



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

Green Mountains, Blue Water



TROUT LILY. "Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light." - Pope Francis

In This Issue:

Dear VTipl Community,

Spring ephemerals are appearing in the woods, soaking up the available sunlight on the forest floor before the leaves emerge across the canopies of our beautiful Northern Hardwood forests. These flowers are all the more beautiful for their fleeting presence: they will grow, flower, seed, and go dormant all within the next several weeks.

In this issue of our newsletter, we've paired images of spring ephemerals with quotes from Pope Francis.

May both the beauty of wildflowers and the words of a great leader serve as a reminder for us to delight in Creation, in all of its manifestations, and to rejoice in the arrival of spring!

If you'd like help identifying the ephemerals you're seeing, [check out this article from the Vermont Land Trust](#).

We're excited to share some of the ways that VTipl is caring for Creation and working to ensure a thriving and healthy future for Vermont.

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Forward Momentum on Climate Initiatives

We're keeping a close eye on the political landscape and we're participating in efforts to ensure that Vermont stays on track with climate policy and commitments.

Our message is consistent: **We cannot afford to go backwards on climate policies and progress.**

Here are some of the efforts we have been involved with lately:

We sent out an Action Alert to our volunteer list, encouraging them to call their senator **to oppose the introduction of an amendment on the budget that would repeal the Global Warming Solutions Act cause of action, repeal Clean Cars and Clean Trucks, and repeal the Clean Heat Standard statute.** (Update: The amendment did not materialize on the Senate floor!)

We joined the Preservation Trust of Vermont for a workshop for faith communities in St Johnsbury.

We signed-on to a letter from the Conservation Law Foundation **opposing the delay of the Advanced Clean Trucks rule (H.503).**

We joined a list of organizations that sent **a joint letter to the Senate Committee on Appropriations to support funding for a critical cost-saving climate resilience policy – the implementation of Act 122** (the Climate Superfund Act).

Alongside Rural Vermont, The Conservation Law Foundation, The Environmental Justice Network, Waterkeeper Alliance, Vermont Natural Resources Council, Vermont Conservation Voters, **we expressed our opposition to S.45, a bill that would remove the provision of Vermont state law that gives citizens the right to sue when a factory farm has a “substantial adverse effect on the health, safety, or welfare” of the community.**

Alongside VPIRG, we signed a multi-faith letter, sent to every congressperson, asking them to protect renewable energy tax credits in the upcoming reconciliation.

VTIPL sponsored Sustainable Woodstock's Earth Day program, featuring advocate and activist Rev. Mariama White Hammond.

VTIPL'S Public Comment to the Climate Council (from Board Member Richard Butz)

Vermont Interfaith Power & Light (VTIPL) works to help members of Vermont's faith and spiritual communities understand and act to address the climate crisis, which is threatening the world. The climate crisis is, at heart, a spiritual crisis.

This spiritual crisis demands recognition that Earth is a precious gift, that global climate change is a moral challenge, and that global climate change is disrupting the natural balance. **We live our faith through our actions, and our faith demands that we work for a just, equitable and sustainable future for all creation.**

We believe that Vermont's 650,000 people are called to at least carry out our share of the global work needed and, one hopes, can demonstrate to much larger towns, cities and states that this small community can show that getting this work done will improve the lives of our people.

We charge the Climate Council with meeting the legal requirements and timelines of the Climate Action Plan and:

- **Ensure that people across Vermont in all walks of life are participating** in the transformational publicly funded efforts to achieve short and long term climate goals.
- **Increase public access to community solar** with strong financial support for low and middle income home owners and renters.
- Increase affordable access to urban, sub-urban and rural public transportation networks to reduce the need for personal vehicles, reduce space allocated for parking and enable those without vehicles to get around efficiently throughout the day and week.

- **Provide Vermont residents, businesses, local governments, and community serving organizations with the means** now to eliminate, or at least significantly reduce, **the climate emissions produced by heating buildings of all types** in Vermont with fossil fuels and inefficient high emission producing wood burning stoves and boilers.
- **Commit resources to accelerate the deployment of EVs, hybrid EV's, and charging infrastructure**, ensuring that people at all income levels are able to get and use EVs and hybrid EV's to replace their fossil fuel cars and trucks Vermont families and workers now depend upon.
- **Replace Vermont's portfolio standard policy and renewable energy credit accounting to ensure that renewable energy projects** built in Vermont contribute to Vermont climate emission goals.
- **Build and use science based measurement and evaluation practices** that will tell us all what works and what needs to change.
- **Undertake the difficult work of bridging differences of perspective among Vermont people with different backgrounds across Vermont**, aiming to gradually build the best possible foundation of public trust and support for Vermont efforts to address the climate crisis.

Storms and flooding have already begun to intensify in Vermont. Seasons are shifting affecting maple sugaring and winter sports. Species are being displaced while others are moving in. Climate scientists agree that the crisis is now, and that **we must take action now**, it will cost much more if we delay.

Later is too Late.

Submitted by the Board of Vermont Interfaith Power and Light

Richard Butz, Board member

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You can submit your own public comment to the Climate Council for VT's Climate Action Plan!

Give your input on the Climate Action Plan update!

[Here is the commenting form.](#)

You are welcome to pull from VTIPL's talking points / comments above.

Thank you!



SPRING BEAUTY. "Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction." - Pope Francis

Webinar Recording: Environmentally Responsible Investing

"If it's a sin to wreck creation, then it's a sin to profit from wrecking creation."

In March, we hosted a webinar about environmentally responsible investing, featuring denominational leader, climate activist, author and public theologian Rev Jim Antal, and socially responsible financial planner, environmentalist, and social organizer Craig Walker of Greenvest.

You can watch the recording to learn about the faith and environmental values that inform responsible investing, practical steps for how to do so, and some great questions from the audience.

[WATCH THE RECORDING HERE](#). Passcode: *5hSbuW%



PNS Article about VTipl Investing Webinar

Mike Ferguson wrote an article about the webinar for the Presbyterian News Service, **which gives a wonderful overview of the program and its highlights.** Thank you, Mike and PNS!

You can read the article **[HERE](#)**.



COLTSFOOT. "Let us sing as we go. May our struggles and our concern for our planet never take away the joy of our hope." - Pope Francis

Be a VTIPL Congregational Liaison!

Are there key people in your congregation who are concerned about caring for the planet?

VTIPL can work directly with you and your congregation or faith community to **offer programs**, help you **create and sustain a Green Team**, work with you on **climate action grants**, and more!

Please reach out to chelsea@vtipl.org to learn more!

VTIPL Climate Action Grants

Our Climate Action Grants provide **matching grants** to faith and spiritual communities in Vermont! These grants can enable your faith and spiritual community to: obtain energy audits, implement energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy projects, and more!

Learn more [here](#).

If you would like to receive a **print copy of our newsletter** in the mail, please contact chelsea@vtipl.org.

If you would like to be on the mailing list for our **Volunteer Task Force**, please email chelsea@vtipl.org

[Donate Now](#)

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.



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