



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

Green Mountains, Blue Water



Photo by Richard Hibbert

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Join VTIPL's Board of Directors!

Join a dedicated team of creative thinkers, spiritual leaders, and climate advocates in caring for the Earth.

Vermont Interfaith Power & Light (VTIPL) offers a faith-based response to global climate change. With the support of more than 75 faith communities across the state, we seek to build a more sustainable future for Vermont and for the Earth as a whole.

We're excited to announce several openings on our Board of Directors! If you have a passion for affecting climate change, and a religious or spiritual connection to Earth stewardship, we'd love to speak with you.

Our board consists of active and dedicated community members who work to empower environmental advocacy, educate faith communities about caring for creation, and take action to ensure the health and well-being of our human and natural communities.

If you would like to learn more, please email us at info@vtipl.org.

On Faith: Readings & Reflections

"The key to stopping the environmental apocalypse is not science but love. For decades now we have been staring at the scientific reports. They have not sufficiently inspired us to change our apocalyptic reality. But where science has failed, faith can succeed. We must help humanity rediscover [Mother Earth], their loving parent, the living world that sustains them. We must help them feel her love just as we show them how that love can be returned. And it can begin by gathering people around two simple questions: Where were you in nature when you experienced a vision of such beauty that it took your breath away? And how did that make you feel? If you can answer those two questions, you are on your way to meeting the Mother you may never have known before."

-- Steven Charleston, from *We Survived the End of the World: Lessons from Native America on Apocalypse and Hope* (Minneapolis, MN: Broadleaf Books, 2023), 109–110.

We invite you to answer these questions yourself, or bring them to your faith communities:

Where were you in nature when you experienced a vision of such beauty that it took your breath away?

How did that make you feel?

Share your responses with us for our next newsletter!

Email: chelsea@vtipl.org



Solar Financing Webinar

Solar Financing for Congregations 2024 - Interfaith Power and Light

Join National Interfaith Power & Light's Solar Financing for Congregations webinar to learn how to finance solar at your congregation on June 13 at 12 pm Eastern!

Learn more about the different ways congregations can finance solar from Jerry Bernstein, author of IPL's Solar Financing for Congregations. Next is an overview of Direct Pay from Miguel Yanez, from the Environmental and Energy Study Institute, with the latest updates. Maggie Chappen, the Senior Warden from St Andrew's Episcopal Church in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, will share her experience filing for Direct Pay for their solar installation. Finally, we'll hear from our friends at Energy Sage, an electrification marketplace helping IPL congregations find solar and heat pump installers in many states.

What better way to celebrate the summer solstice than to plan to use the sun's energy to heal our Sacred Earth! [Register here.](#)

If you aren't able to attend the webinar live, the recording will be sent out to everyone who registers.

Legislative Updates

An Update from Vermont Natural Resources Council

and Vermont Conservation Voters:

Recent legislation that has been enacted into law:

“Establishing a Climate Superfund (S.259) – This will create a Climate Superfund to ensure that the world’s largest fossil fuel companies are required to pay their fair share of the cost of disaster cleanup, and help invest in climate resilience and adaptation measures here in Vermont. Governor Scott allowed this legislation to become law without his signature yesterday.

Mitigating Flooding and Building Climate Resilience (S.213) – The Flood Safety Act will take important steps to reduce flood risk across Vermont by protecting and enhancing the state’s wetlands, limiting development in river corridors, and improving dam safety. Governor Scott allowed this legislation to become law without his signature yesterday.

Banning Toxic Forever Chemicals (S.25) – This is a nation-leading step to protect communities by banning per- and polyfluorinated substances (PFAS) and other toxic chemicals from personal care products and menstrual products, and ban PFAS “forever chemicals” from apparel, cookware, artificial turf, and children’s products. Governor Scott signed this legislation into law yesterday.”

Vetoed by the Governor:

“Modernizing Vermont’s Renewable Energy Standard (H.289) – This bill would put Vermont on track to achieve 100% renewable electricity by 2035 across all the state’s utilities, and significantly increase the requirements for utilities to deploy new renewable energy built here in Vermont and in the region.

Protecting Pollinators from Harmful Pesticides (H.706) – This bill would phase out the use of neonicotinoid pesticides in Vermont. These harmful pesticides are applied to seeds that are widely used by farmers, despite research showing they provide little to no benefit. Instead, there is substantial evidence that they are contributing to pollinator loss and pose potential risks to public health.”

The Legislature will convene again on June 17th for a veto session. These bills require a 2/3rds majority vote to override their gubernatorial vetoes. **Please contact your legislator to let them know you support the passage of these bills!** (You can find your legislator [here](#).)

Creation Care in Action

“A ‘Cool’ Success Story”

by Sam Swanson, Ascension Lutheran congregant and VT IPL Board Treasurer

Earlier this year, Ascension Lutheran Church in South Burlington found we would need to upgrade air-conditioning in part of the church building to meet the needs of the Old School program (a nature-based preschool) that operates at the church. The two existing window air-conditioners did not meet state regulation for such a preschool program. The Church decided these improvements could best be accomplished by installing two heat pump units, which would have the additional benefit of enabling us to reduce the use of natural gas for heating the church in the winter. However, the church budget could not provide the \$40,000 needed to install the heat pump systems. To move forward with the project, Ascension Lutheran split the project into two phases, each costing about \$20,000. We then applied for a **VTIPL Climate Action Program** matching grant in the amount of \$10,000 to cover half the cost of the first phase, and appealed to the congregation for donations to cover the remaining \$10,000. The subsequent fundraising program--launched with the VTIPL seed funding--succeeded in not only obtaining \$10,000 for the first phase, but raised an additional \$20,000, enabling us to fund both phases of the heat pump installation. Thank you to the generous community of Ascension Lutheran and to VTIPL for making this project a success!

“Hope for the Earth”

Congratulations to St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Brattleboro on its successful Building Hope for the Earth project! With help from grants through VTIPL's Climate Action Grant Program, St. Michael's conducted a comprehensive energy audit and then installed cold-climate heat pumps in their sanctuary and rectory.

Per the article in the Brattleboro Reformer: “Within three months of its campaign launch, St. Michael's Episcopal Church on Bradley Avenue raised the lion's share of capital funds needed to launch Phase One of its Building Hope for the Earth (BHE) project designed to make the church property, church, education wing, and rectory, 110 percent powered by clean, renewable energy by 2030.”

Read the full story [here](#).



Apply to our Climate Action Grant Program!

Faith communities seeking to improve the energy efficiency of their buildings and reducing their carbon emissions are invited to explore VTIPL's Climate Action Grant program. More information can be found [on our website](#).

Thank you for supporting Vermont Interfaith Power & Light. We are grateful to collaborate with you on behalf of the human community and all of Creation.

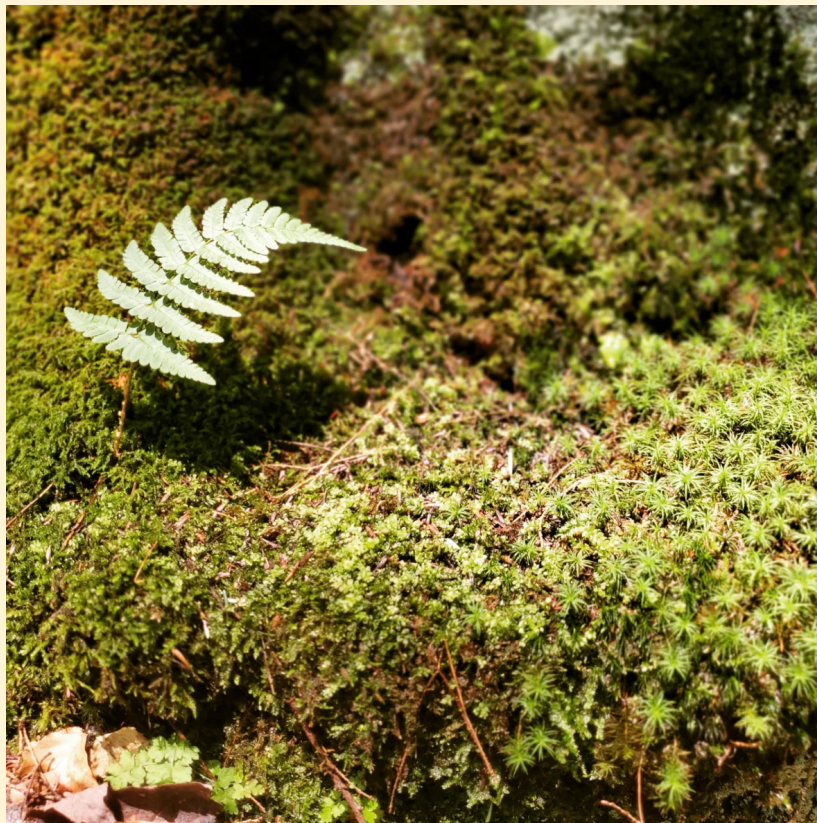


Photo by Chelsea Steinauer-Scudder

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