

# Protecting Our Democracy, Voter Reflection Guide & thoughts on Independence Day



Photo of Local Motion Bike Ferry & Grace O'Malley's ice cream boat by Gerald Hoffman

- TONIGHT/Thursday, July 14, 7 p.m. IPL's *Protecting Our Democracy*
- IPL: Supreme Court EPA Ruling is A Moral Travesty
- Now Available: Faithful Voter Reflection Guide
- VTIPL Donor Offers Matching Grants – We Need You!
- Community Climate Resilience & Faith Communities - July 21
- Article: What if the Church takes the Lead on Climate Change?
- Raise the Blade Campaign
- No Other Lake Film - July 22, St. Albans Bay Park
- VTIPL's Pr. Nancy Wright to Lead Creation Care for N.E. Lutheran Synod
- HELP Wanted: VTIPL Seeks New Webmaster
- About Independence Day by VTIPL Board Member Harris Webster



**GUESTS**  
 Rev. Adam Russell Taylor, Sojourners  
 Gayla Tillman, GA Interfaith Power & Light  
 Leah Wiste, MI Interfaith Power & Light  
 Bee Moorhead, Texas Impact  
 Madison Mayhew, Interfaith Power & Light

★ ★ ★  
**PROTECTING OUR DEMOCRACY DISCUSSION**

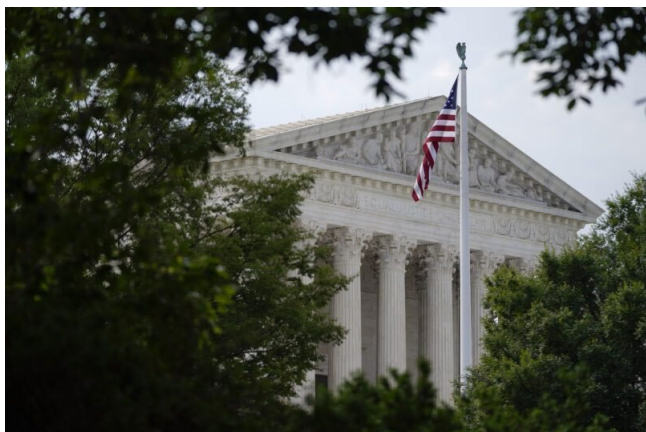
**JULY 14**  
**7PM ET / 4PM PT**




## TONIGHT/Thursday, July 14, 7 p.m. IPL's Protecting Our Democracy

If there was ever a time to protect our democracy, many of us would agree that time is now. As people of faith and conscience, we must work to protect our democracy whether that means caring for our neighbors or protecting our climate for future generations and for all of Creation. VT IPL invites you to join this important virtual discussion with national Interfaith Power & Light Pres. Rev. Susan Hendershot, Pres. of Sojourners magazine Rev. Adam Russell Taylor, author of *A More Perfect Union: A New Vision for Building the Beloved Community*, and several IPL state leaders. Speakers will discuss what's at stake and why people of faith and conscience are uniquely positioned to protect our democracy. Sponsored by IPL and Creation Justice Ministries.

[Register for tonight's virtual discussion.](#)

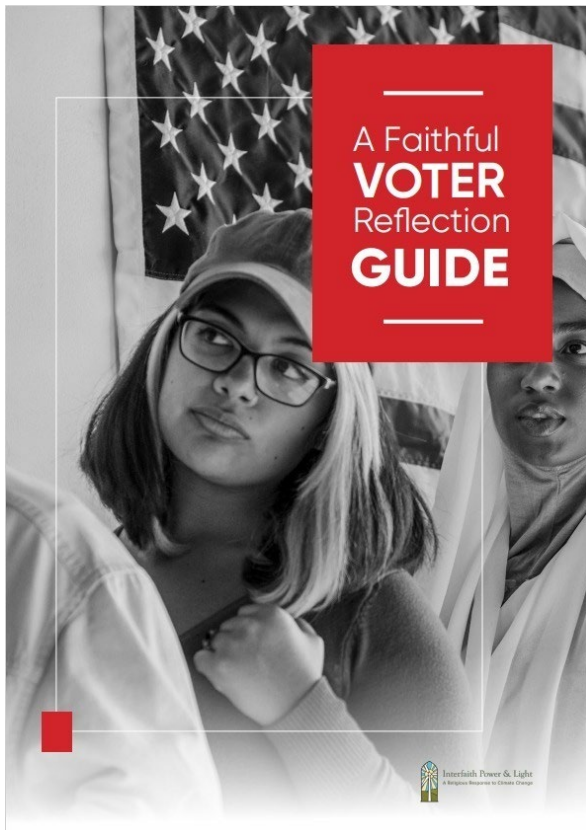


## National IPL - Supreme Court EPA Ruling A Moral Travesty

*Interfaith Power & Light Responds to Supreme Court's West Virginia v. EPA Decision & Calls on Congress to Pass Bold Federal Action to Advance Climate Justice*

As you may know, the U.S. Supreme Court recently released a decision on the West Virginia v. EPA case that limits the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to reduce carbon pollution from power plants. The decision will limit the EPA's ability to set the strong standards needed to cut carbon pollution and tackle the climate crisis. VT IPL stands with national Interfaith Power & Light in strongly denouncing the ruling. IPL released the following statement by Rev. Susan Hendershot, Pres. of IPL: "Make no mistake, the Supreme Court's ruling risks the lives of thousands of people by limiting the ability of the U.S. government to regulate carbon pollution from power plants. It prioritizes polluters, especially the coal industry, over people. This is a moral travesty. People of faith and conscience have long been advocating for climate policy that will safeguard our children's future and care for those burdened by pollution and climate impacts. Rest assured that we will continue to fight for these policies and carry out our faithful commitment to care for God's creation and protect the vulnerable."







**Faithful Voter Reflection Guide** Interfaith Power & Light has released a multi-issue Faithful Voter Reflection Guide to help educate and inform us about the issues at stake in the 2022 elections. We believe that elections are a referendum on the values which will shape our future, and we need elected leaders who share our values. We know that we must participate thoughtfully in our elections if we want a country that reflects our highest values. Free, digital versions are available to download; printed versions can also be purchased. The Guide intends

to stimulate the conversations we need to renew our democracy. [Download digital guide.](#) [Order printed guide.](#)

### VTIPL Donor Offers Matching Grants – We Need You!

A longtime VTIPL donor has generously offered to match all new gifts and increases in past donation amounts to our organization in this calendar year. We are deeply grateful for this opportunity to raise additional funds to support VTIPL's work providing our communities with a faith-based response to the climate crisis. However, we need you to help make this a reality. If you have never given to VTIPL, now would be a very meaningful time to make that first donation as it will be doubled. Or, if you've donated to VTIPL in the past and now increase your donation, it will be doubled! As we are a 501(c)3 charitable organization, your donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Thanks very much for considering a gift at this particularly important moment. **Donations can be sent by postal mail to:** VTIPL, P.O. Box 3095, Burlington, VT, 05408. **Or donate securely on our website using the Donate Now link below or [on VTIPL's website](#).** (Please indicate "matching grant" in the designation field.) If you have any questions, please send us an [email](#).

<b>Building Community Climate Resilience</b> <b>The Role of Faith Communities in Addressing Natural Hazards</b>	
	
<small>Photo by Justin Wilkens</small>	
<b>THURSDAY, July 21</b> <b>6PM-7PM Eastern Time</b>	
<b>REGISTER AT:</b> <a href="https://creationjustice.org/resilience">creationjustice.org/resilience</a>	
<b>Speakers:</b> Dr. Dawn Baldwin Gibson Dr. Christy Miller Hesed	
	

### Community Climate Resilience & Faith Communities – July 21, 6 p.m.

Creation Justice Ministries invites everyone to join the virtual presentation, *Building Community Climate Resilience: The Role of Faith Communities in Addressing Natural Hazards* featuring Dr. Dawn Baldwin Gibson and Dr. Christy Miller Hesed. Climate change will continue to burden communities

across the U.S. and the world with increasing floods, heat, and fire. Faith communities can be a first line of defense against these natural hazards by providing food, water, shelter, and hope in times of great upheaval. Faith communities also play an integral role in disaster preparation and response, while building resilience to natural hazards before they hit. How can the fundamental work of faith communities be integrated into broader resilience efforts? Learn how your faith community can collaborate with others to build resilience. Presenters: Dr. Dawn Baldwin Gibson is Exec. Pastor of Peletah Ministries and Superintendent at Peletah Academic Center for Excellence in New Bern, N.C. She is also a member of the North Carolina Faith and Justice Alliance Steering Committee. Dr. Christy Miller Hesed is Research Assoc. at the North Central Climate Adaptation Science Center in Boulder, CO, and was Project Director of Engaging Faith Communities for Coastal Resilience addressing climate change on the Chesapeake Bay. [Register for link.](#)

### **Article: What if the Church takes the Lead on Climate Change?**

*Climate Changes Will Affect the Church. What if the Church Takes the Lead?*  
(From "The Better Samaritan" blog of the Humanitarian Disaster Institute at Wheaton College, 7/11/2022.)

Rayshawn Graves, Dir. of Mission at Northside Church in Richmond, VA, writes, "Whereas the changing climate will have an effect on both wealthier and poorer countries and cities, it will be the populations made up of the poor and the marginalized who will be disproportionately affected and most vulnerable to climate hazards such as severe storms and flooding, famine, drought, and starvation which in turn produce issues such as loss of income sources, malnutrition, displacement, food insecurity, and permanent impacts on health....In present times, there is no shortage of Christian humanitarian aid for those in need during moments of crisis and seasons of natural disasters. Both Christian and secular humanitarian aid often respond generously and compassionately in these moments. But in light of the IPCC's (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) revelations, it's time to assess the moment our world is in and ask what a proactive Christian response might be to the potential climate hazards that will disproportionately affect the world's poor and marginalized." [Read the full article.](#)



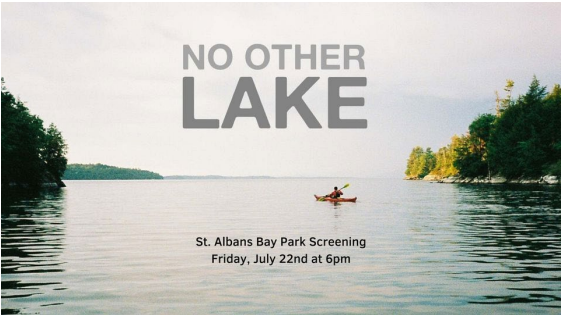
### **Raise the Blade Campaign**

*(Thanks Linda Patterson of Lake Champlain Sea Grant for this article.)*

Natural bodies of water are a precious resource. Protecting the quality of our waters is critical to the health and welfare of all beings. Those who maintain lawns have an opportunity to help reduce stormwater runoff into roads and storm drains, thus reducing the pollutants

ending up in lakes and streams. Simply raise the lawnmower blade to three inches, and leave the grass clippings on the lawn. Grass cut at three inches grows longer roots, creating air pockets that allow more rain absorption. And clippings left on lawns break down into organic matter serving as a natural soil fertilizer. Healthy soils act like a sponge, soaking up, filtering, and storing rainwater and snowmelt that could otherwise flow to water bodies.

The Raise the Blade campaign promotes these practices throughout the Lake Champlain basin. To date, 5 cities and towns, 15 businesses, and 5 nonprofits have joined the campaign setting an example for communities and helping to spread the word about reducing stormwater runoff. **The Raise the Blade campaign also invites members of faith communities and houses of worship to adopt these practices.** For more information, or to get a Raise the Blade lawn sign, please [contact Linda Patterson at](#) or phone 802-734-2617. (A longer version of this story is on VTIPL's website: [website.](#))



**Film, *No Other Lake* - July 22, St. Albans Bay Park**

Friends of Northern Lake Champlain, the Franklin County Stormwater Collaborative, and the St. Albans Museum invite all lovers of Lake Champlain to come together for a 5:45 p.m.

viewing of, *No Other Lake*, a film created by Vermonters Jordan Rowell and Duane Peterson. After the screening, the filmmakers will lead a Q & A, and there will be opportunities to connect with organizations working to improve the lake's water quality. Bring a chair. There will be snacks on site. The film will be shown at the Stone Building of St. Albans Bay Park. For more information about the film and to view a trailer, visit the [film website.](#)



*The Rev. Dr. Nancy Wright.*

**VTIPL's Pr. Nancy Wright to Lead Creation Care for New England Lutheran Synod**

VTIPL Vice-President The Rev. Dr. Nancy Wright retires this weekend from her position as Minister of Ascension Lutheran Church in South Burlington where she has served for 16 years. In keeping with her profound dedication to education and

advocacy regarding our world's environmental crises, and special focus on water stewardship, along with past leadership of the Green Team of the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as of July 17, Pr. Nancy takes on the role of Pastor of Creation Care for the Synod. We wish Pr. Nancy the very best in her new position! We are thrilled that this will also allow her more time to serve with VTIPL including guest preaching for our member congregations. We'll share more information about how Pr. Nancy can contribute to your faith communities' environment-related work in coming newsletters. If you wish to connect with her, [email Pr. Nancy Wright after July 17.](#)



**HELP WANTED: VTipl Seeks New Webmaster** Are you retired, a student, or someone with a bit of time on your hands who's concerned about the climate crisis and willing to serve? Do you have computer or website-related skills, or interest in learning how to manage a website? If so, please consider becoming our new webmaster. VTipl has been so fortunate to have Rev. Richard (Dick) Hibbert as our volunteer webmaster for about a decade. He's done this while also serving in other VTipl positions including several years as Secretary and then as President. Dick stepped down from our Board in 2020, but has kindly continued to be our webmaster. Now, he's retiring from this position. Dick will help train a new webmaster to maintain VTipl's website and plans to be available going forward to answer questions. And please consider whether you know someone who might be willing. We appreciate your help. For more information, please send us an [email](#). Thanks!

---

### **About Independence Day by VTipl Board Member Harris Webster**

"It is understandable many VTipl supporters get discouraged reading recent major news stories: Ukraine; COVID; gun violence; the January 6th Insurrection; ending Roe; and most alarming to me, the increasing divisiveness and the seeming lack of fundamental common values on so many issues in American life. However, I am refusing to write one more pessimistic commentary on today's world, especially in this post-July 4th period when we have just celebrated the adoption of our full-of-wonder Declaration of Independence.

In the above list of problematic issues facing America today, I didn't include the one I believe is the most serious, the 'Climate Crisis', or as I would describe it, the crisis threatening Mother Earth's ability to sustain life on our planet. I hope that I, you, the experts, our leaders, and the media do more to mitigate this challenge, but as I just said, that is not my goal with this commentary, but rather, to look at the positives.

First, I have heard on TV and have read online various poll results that I find satisfying. The results ranged from a majority of 54% to 80% saying they would be willing to make a lot or some changes to how they live and work to help avoid the worst consequences of climate change. Congratulations ordinary Americans, especially considering that no U.S. political leaders call on people to make significant sacrifices for this purpose, but tend only to promise to provide jobs and subsidies if people do so!

I have some optimism these days based on the growth of meditation groups, spiritual movements, religious organizations, and environmentalists who stress non-material truths. These folks value Creation and the Golden Rule and are worried about the worship of Mammon. I believe they should and will see how their beliefs and practices are an essential element in the movement to heal, not harm, our Earth, the Sustainer of Life.

I am thankful for the re-emergence of the wisdom of indigenous cultures which survived hundreds of thousands of years. I am thankful so many people are reading Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass*. There are a fair number of local organizations who acknowledge we are living on the land of

the Western Abenaki. I hope we also adopt indigenous gratefulness for and love of the land...."

Read Harris's full essay on [VTIPL's website](#).

*Harris Webster is an octogenarian and retired social studies teacher who enjoys walking in his beloved Montpelier.*



*Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts*

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

[Donate Now](#)

