



# MASSACHUSETTS Interfaith Power & Light

PRAY | ACT | MOBILIZE

FAITH IN ACTION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

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November 2022

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Dear friends,

The heat is on, in more ways than one!

The level of activity and rhetoric on the US political front certainly seems to be heating up as we head into the final days of the mid-term election cycle. Whatever the outcomes, my spirit will remain lifted by the stories I've come across of people of faith bringing their values to the polls and encouraging others to do the same. Our appreciation goes to all who have volunteered with IPL's Faith Climate Justice Voter campaign and other get-out-the-vote efforts. And to those who have gone door to door or reached out across state lines by sending texts, post cards and letters. Also, to clergy and lay volunteers mobilizing to serve as Election Defenders at poll sites, using their deescalation training to help bring the heat down on potential flare-ups.

Leaders and observers will be gathering November 6-18 for COP 27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. There they will take up the challenge put forth in a [new report from UN Climate Change](#): CO2 emissions expected by 2030 are trending downward, and yet, "we are still nowhere near the scale and pace of emission reductions required to put us on track toward a 1.5 degrees Celsius world." The time for *stronger* climate action plans and the resources to implement them is now. You may find national Interfaith Power & Light's webinar, [The Faith Voice at COP 27](#), helpful for understanding the role of faith-based observers and for thinking about how you can be involved from home.

Each of us has a part to play in speaking up and implementing stronger climate actions in the communities where we live, work and worship. Join us as we pray that our world and local leaders act wisely and justly for those most impacted; in our own circles, let us pray, meditate, preach and bear witness to the cry of the earth and all her peoples. We did just that last month at our [Love.Earth.Justice. service!](#) We hope you enjoy the video!

As energy consumers, we can almost always find a next best step to take as we act to reduce emissions through energy efficiencies and embracing renewable energy. This month we share a recent webinar addressing the Inflation Reduction Act's new incentives for solar for non-profits and houses of worship.

Thank you for being a part of the growing movement to Pray,

## Inspiration

*Trees, by Joyce Kilmer*

Act, and Mobilize for a livable climate!

We are deeply grateful for your ongoing support and hope you will keep MassIPL in mind in your end-of-year giving plans.

Warmest regards,



Rev. Cindy Davidson



**MASSACHUSETTS**  
Interfaith Power & Light  
PRAY | ACT | MOBILIZE

## 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 @ [cdavidson@massipl.org](mailto:cdavidson@massipl.org).

## Pray

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



## Love.Earth.Justice. 2022 Multi-faith Service recording available

Approximately 60 people gathered at First Unitarian Church of Worcester on October 16th, with scores more online, for an inspiring and spirited multi-faith worship service organized by Rev. Fred Small.

Combining prayer, song, meditation, reflections from many traditions and a rousing sermon by Rev. Vernon Walker who exhorted, "Climate

Change is real. Let's all work together for climate justice!" Our sung reply: "Yes, we can!"

**Check out the video recording of the service livestream at the thumbnail video below.**  
(Order of Service in the YouTube description)

*Worship Leaders, assembled above, left to right:*

*Rabbi Valeri Cohen, Temple Emanuel Sinai, Worcester*

*Rev. Sarah Stewart, Minister, First Unitarian Church of Worcester*

*Rev. Vernon K. Walker, Program Director, CREW (Communities Responding to Extreme Weather)*

*Athene Wilson, Vocals*

*Rev. Fred Small, Director of Faith Action, Mass Interfaith Power & Light*

*Rev. Dr. Marcus Hill, Ass't Chaplain to Protestant Students and Black*

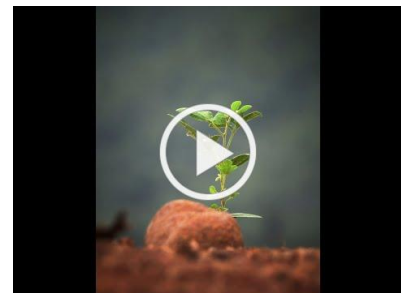
*Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) Ministry, Holy Cross College*

*Preeta Banerjee, Hindu Chaplain, Tufts University*

*Rollins Ross, keyboard*

*Brett Maguire, organ*

*Michael Herzog, Dharma Holder, Boundless Way Zen Temple*



## Thank you to all who made this event a success!

- First Unitarian Church of Worcester for hosting and live-streaming the service.
- Worcester Congregations for Climate and Environmental Justice volunteers for their deep collaboration in organizing the many logistics.
- Our many [co-sponsors](#) for their financial and practical support.
- Attendees whose generous offering of over \$1,000 will support Worcester Interfaith and MassIPL's Faith Action Network for Climate and Environmental Justice program!
- Our many workshop presenters and panel of local activists for sharing their expertise and enthusiasm. Unfortunately, technical difficulties prevented us from recording three of the four workshops. Write-ups and slides will be posted to our website soon.



### Make a Commitment: Pray & Meditate for COP 27 November 6 - 18, Noon

The Interfaith Liaison Committee to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change invites and requests your prayers, meditations, and symbolic actions for a positive outcome throughout COP27.

Join with people of faith across the globe to create a spiritual wave around the world, occurring at noon in each time zone each day.

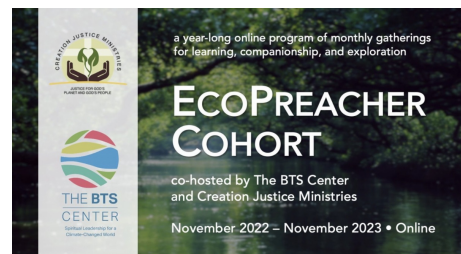
MassIPL encourages you to PRAY, alone or with a group, in the ways you find most meaningful. Let us hold the planet, those most impacted by climate change, and world leaders in our care.

How will you Pray for the Planet? Tips and samples for participation at the link below.

[Access the Prayers for the Planet COP 27 resources](#)

### Join the EcoPreacher Cohort Begins November 17; 1:00 - 2:15 pm EST Meets monthly through November 2023 Online, modest participation fee

Sponsored by Creation Justice Ministries & the BTS Center.



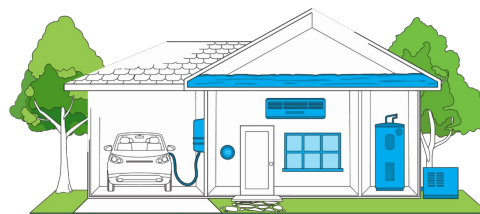
Understanding the facts, the science, and the impacts of climate change are important, for sure. This program is designed to help clergy and student preachers understand climate change and other environmental justice issues more deeply as spiritual crises that require creative, faith-rooted action. As part of a supportive cohort, explore ways to integrate climate consciousness into your preaching and messages for compelling calls to action.

[Learn more and register for the EcoPreacher Cohort](#)

## Act

## Make a Plan to Give Your Home the Energy Star Home Upgrade

The ENERGY STAR Home Upgrade is a carefully crafted set of six high-impact, energy efficiency improvements for your home. Designed to work together to deliver significant energy and cost savings, these upgrades can also help you transition from fossil fuels for a cleaner, healthier and more comfortable home. You can choose the improvements that make the most sense for your home and implement them at your own pace.



Most of these projects are supported with [MassSave](#) incentives and may also qualify for tax credits or other financial support under the [Inflation Reduction Act](#).

Read about the six priority projects here:

[https://www.energystar.gov/products/energy\\_star\\_home\\_upgrade](https://www.energystar.gov/products/energy_star_home_upgrade)

Watch the 4-minute video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQdJAtVXtOw>



## Ditch Natural Gas for the Climate's Health -- And Yours!

The article above -- and many others -- increasingly promote "electrification" as the answer to climate change. Growing evidence shows that not only is burning natural gas bad for the climate's health, it is also bad for our health. [This Vox article](#) details the nitrogen oxides, ozone, and particulates that can build up from our gas furnaces, stoves, and dryers that contribute to asthma and heart disease.

The article quotes Leah Stokes, a political scientist at University of California at Santa Barbara saying, "Whenever somebody has a hot water tank or a furnace that dies, we need the next appliance to be a clean one, because these appliances can operate for 10 to 30 years. Every decision we make now has a consequence decades down the line."

We couldn't agree more!



Solar for Nonprofits:  
New Policies, Big Benefits

Thursday October 6th  
11 am



RESONANT  
ENERGY



COMMUNITY  
PURCHASING  
ALLIANCE



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## Solar for Non-profits: New Policies, Big Benefits October 6th webinar recording now available

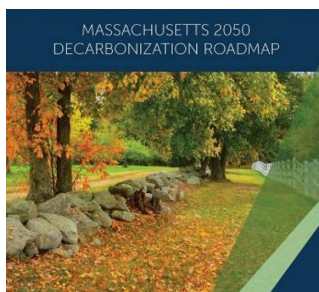
Our partners at Resonant Energy in Dorchester and the Community Purchasing Alliance joined MassIPL's President, Jim Nail, to discuss the new solar policies in the Inflation Reduction Act and the many benefits these policies have for nonprofits and houses of worship.

Tune in to learn more about the historical increase in solar tax credits, the new direct pay/cash payment options replacing tax credits, the ins and outs of what's eligible, domestic content requirements, and benefits earmarked for environmental justice communities.

Watch the Solar for Nonprofits webinar video

## Mobilize

*Promote policies for a more just and sustainable world*



### MassIPL Submits Comments on the 2050 MA Clean Energy Climate Plan (CECP)

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs has been working to write the 2050 CECP to put more detail to the Commonwealth's Decarbonization Roadmap presented. They presented [draft goals and plans](#) in early October and invited public comments. On your behalf, MassIPL noted that:

- The faith-based building sector emits 277,669 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, about 2.25% of commercial buildings' emissions
- Many of our buildings are older, with construction techniques very different than those used for the past 50 years, making them more difficult to weatherize and electrify.
- We are not alone -- 33% of buildings in New England were built before 1946.
- With the CECP goal of a 91% reduction in carbon emissions from commercial buildings, these older buildings must be retrofitted.
- Current programs are inadequate to enable the scope of work needed to support the 2050 CECP goal.

We went on to recommend new programs to support actions to enable these buildings to undertake the retrofits necessary to support the 2050 CECP:

- Building analysis and energy modeling to identify and quantify carbon reduction opportunities;
- Incentives to correct conditions such as asbestos or knob-and-tube wiring;
- Incentive amounts based on the potential lifetime carbon reduction of measures implemented.

We will continue to follow development of the CECP and represent your interests in enabling your house of worship to support the Commonwealth's net zero goals!

**Add your Voice!**  
**Join the People's Hearing for a True Net Zero Building Code**  
**November 15, 9:00 - 10:30 am**

MassIPL allies in the Mass Power Forward coalition have organized this opportunity to call upon the next Governor to take steps to implement an all-electric opt-in stretch

code that will lower energy bills, improve health, combat the climate crisis and create jobs.

On September 23rd, the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) released [a final version of the formal code language for the two existing building codes and the brand new opt-in specialized stretch energy building code](#). While there are many positive provisions in the updated language, and **every municipality will significantly benefit from opting-in to it**, the proposed specialized opt-in stretch code falls short of being truly "net-zero" by providing a clear pathway for new buildings to utilize natural gas. The Baker Administration has refused to take the necessary action to meet the climate crisis, Fortunately, a new administration brings new opportunities!

RSVP for the People's Hearing for An All-Electric Building Code  
HERE

**Recording Now Available (90 minutes)  
"Environmental Justice is Racial  
Justice: Faith Communities Respond"**

Panelists from the front lines of environmental justice share their expertise and experiences; event moderated by Rev. Betsy Sowers, Co-chair of the Alliance of Baptists Creation Justice Community, and Minister for Earth Justice at Old Cambridge Baptist Church, Cambridge, MA.



- Dr. Robert Bullard, "The Father of Environmental Justice," presents on the history and challenges of the environmental and climate justice movements and why equity matters.
- Rev. Mariana White-Hammond, founding pastor of New Roots AME church in Boston and Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Space for the city, shares on viewing her work through an ecological justice lens; climate change as a spiritual problem of values; and challenges to the equitable distribution of solar. Also, an example of success when non-traditional groups of allies come together on solutions that address multiple issues.
- Rev. Dr. Deborah Conrad, UCC pastor, sharing her experience and testimony on the lead poisoning crisis during her time serving the People's Church in Flint, Michigan.

Watch the Environmental Justice is Racial Justice  
webinar



**Pennsylvania Interfaith Power & Light  
November 13: Hybrid Annual Conference  
1-2 pm: virtual Keynote Address, Response**

Keynote speaker Dr. Joylette Portlock is the Executive Director of [Sustainable Pittsburgh](#). Previously she served as Associate Director of Science and Research at the [Carnegie Museum of Natural History](#) and as Executive Director of [Communitopia](#), a nonprofit focused on climate change communication. Her work focuses on building community around sustainability topics, with an interest in making important scientific, technical or complex information accessible and useful. She has worked at the local, state and federal level on environmental issues.

More information & registration link found [HERE](#).

## Inspiration

### Trees

by Joyce Kilmer (1886-1918)



I think that I shall never see  
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest  
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,  
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear  
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;  
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,  
But only God can make a tree.

(Source: <https://poets.org/poem/trees>)

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