



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



Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts

Green Mountains, Blue Water News

Limits to Growth: Finding Pathways to a Sustainable Future



Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts

Register Now for VTIPL Spring Conference - April 24, Norwich, VT

We are happy to share details of VTIPL's Spring Conference taking place on Sunday, April 24, from 1:30 p.m. - 7 p.m. at Norwich Congregational Church, in Norwich, VT. The Conference, *Limits to Growth: Finding Pathways to a Sustainable Future*, features keynote speaker Dr. Jon Erickson, the David Blittersdorf Professor of Sustainability Science & Policy of The University of Vermont. Erickson has published widely on energy & climate change policy, land conservation, watershed planning, environmental public health, and the theory and practice of ecological economics. He is past President of the U.S. Society for Ecological Economics, among other distinguished roles.



Erickson will give a preview of his soon-to-be-released book, *The Progress Illusion: Reclaiming our Future from the Fairytale of Economics*. In the book, he asks, "With the planet in peril and humanity in crisis, how did we

become duped into believing the fairytale of economics? And how can we get past the illusion to design an economy that is socially just and ecologically balanced?"

The keynote will be followed by four workshops in two sessions featuring:

-**Prof. Jon Erickson & Marta Ceroni**, Co-Director, Academy for Systems Change;

-**Bob Fireovid**, Exec. Dir. of Better (not bigger) Vermont;

-**Creative Activism Youth Workshop** moderated by **Sylvia Burkman**, South Burlington High School senior & VT IPL Board member; and,

-**Rev. Joan Javier-Duval**, Pastor of Unitarian Church of Montpelier & **Jared Duval**, Exec. Dir. of Energy Action Network (EAN).

Our Conference is dedicated to the late Donella Meadows, lead author of *The Limits to Growth*; this year is the 50th anniversary of the book's initial publication.

[Registration is now open on VT IPL's website](#) where you can register and pay online, or print the registration form, complete and return it to our address. The Conference registration fee is \$45 per person which includes a meal, snacks, and beverages. Student registration fees are waived thanks to a VT IPL Board member's sponsorship of student participants. (Students still must register.) No one will be turned away for lack of funds; [email us](#) about a scholarship.

COVID Safety Measures

We ask that Conference participants be up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations. Masks are required; a limited number will be available on-site. Social distancing will be practiced.

Invite your youth groups to attend our Conference!

From Sylvia Burkman: “Are you interested in collaborating with other environmentally conscious youth? Join the youth environmental activism workshop at VT IPL’s Conference as we explore and engage with art as a medium for climate change awareness. Hear from inspiring activists and create your own artwork! Please come!”

VTIPL continues to welcome congregational sponsorship of our Conference. The minimum donation to sponsor is \$50.00. Congregation's names will appear in digital and printed Conference information. (Payment can be via check sent to VTIPL, P.O. Box 3095 Burlington, VT, 05408, or electronically using the secure “Donate” link on our [website](#). We encourage pastors, members of congregations, and all interested individuals to join the Conference. We look forward to seeing you. [Register Now!](#)



YOUTH GOV

VTIPL Virtual Screening of Film, *Youth v. Gov*, with Youth Panel - April 14

It is undeniable that youth are leading the way in climate advocacy and activism around the world. If you're interested in learning about youth climate activism in Vermont and beyond, join us for a virtual preview screening of

Youth v. Gov on Thursday, April 14, at 6:30 p.m. The film documents the story of 21 youth plaintiffs suing the U.S. government for violating their constitutional rights by perpetuating the climate crisis through its policies. After the screening, join a discussion with one of the filmmakers, and Vermont-based and national youth activists. Event moderator Sylvia Burkman, VT IPL Board member and South Burlington High School senior, says, "This will benefit anyone interested in learning more about the legacy of the climate crisis and how everyone, especially youth, can make a difference." We are grateful to Sylvia for her leadership of this event! [Pre-register for event.](#)



Bill McKibben - "This is How We Defeat Putin & Other Petrostate Autocrats"

The Guardian, Opinion -
February 25, 2022

As our hearts and prayers continue to be with the Ukrainian people, Bill McKibben offers an important perspective on the conflict and its energy implications. In the piece, McKibben states, "Imagine a Europe that ran on solar power and wind power. That Europe would not be funding Putin's Russia, and it would be far less scared of Putin's Russia." [Read Opinion piece.](#)

Our IPL network and supporters have been working for years to move the U.S. off of the destructive consumption of fossil fuels and into a clean energy future. To get to that future, policymakers must reject the self-serving efforts of dirty energy companies and instead invest in the types of clean energy that can move us to true energy independence. Please support our work in mobilizing faith communities and others in clean energy advocacy. This work is now more important than ever. Through our faithful advocacy, we stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine, and all the communities in the U.S. and around the world harmed by fossil fuel consumption.

IPCC 6th Assessment Report - Extent & Magnitude of Impacts Increasing

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recently released its latest report. Among new insights on climate impacts, vulnerability, and adaptation: “Climate change is affecting nature, people’s lives and infrastructure everywhere. Its dangerous and pervasive impacts are increasingly evident in every region of our world. These impacts are hindering efforts to meet basic human needs and they threaten sustainable development across the globe. All life on Earth – from ecosystems to human civilization – is vulnerable to a changing climate. Since the first IPCC reports, the evidence has become stronger: our world is warming and dangerous climate change and extreme events are increasingly impacting nature and people’s lives everywhere. This can be seen in the depths of the ocean and at the top of the highest mountains; in rural areas as well as in cities. The extent and magnitude of climate change impacts are larger than estimated in previous assessments. They are causing severe and widespread disruption in nature and in society; reducing our ability to grow nutritious food or provide enough clean drinking water, thus affecting people’s health and well-being and damaging livelihoods. In summary, the impacts of climate change are affecting billions of people in many different ways.” [IPCC Report.](#)



AMERICAN CLIMATE LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

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LIVE ONLINE March 28-31, 2022 | acls2022.org

American Climate Leadership Summit - Register with Yale FORE Code

Our friends at the Yale Forum on Religion & Ecology are pleased to be a sponsor of the 11th annual American Climate Leadership Summit taking place March 28-31. This virtual event brings together world-class speakers—including Bill McKibben, Katharine Hayhoe, Rev. Lennox Yearwood, Jr., and other diverse leaders. Join like-minded folks who seek new connections,

ground-breaking insights, and opportunities for practical action for equitable climate solutions. Be inspired to action through innovative sessions, and empowered with the latest climate information and resources. Learn about the Summit and register for free with this promo code thanks to Yale FORE:

ACLS22YALE [Register.](#)

Learn more about [Yale FORE.](#)

ALSO UPCOMING:

-Green Justice Zones Community Forum - March 23

We know there can be no climate solutions without climate justice. Join the Rights & Democracy Institute, Vermont Renews coalition partners, and the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies on Wednesday, March 23, at 6:00 p.m. to envision how Vermont communities can become Green Justice Zones. [Register.](#)

-Electrify Everything Town Hall - March 30

Join VECAN on Wednesday, March 30, 5:00-6:15 p.m., as they co-host a Town Hall Meeting with Burlington Mayor Miro Weinberger, and Co-founder and Chief Scientist of Rewiring America, Saul Griffith, Ph.D. to discuss the road to become a Net Zero Energy City by electrifying everything. [Register.](#)

-Solar for Houses of Worship Open Forum - April 7

Interested in how your house of worship could install solar panels, but not sure about how to make it happen? This open forum on Thursday, April 7, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. will provide insights from three Massachusetts-based congregations currently on the solar journey. Mass Interfaith Power & Light is organizing the workshop. Look for a VTIPL event with Vermont congregations using solar later this year. [Register.](#)



IPL Faith Climate Action Week Free Digital Organizer's Kits Available

Get ready for IPL's Faith Climate Action Week from Earth Day, April 22 - May 1! The resources in this kit will equip you to lead faith-based discussions and action in your faith community during Earth Month to help safeguard a thriving Earth for future generations. The theme of 2022's Faith Climate Action Week is *Sacred Trust: Our children's right to a livable future*. During the Week, we examine our responsibility to safeguard our Earth for future generations, and how our faiths call us to respond with bold and just solutions to climate change. The Kit includes a *Sacred Trust Guide* with information on intergenerational climate justice, and the moral and legal rights of our children and grandchildren to a livable climate. There are resources for how to get engaged in supporting local climate justice action, and a call for youth art that envisions a positive future for our Earth through the #ImagineIPL campaign. You'll find faith-based discussion materials, suggested short films, and a *Youth and Children Blessing* ceremony. [Download Free Kit.](#)

Save the Date: IPL Webinar with *Youth v. Gov* Plaintiffs - April 27

As a follow-up to VT IPL's April 14 virtual film screening and panel, please consider joining a national IPL webinar on Wednesday, April 27, at 7:30 p.m. to hear from the director of the film, *Youth v. Gov*, and two youth plaintiffs from the court case featured in the film whose activism is inspired by their faith. Registration link coming soon.



Today, March 22 is World Water Day

To mark the occasion, we share an excerpt of an essay by VT IPL Board member Sylvia Burkman, a high school senior.

Climate change is a vast ocean. It is slowly rising, waves eroding the fabric of our lives before we even stitch the cloth. Climate change is an all-consuming, all-encompassing conflict. Every day, it becomes a little easier to be swept away in its enormity. As individuals and

communities, one of the ways to effectively confront climate change is to address it on a micro-level, breaking it down and turning a significant problem into thousands of more manageable ones. For me, this is cyanobacteria. When I moved to Vermont, I remember being taken aback at how often cyanobacteria was in the local news; its increasing frequency, beach closures, and pet deaths made me wonder why I had not heard of this before.

Cyanobacteria blooms are not harmful in themselves, but some produce harmful or potentially fatal substances called cyanotoxins that are released after cell death or cell rupture, called lysis. The most commonly found toxin in Vermont, microcystin, can bioaccumulate, or build up in an animal or human, affecting the liver, kidney, or reproductive system. Another type of cyanotoxin called anatoxin binds to receptors in the nervous system, making it a dangerous neurotoxin: one study found a correlation to ALS. A methodical, science-based approach from the local government and community is a good place to start. Blooms thrive in nutrient-loaded waters, especially those affected by runoff from farms. Enacting regulations that limit the amount and type of fertilizer used will reduce the amount of nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus which contribute to rapid cell growth while prioritizing green space will decrease nutrient runoff. Installing tall reeds and other aquatic plants at the edges of beaches prevents cells from accumulating.

Thanks, Sylvia, for this important piece! Water truly is life!



Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts

[Donate Now](#)

Thank you for your ongoing support of our work providing a faith-based response to the climate crisis. We are so grateful!



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