



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



*Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts.*

## **Green Mountains, Blue Water**

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- **Monthly Drop-In Virtual Meetings for Creation Care & EcoSpirituality**
- ***Planning the Energy Future of Your Congregation*, Feb. 21**
- **VECAN Workshop Series: Potential of Thermal Energy**
- **IPL's Faith Climate Action Week, *Living the Golden Rule*, April 14-23**



**VTIPL Event: Weatherization & Energy Efficiency Rebates for Faith Communities, February 23, 7 p.m.**

Please join us on Thursday, February 23, at 7 p.m. when Vermont Interfaith Power & Light hosts a webinar on Weatherization & Efficiency Rebates for

Faith Communities.

Weatherization (air sealing and adding insulation) is one of the most effective steps you can take to reduce your house of worship's energy use, save money, and reduce carbon pollution. Bruce Courtot, Senior Energy Consultant for Efficiency Vermont will explain how your house of worship, much like your home, loses heat, and what you can do through weatherization to reduce heat loss, save money, and make your congregation more comfortable in the colder months. Also, Efficiency Vermont's Rose Wall will share how your congregation can benefit from financial incentives and rebates available from Efficiency Vermont when you weatherize your house of worship. The event will take place on Zoom. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about joining the meeting. [REGISTER NOW.](#)

Please consider a donation to support this VTIPL program. THANK YOU!

[Donate Now](#)

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## **Ascension Lutheran Church Wins National IPL Cool Congregations Challenge!**

Congratulations to Ascension Lutheran Church in South Burlington for being chosen as the national winner in this year's Energy Saver category of national Interfaith Power & Light's Cool Congregations Challenge!

Ascension Lutheran won the award for their inspiring years-long upgrade project that cut energy use of their building, preventing 40 tons of carbon emissions annually. The congregation considers their energy upgrade work a legacy to their children and grandchildren. Over 17 years, they have reduced their carbon footprint by 60% by upgrading lighting, heating, cooling and ventilation systems, insulating buildings, and purchasing solar from a community solar farm. They are also known as a Creation Stewardship Congregation. Along with the recognition, Ascension will receive \$1000.

"Ascension Lutheran Church and the other national winning congregations are casting a vision for the kind of world in which they want to live, and then carrying out that vision with practical actions that make a real difference in creating lasting solutions to climate change," said Rev. Susan Hendershot, President of Interfaith Power & Light. Bravo!



## **Vermont Climate Legislation Overview** by VTIPL Board Member Richard Butz (Read the full piece on our [website](#).)

Our Great Little State legislature continues to work on important climate change legislation that will enable us to edge closer to sustainability. Here is a summary of some

of what's on the table this session. VTIPL will provide updates on how you can help get these bills across the finish line.

### **Important Climate Requests of Our Representatives**

- Significantly increase the amount of sustainable energy, particularly solar and wind, that we produce in Vermont and the New England mix.
- Keep electric rates affordable for all Vermonters with particular emphasis on

supporting low income and marginalized people. As we electrify, the increased demand will add pressure on prices.

### **Specific Bills to Watch & to Contact Your Legislators** (titles may change)

#### **A Renewable Energy Standard (RES)** that:

- requires all new energy to come from solar and wind produced in Vermont & New England;
- does not depend on any new Hydro Quebec power. As HQ hydropower is maxed out, new energy will come from Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) that are actually produced by fossil fuels;
- does not rely on REC's that are exchanged for fossil fuels shipped to Vermont.

#### **H.242 Thermal Networks Act**

- provides a way to implement and scale geothermal and other thermal energy systems that are affordable, safe, healthy, reliable, resilient, and secure;
- encourages utilities, businesses, and co-ops to become network geothermal installers, providing secure jobs for gas and oil heating workers;

#### **S.5 The Affordable Heat Act** that:

- incentivizes weatherization and installation of electric heat pumps and geothermal systems;
- includes accurate lifecycle accounting whereby all aspects of carbon emissions are counted all along the way;
- progressively reduces dependence on liquid biofuels, biomass, or so-called renewable natural gas.



*VTIPL at 2020 Faith Climate Action Day  
with former Sen. Pro Tem Tim Ashe*

### **VTIPL's Faith Climate Action Day, State House, Montpelier, March 29**

VTIPL is pleased to announce our second Faith Climate Action Day, in partnership with VPIRG, Vermont Conservation Voters, and Vermont Interfaith Action. The event will be held on Wednesday, March 29 at the State House in Montpelier. Please plan to join us for a legislative briefing before a news



conference in the State House, after which we hope to connect briefly with our specific legislators, then sit in on the legislative proceedings of the afternoon.

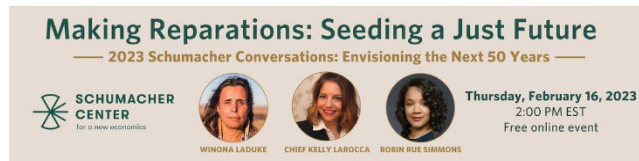
This Day of Climate Action follows our very successful Faith Climate Action Day in February 2020. If you are interested in participating, please send us an [email](#).

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### **New VTIPL Grant Program, Ellie Cressey Webster Memorial Fund**




In the very near future, VTIPL will be sharing details about our exciting new matching grant fund, The Ellie Cressey Webster Memorial Fund. This new program is available to all of Vermont's congregations which are dedicated to climate action and making tangible changes to lower their carbon emissions and care for creation. Stay tuned for more information!

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**Making Reparations: Seeding a Just Future**  
— 2023 Schumacher Conversations: Envisioning the Next 50 Years —

 **SCHUMACHER CENTER**  
for a new economics

**Thursday, February 16, 2023**  
2:00 PM EST  
Free online event

WINONA LADUKE CHIEF KELLY LAROCKA ROBIN RUE SIMMONS

### **Making Reparations: Seeding a Just Future, Feb. 16**

The Schumacher Center is

convening a monthly series featuring New Economic thinkers, builders, and activists from a range of fields. February's theme is *Making Reparations: Seeding a Just Future*.

Esteemed presenters include: Winona LaDuke, renowned activist of the White Earth Nation; Chief Kelly LaRocca of First Nations Land Management; and Robin Rue Simmons of FirstRepair. The virtual event will take place on Thursday, February 16, at 2 p.m. [Register for this free event](#).

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### **Monthly Drop-in Gatherings for Creation Care & EcoSpirituality**

Hoping to become a Creation Care Congregation? Perhaps your congregation already is. Either way, you're invited to join

others who foster Creation Care to share questions, support, tips, and inspiration. Pastor Nancy Wright, Vermont Interfaith Power & Light's Vice-President, leads these virtual meetings on the last Tuesday of the month. Come every time or whenever you wish to drop in. **The next meeting is Tuesday, February 28, at 7 p.m.** To receive the link to join, please send a message with "Creation Care Zoom Meeting" in the subject line of your [email](#). Also, please include your faith community's name in your message. For a list of related resources, visit VT IPL's [website](#).

### **Connecting with Spirit in Nature - 2nd Sundays**

These monthly virtual gatherings focused on EcoSpirituality are a great way to stay connected with those who value a spirituality grounded in appreciation of the natural world. Pr. Nancy Wright facilitates the meetings. Reflections on the seasons and spiritual readings will be provided, as well as suggestions for shared explorations. The one-hour virtual meetings are scheduled for the second Sunday of the month. For a link to join, please send Pr. Nancy an [email](#).

Both offerings are co-sponsored by VT IPL and the Green Team of the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.



### **Planning the Energy Future of your Congregation, Feb. 21**

This IPL-sponsored webinar will address the importance of benchmarking or creating

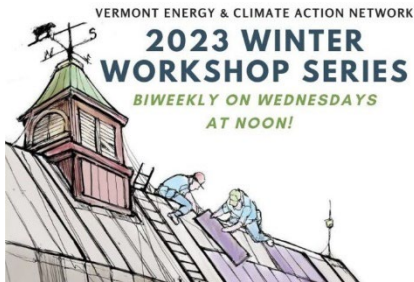
a snapshot of your facilities' energy use to shape your congregation's plan to cut energy costs and care for our Sacred Earth. This is the first step to making a plan to take advantage of federal funding available later this year from the Inflation Reduction Act and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

[Register here.](#)

The National Manager of EPA's Energy Star for Small Businesses and Congregations will explain the EPA's free energy tracking tool, Portfolio Manager, the gold standard of energy tracking. For smaller congregations

needing a simpler tool, IPL's Sarah Paulos will explain IPL's Cool Congregations carbon footprint calculator.

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## VECAN Workshop: Potential of Thermal Energy

Join VECAN's 2023 Winter Workshop Series on March 1, for *Keeping Vermonters*

*Warm...and Cool: the Potential of Thermal Energy Networks.* Geothermal or other kinds of thermal energy networks are among the cleanest, most efficient, safest, and healthiest ways to heat and cool buildings. Beginning with the basics and benefits of networked geothermal systems, this workshop addresses the possibilities for harnessing and exchanging thermal energy. This is part of a lunchtime webinar series organized by the Vermont Community Geothermal Alliance. [Register here.](#)

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## IPL's Faith Climate Action Week, *Living the Golden Rule*, April 14-23

Mark your calendars for April 14-23, this year's National Interfaith Power & Light's Faith Climate Action Week with the theme, *Living the Golden Rule*. Take advantage of

content provided in the Organizer's Kit including diverse and creative resources to help faith communities act on climate from a spiritual perspective. Available now is IPL's [Printed Organizer's Kit](#). A digital Organizer's Kit will be available soon.

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*Thank you for your interest in and support of Vermont Interfaith Power & Light. We look forward to collaborating with you on behalf of the human community and all of Creation.*



*Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts.*

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