fourth year of a favorite annual event, but the 2020 event was canceled due to COVID-19.



Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts

photos on our [website](#).

Participants then broke into groups to hike with UVM

We were happy to welcome many new friends! VT IPL is grateful for the support of our event partners including: All Souls Interfaith Gathering; Ascension Lutheran Church; Clean Water Network; ECHO, Leahy Center for Lake Champlain; Lake Champlain Committee; Lake Champlain Maritime Museum; and Lewis Creek Association. See more



Photo by Abagael Giles - VPR

particularly compelling quote is as follows: "Adults always tell me that we're the generation to fix things, which...I mean, they're not dead yet, it's their responsibility, too, to work on fixing it." To that, we say, AMEN! It is all of our responsibility, not just that of the young people who are inheriting the Earth.

[VPR story](#).

-Vermont Youth Lobby's Climate Justice Launch

Vermont Youth Lobby was back in Action in Montpelier recently after a long pandemic hiatus. Vermont Public Radio aired an "audio postcard" of the Lobby's Youth Launch for Climate Justice. Enjoy this compilation of clips of the students speaking. One



-Young Canadian Woman Creates Film about Youth Climate Movement

A young Canadian woman has recently finished making a film about the youth climate movement and luckily for us, has released it on a platform for free viewing. Slater Jewell-Kemker started filming the

climate youth movement in 2008 when she was 15 years old. The result is the documentary, *Youth Unstoppable*, a testament to the evolution of the movement during the 12 years she filmed, covering the effect of social media, the diverse and international nature of the movement, and, not surprisingly, the influence of Greta Thunberg and her Fridays for Future protests. The film was released in late September and is available for free screening on [Water Bear film platform](#). Read more about Jewell-Klemker is this [Global Citizen story](#).

[Donate Now](#)

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

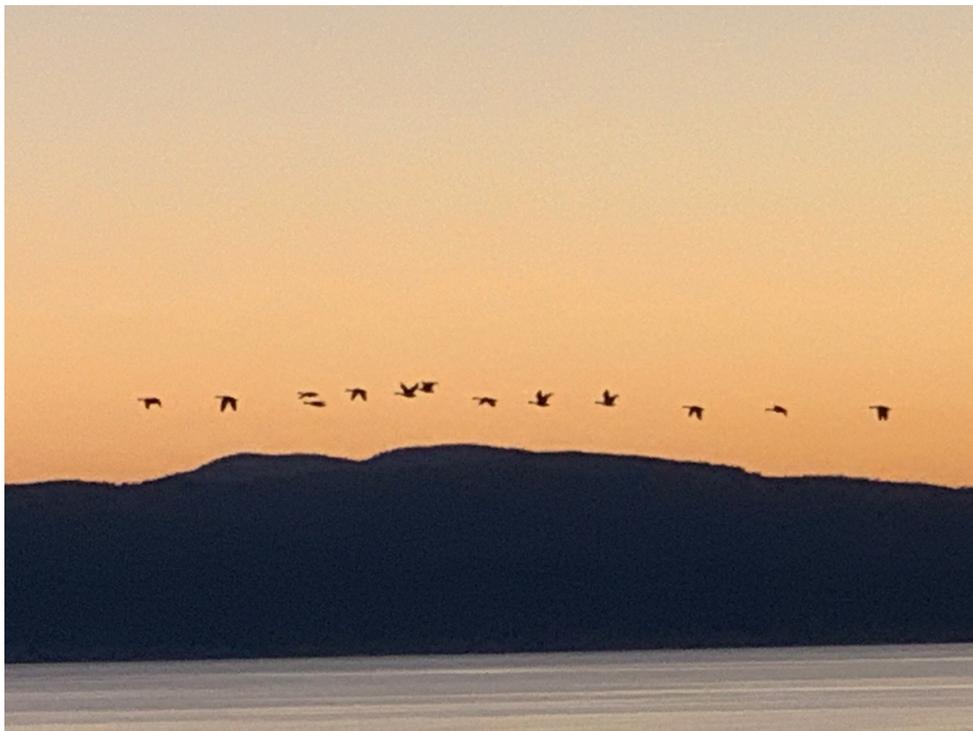


Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts



©2021 Vermont Interfaith Power and Light | PO Box 3095, Burlington, Vermont 05408