

Dear MIP&L members and friends,

The Road from Paris: 1.5 to Stay Alive

The COP21 negotiations in Paris yielded an international agreement widely hailed as historic. Its highlights include:

- Nearly 200 countries including China and India have committed to reduce carbon pollution;
- Countries are incentivized to review emissions goals and set more stringent reductions every 5 years;
- Lays the foundation for keeping global temperature rise below 2 degrees Celsius, the level at which the most severe impacts from climate change will occur; and
- Will reduce global emissions toward a goal of carbon neutrality by the end of the century.

The agreement will now need to be approved by 55 countries by April 21, 2017, and then ratified within the legal system of each country.

Achieving consensus among 186 countries is an impressive diplomatic achievement. The agreement does not however, contain a detailed timetable or binding, country-specific goals. Nations have submitted voluntary "Intended Nationally Determined Contributions" or INDCs. The INDCs of the world's six largest greenhouse gas emitting nations are as follows:

- China: Lower "carbon dioxide intensity" 60 to 65% by 2030 from 2005 levels; peak emissions by 2030 while "making best efforts to peak early".
- United States: Lower carbon dioxide emissions 32% by 2030 from 2005 levels, and 83% by 2050
- European Union: Lower emissions by 40% compared to 1990 levels;
- India: Lower "carbon intensity" 20-25% by 2020 from 2005 levels;
- Russia: Lower emissions by 25-30% by 2030 based on 1990 levels. (International observers have characterized Russia's INDC as "inadequate" because it isn't based on transparent standards and is overly reliant on forestation.)
- Japan: Lower emissions by 25.4% by 2030 compared to 2005 levels.



A key breakthrough is that "developing countries" like China and India have now committed to reductions. Many believe that the goal of limiting temperature increases to 2 degrees Celsius is inadequate and that a goal of 1.5 degrees is needed to prevent devastating losses to low-lying countries like the Philippines, Bangladesh and island nations.

Nations have set a goal of \$100 billion in aid to help developing countries. Commitments of only \$65 billion have actually been made and only \$10 billion of that has actually been appropriated and raised. The agreement contains provisions recognizing loss and damage to low lying countries, but also states that the loss and damage section "does not ... provide a basis for any liability or compensation."

The role of so-called "civil-society" or sub-national groups including faith communities received greater emphasis in the agreement. The achievements of several U.S. states and of 117 mayors were recognized. Bianca Jagger one of the civil-society participants commented that "The next step after Paris must be to ensure that the promises made by world leaders are fully implemented and complied with.... my lasting memory of COP21 will be one of hope, the moment when representatives of every country in the world stood up

to applaud the Paris Agreement. Such a moment of global harmony is a powerful and exceptional breath of optimism for the future."

French foreign minister M. Laurent Fabius commented that "The agreement adopted is a turning point, but a lot of work remains" and first of all implementing it.... The framework is there; the action must follow."

Interfaith Power & Light has asked both congregations and individuals to sign the **Paris Pledge**. Signers strive for a **50% carbon emission reduction by 2030 and set a goal of being carbon neutral by 2050**. We'd like to see global nations commit to these levels. It's a moral imperative to respond to global warming, and we need to work together in the upcoming years to effect greater change. Ten Massachusetts Congregations have taken the pledge. Has yours? To learn more [click here](#).

To learn how you too can lead by example go to www.MIPandL.org and join MA Interfaith Power & Light today. To learn more about COP 21 join the MCAN webinar featuring Sonia Hamel on January 6th. [Click here](#) to register.

To Change Everything We Need Everyone

During 2015 we have seen several landmark events, each significant in its own way, and collectively indicative that we are at an extraordinary moment in time.

The Papal Encyclical. Patrick Carolan, Executive Director of the Franciscan Action Network calls the encyclical "the most important document written in our lifetime". I personally find it inspirational in its beautiful evocation of the inter-connectedness of all of creation and its plea that we hear the "cry of the earth and the cry of the poor". Its greater significance may lie in the extent to which it has inspired all people of faith. The past six months have also seen powerful statements on climate change from rabbis, Muslim leaders, Buddhists, Black Church leaders and the National Association of Evangelicals. The world it seems has awakened to the fact that there is a moral imperative to address climate change.

The Clean Power Plan. The President's Clean Power Plan is now law. It signals the death knell for coal in the United States. James Hansen said some years ago that limiting coal was the single most important thing we could do. This action signals to the world that the United States recognizes that the future is in clean energy.

The Paris Agreement. With this agreement rich nations and poor nations recognized that despite differing degrees of responsibility, and differing abilities to confront the issues, the world is united in its commitment to confront this crisis. It also recognizes that the scope of the problem requires "top down" and "bottom up" leadership.

We are proud of the many ways that **Massachusetts** is a leader and we believe that we can provide an example for the rest of the nation. Our **Global Warming Solutions Act** mandates that we reduce carbon emissions by 25% by 2020 and 80% by 2050. We're working with you to meet those mandates at a congregational and a state level.

In 2016 we will continue to:

- Help the faith community lead by example. Our **Environmental Stewardship Assessments and SHOW workshops** will tell you how to lower your carbon emissions and energy use;
- Support the work of the MA Campaign for a Clean Energy Future to capture the social and public health costs of carbon dioxide by putting a price on carbon;
- Support the expansion of solar and wind energy in Massachusetts advocated by the Massachusetts Power Forward campaign; and
- Work to pass the adaptation bill sponsored by Rep. Frank Smizik and others in the legislature. As a coastal state we're already seeing major damage.

To do this work, we need your help. Please consider an "alternative gift" to Mass. Interfaith Power & Light by [clicking here](#) and then clicking on the donate button.

Jobs, Justice and Climate

On December 12, 2015, the same day that nearly 200 nations adopted a historic pledge to lower their carbon emissions, more than two thousand people from across New England marched and rallied in Boston in the biggest climate justice demonstration that the city has ever seen. A wide range of groups were represented, including, among others, the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Maine's Penobscot Tribe, National Nurses United, New Bedford Worker Center, Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light, 350 Massachusetts, & Mothers Out Front. Read more [here](#).



This Changes Everything



Screening, Potluck, and Discussion
Sunday, January 10, 2016 5:00 pm-8:30 pm
First Church in Cambridge, 11 Garden St., Cambridge

Join Massachusetts Peace Action, Earth Stewardship at First Church Cambridge, and others for a screening and discussion of "This Changes Everything," the new documentary based on the Naomi Klein book of the same name that weaves together threads of climate, racial and economic injustice and the movements already rising for a new, non-extractive economy.

Please [register here](#).

5:00 pm: Potluck and conversation
6:00 pm: Film screening
7:30 pm: Small group discussions
8:30 pm: Close
Snow Date: January 24. If in doubt, call 617-354-2169.

Save the Date!

Next SHOW—Sustainable House of Worship Workshop—Jan. 30th 2016

Sustainable House of Worship Workshop



Would your congregation like to decrease its use of fossil fuels, and the contribution they make to global warming? Are you interested in learning about solar energy? How to lower your energy bills? Mass. Interfaith Power & Light's Sustainable House of Worship—(SHOW) workshop covers all this and more.

You will learn:

- How to track your energy use, cost and carbon footprint;
- How to find no-cost & low-cost projects with big impacts on energy bills;
- How to know when heating & electrical equipment needs to be updated;
- How to get solar panels with no upfront costs; and
- Rebates and financial help available through utility companies

For information contact Vince Maraventano: vince@MIPandL.org or 617-244-0755



A Prayer for Our Earth

All powerful God,
You are present in the universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with your peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned
and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
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.
Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
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.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle,
for justice, love and peace.

Pope Francis
Laudato Si' Care for Our Common Home

If not us who? If not now, when?

Peace and blessings,

Your friends at MIP&L