



MASSACHUSETTS Interfaith Power & Light

PRAY | ACT | MOBILIZE

FAITH IN ACTION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

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December 2022

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Dear friends,

'Tis the season when festivals, rituals and customs mark the encroaching darkness of winter and anticipate and celebrate the returning light. It's a time when welcome messages of hope and healing lift us from despair and the uncertainties of the world and gratitude often gives way to generosity.

As we reflect on [MassIPL's 2022 highlights](#) (at button above), our deepest gratitude goes to all the individuals, congregations, and family and community foundations whose donations support our work. We hope you count yourself among those who have found something in MassIPL's ministry of interest and value this year. Something that helps your faith community Pray, Act, and Mobilize for a livable climate. Something meaningful enough to compel you to include us among the organizations you support.

Your end-of-year gift helps MassIPL end its fiscal year on a positive note and ensures we can continue serving you and others who value our unique ministry. Your gift, large or small, one-time or recurring, allows us to offer spiritual sustenance, practical support and encouragement for the long haul in the ongoing quest for environmental and climate justice.

[Thank you for sharing an end-of-year gift as you are able.](#)

We are also grateful for the dedication and gifts of our staff and volunteers and take this opportunity to mark some transitions. Rev. Fred Small and Miriam Cohen, whose dedication and energies helped launch our Faith Action Network program and see it through its first year, will be ending their time with MassIPL at the end of this month. (*Read their messages below.*) In addition, Rev. Victoria Guest, who has kept MassIPL connected to the environmental ministries of the UCC denomination, concludes her term on the Executive Committee. Each will be missed and we wish them well on their next steps.

For you, our wish is that you find peace and time in the quiet of this winter for reflection, rest, and renewal, the building blocks of

Inspiration

*Prayer for the Closing
of the COP 27
climate summit*

personal and collective resilience. May the rituals, customs and bonds within and beyond your faith community give meaning to each short day and long night and sustain you. Together, may we find the strength and courage needed to take collective action for the good of all and the beauty of this earth

In joyous resolve,



Rev. Cindy Davidson



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HELP WANTED: NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Do you have a few hours a month to volunteer with MassIPL? Are you adept with computers and enjoy writing and editing? We could use your help!

We are looking for a volunteer to help create our monthly newsletter. You would help identify possible items to include, receive articles from contributors, compose articles in our newsletter program (Constant Contact), and add graphics for a bit of flair!

If you are interested in learning more, contact Cindy Davidson @ c davidson@massipl.org.

Pray

Connect environmental justice to your faith tradition through prayer, worship, and reflection



Post-COP27 Webinar
Tuesday, December 6, 2022
7:00 pm EST, online

Presented by Interfaith Power & Light

After two weeks of climate change discussions, negotiations, and strategizing, COP27 has come to an end.

Learn about what happened this year at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt from IPL leaders and other faith leaders who attended COP27 in person. Hear about their experiences in joining with other faith communities from across the globe to spread the word that faith communities are demanding bold and just climate action. Participants will share updates on the latest US commitments and next steps at home and internationally.

**Register for IPL's Post-COP27
webinar**

Save the Dates!
IPL's Faith Climate Action Week
April 14 -23, 2023

Interfaith Power & Light sponsors its annual a 10-day week of action near Earth Day to

encourage congregational activities that protect and bear witness to our climate. The 2023 theme is "Living the Golden Rule: Just Transition to a clean energy economy" and examines our responsibility to transition to energy sources that safeguard our common home, and how our faiths call us to respond with just solutions for all.



Offerings include:

- online worship resources;
- opportunity to screen a series of short films, Current Revolution, for your congregation that show the possibility of a just transition to a clean energy economy where the well-being of workers and frontline community members are prioritized;
- postcard campaign and online advocacy petition calling upon Toyota and other car makers to support clean cars;
- find or add your events to IPL's online national calendar.

Learn more and reserve your Faith Climate Action Week kit

Act

Lower the carbon emissions of your house of worship and your home

Federal Funding Resources for Nonprofits briefing

Thursday, December 8
4:00 pm EST, online

Presented by Interfaith Power & Light, the Environmental and Energy Study Institute, United Church of Christ, and the Unitarian Universalist Association



The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) signed into law last summer included the greatest investment in climate care provisions in history. Learn more about the benefits of this program that can help houses of worship do energy work on their facilities.

In addition, the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provides the Department of Energy with \$50 million over five years for an "energy efficiency materials pilot program" for nonprofit organizations. **This new program will provide grants of up to \$200,000 to nonprofits to improve the energy efficiency of their facilities.**

Experts from the Environmental and Energy Study institute (EESI) will discuss the multiple benefits of energy efficiency, describe the pilot program authorized by IIJA, and share ideas about benchmarking facilities, designing cost-effective projects, leveraging other funding sources, and developing plans to evaluate results. Following a brief presentation, they will be available to answer questions from webinar participants.

Tune in to learn more about how to prepare to apply for these grants to help finance your congregation's energy efficiency work. Can't attend? Register anyway to receive the recording!

Register for the Energy Efficiency Materials Pilot Program briefing



Take the Cool Congregations Challenge!

DEADLINE EXTENDED to DECEMBER 15th
Projects completed in 2020, 2021, and 2022.

The Cool Congregations Challenge is IPL's annual national contest to recognize "Cool Congregations" that are becoming energy efficient and sustainable role models within their communities. Projects can have taken place inside the worship space or other buildings, on the grounds, in congregants' homes, or in the community.

Six entry categories, each awarding a \$1,000 first place prize and three \$500 runner up prizes.

- Energy Saver: Lighting, Insulation, Windows & Doors, Heating & Cooling Systems
- Renewable Role Model: Solar, Wind, Geothermal, Solar Water Heating
- Sacred Grounds: Native landscaping, Organic Gardening, Water Conservation, Bike Racks, Wildlife Habitats, Recycling & Composting
- Community Inspiration: Inspiring Congregants to Reduce at Home, Helping Communities Transition from Fossil Fuels to Clean Energy, Helping Communities Prepare for the Impacts of Climate Change
- Cool Congregations Planner: Audits, Planning Reports, Fundraising
- Electric Vehicle Leader: EVs, Charging Stations, Education, Advocacy, Outreach

\$25 Lowe's gift certificates to the first 50 qualified entries.

Learn more and DOWNLOAD the Entry Guide!

Boston Community Choice: Go Green AND Save Money On Your Electricity Bills!

Are you based in Boston? Consider opting in (if you haven't already done so) to **Boston Community Choice Electricity** whose rates are currently about 25% lower than Eversource Basic Service Rates while being 100% renewable electricity! Even better, the rate will remain the same until December 2023. Check out your options to receive up to 100% renewable electricity at boston.gov/bcce.

ELECTRICITY PRICES ARE RISING				
BUT YOUR BILL DOESN'T HAVE TO				
Learn more about Boston Community Choice Electricity at boston.gov/bcce				CITY of BOSTON Environment

Learn More about Boston Community Choice Electricity

Rate Hikes - Yikes! Monday December 19 7:00 pm EST, online

The price of gas, electricity, oil are skyrocketing from last year to this year, challenging our home and congregation budgets and imposing a

JEWISH CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK MA



significant burden on lower income households. MassIPL and JCAN are partnering to discuss how families and congregations can cope with this situation and assist those in our communities who need access to programs to make their winter heating bills more manageable.

Register for Rate Hikes -
Yikes!

Mobilize

Promote policies for a more just and sustainable world



**DEP PUBLIC HEARING on the
FINAL AIR QUALITY PERMIT for the
new Peabody Peaker plant on Pulaski Street**

**Wednesday, December 7, 2022
7:00 pm EST**

Attend in Person at Torigian Senior Center, 75R Central St, Peabody, MA
With English-to-Spanish, Spanish-to-English, Portuguese-to-English and English-to-Portuguese interpretation on site.

Participate remotely via ZOOM at [THIS LINK](#)
The hearing will be recorded by Peabody TV, Channel 9.

The final Air Quality Permit to monitor emissions and energy output from the new, 65MW, gas-and-oil burning plant is crucial. Public comments on the CO2 Budget Emissions Control Plan (ECP) Application will be received by the Department of Environmental Protection to ensure that the CO2 mass emissions are determined accurately and consistently.

Organizers encourage also sending a strong visual message to the DEP: Wear the color blue in solidarity and hold signs to convey your opposition to the plant!

Did you know? A **recent health study conducted by Mass Climate Action Network** shows a higher prevalence of disease in communities within a 1.5 mile radius of the proposed Peabody peaker site than the rest of the state. The site is adjacent to existing oil-and-gas burning generators owned by Peabody Municipal Light Plant (PMLP). Area residents suffer from high rates of stroke, chronic kidney disease, cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and coronary heart disease.

RSVP here to attend the public hearing in Peabody in person

**What's Next for Climate Progress?
A post-election briefing
Monday, December 12**



3:00 pm EST, online

Presented by Interfaith Power & Light

What do the midterm election results mean for climate action in 2023 in the US? Tune in to celebrate the impact of IPL's *Faith Climate Justice Voter Campaign*, learn what the results might make possible for future climate action, and discover how you can take bold and just action to advance climate policy at the national level in 2023.

Speakers will include:

- IPL affiliate leaders from Georgia, Michigan, and Pennsylvania sharing about their work in the midterms and their key takeaways.
- IPL's Federal Policy team with a post-election climate analysis and an update on IPL's policy priorities going into 2023.

Can't make it? Register to receive a follow-up email afterwards with the recording.

Register for the What's Next post-election briefing

MassIPL End-of-year Staff Transitions

Farewells and Gratitudes:

Rev. Fred Small, Director of Faith Action and Miriam Cohen, JOIN for Justice organizer



Rev. Fred Small shares these words of reflection:

“God is Change,” declares Lauren Oya Olamina, the Black teenage protagonist of Octavia Butler’s prophetic novel, Parable of the Sower. “God is Change” is the foundation of Earthseed, the new religion Olamina establishes: “All that you touch You Change. All that you Change, Changes you.”

It has been my great privilege to serve Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light these last three years first as Executive Director, then as a volunteer director of MassIPL’s Faith Action Network for Climate & Environmental Justice.

Having turned 70 last month, I’ve come to another turning point in my life and will be retiring from MassIPL at year’s end. I foresee 2023 as a time of sabbath, exploration, and discernment. After spending most of my life assuming leadership, I now feel called to cultivate followership. What shape my activism takes going forward, I can’t yet know.

I feel proud of what the Faith Action Network has accomplished this year. Supported by our outstanding JOIN for Justice Organizer Miriam Cohen, MassIPL Executive Director Rev. Cindy Davidson, and our Executive Committee, FAN has demonstrated how people of faith can be effective organizers and advocates for climate and environmental justice when offered encouragement, tools, and training. With our partner Worcester Congregations for Climate & Environmental Justice, we’ve presented skill-building workshops and influenced state legislation. This model can be replicated in faith communities throughout the Commonwealth, and I hope it will be.

MassIPL is an important organization with a vital mission at the intersection of faith, environment, and justice. Touching its work has changed me, and I am deeply grateful.

Miriam Cohen shares these words:

As I leave Mass IPL, I feel deeply inspired by all the leaders across the state who are building

community, influencing policy, and bringing their congregations into justice work. I'm grateful to everyone at Mass IPL for their help and guidance, from communications savvy to administrative support to organizing wisdom. I'm looking forward to continuing to be a part of the climate movement in Massachusetts.

Inspiration

Prayer for the Closing of the COP 27 climate summit Adapted from the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD)

God of blessings,
the universe sings of your glory.
Deepen our gratitude for all you have made
and awaken in us a renewed commitment
to care for the earth and each other.

Inspire world leaders after COP27,
with openness to listen to those most affected by climate change
and with courage to act urgently and wisely,
so that our common home may be healed and restored
and all people, and generations to come, may delight in it.

Amen.

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Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light | 897 Washington St., Unit 600163, Newton, MA 02460
www.MassIPL.org

