



MASSACHUSETTS INTERFAITH POWER & LIGHT FAITH IN ACTION FOR CREATION March 2019

Dear friends,

### CARBON PRICING – FUEL FOR THE GREEN NEW DEAL?



Is the Green New Deal a transformational vision for the salvation of creation? Or "a destructive socialist daydream" as Kentucky Sen. Mitch McConnell says? Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez describes it as a "vision document", and one she doesn't expect to become law. A bold vision is exactly what we need to deal with the magnitude and urgency of the climate crisis. While Ocasio-Cortez may be standing in the middle of the above photo, next to her stands Massachusetts Sen. Ed Markey, a battle-tested climate warrior and the Green New Deal's lead sponsor in the U.S. Senate. [When Markey declared that "now is the time for a Green New Deal"](#), in a Boston Globe opinion piece, he included putting a price on carbon, as part of his Senate "to do list".

"A warm heart requires us to acknowledge that our market-based economy today is failing many Americans and that a course correction is badly needed to deliver outcomes that live up to America's promise of equal opportunity, justice, and inclusive growth," writes Jason Bordoff in the journal *Democracy*. A former special assistant to President Obama for energy and climate change, and the director of the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University, Bordoff argues that "The key policy instrument ... is a price on carbon to change investment incentives and production and consumption patterns." He also emphasizes the importance of the Green New Deal's protection for workers.

State Representative Jennifer Benson's carbon pricing bill in the Massachusetts legislature, [H 2810. An Act to Promote Green Infrastructure and Reduce Carbon Emissions](#) now has more than 90 co-sponsors in the Massachusetts House. Her bill allocates 40% of the revenues not returned to the public to [low and moderate-income folks](#). If you are clergy or a lay faith leader, [sign the Massachusetts Interfaith Call for Carbon pricing](#) today!

### Solar Success 2019 – Massachusetts Houses of Worship Lead by Example



At Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light's (MAIP&L's) **Solar Success 2019** seminar at St. Matthew's Methodist Church in Acton, faith community leaders shared stories of their solar installations and the impacts they're having on their congregations.

**Temple Beth Shalom** in Needham, a growing congregation with a full slate of activities 7 days a week, had an electric bill of \$80,000 a year. Their solar system is avoiding 94 metric tons a year of carbon pollution and saving them \$20,000 annually. Loren Shapiro said that the congregation got so excited about solar that they donated the funds needed to replace a leaking roof. Seeing how they were doing the right thing for the earth, going solar spurred them to make upgrades to their lighting and heating systems. MAIP&L partner [621 Energy](#) installed the system.

Daryl Warner told how he and Pastor Shelly Davis at **East Congregational Church in Milton** built a coalition that supported the installation of their 53-kilowatt system. East Church will sell half the electricity they generate to the Epiphany School in Dorchester an independent school for economically disadvantaged families in Boston. MAIP&L partner [Resonant Energy](#) managed the process. [South Church, UCC in Andover](#) installed a system which avoids 48 metric tons per year of carbon pollution. With black panels on a black frame it was approved in Andover's historic district. South Church financed their system through a power purchase agreement which didn't require any upfront cost and guaranteed electricity production. After upgrading many of their appliances, and their lighting to LED, South Church produces all the electricity it needs! Good stewardship is an important part of their mission. At least a dozen members of South Church have installed solar on their homes.

Bedford's Historic Commission denied **First Parish Church** permission to install solar panels, but they sued the town and a Massachusetts Superior Court judge overturned the decision in 2018 calling it arbitrary and in excess of the Commission's authority. First Parish was represented by attorney Sander Rikleen of Sherin and Lodgen. The church stated that "climate justice" is a key principle of the Unitarian Universalist faith based on the seventh principle which requires "respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." Learn more about [MAIP&L's Solar Power for Faith Communities program](#).

Interested in going solar? Contact Jim Nail at: [jnail78@comcast.net](mailto:jnail78@comcast.net).

### Join Faith Climate Action Week



Have you planned your Earth Day service yet? Join the Faith Climate Action Week, April 5th to 14th, and get all the materials you need. Interfaith Power & Light's campaign for climate healing and action is now a whole week of activities from April 5th to 14th, 2019 in celebration around Earth Day. Now in its ninth year, and with the help of people like you, the Faith Climate Action Week has reached close to 2-million people with more than 5,000 climate and Earth stewardship sermons and talks nationwide.

[Click here to buy your printed packet with 100 postcards included](#)

[Click here to download and print your own supplies](#)

### First Parish Unitarian Universalist, Medfield Recognized as Community Inspiration



**First Parish Unitarian Universalist (FPUU) of Medfield, MA** was one of five winners in a national competition sponsored by Interfaith Power and Light. FPUU won in the Community Inspiration category for their community-wide anti-idling awareness project. The objective was to raise consciousness in Medfield about the anti-idling law and its many benefits, such as reduced carbon emissions, fewer public health problems and not wasting gas and money. Through a multi-year effort, FPUU was able to form a community-wide coalition of Medfield churches, governmental committees, police, schools, the board of health, and the garden club. Flyers regarding the anti-idling law were distributed and permanent signs erected by the police. High school students got involved and a TV show was filmed by Medfield TV.

**The Cool Congregations Challenge** is a united effort by religious congregations across the country to address global warming by reducing their carbon footprint and serving as models of sustainability to their members and communities.

### Boston Symposium on Ecologically Informed Theological Education

April 4-5  
**Boston University School of Theology STH B24 and 325**

Keynote Address: Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, April 4th 6:30 pm, STH 325

Symposium Panels & Dialogue: April 5, 8 am to 3 pm, STH B24

- Vince Maraventano, MA Interfaith Power & Light
- Rev. Rob Mark, Church of the Covenant, Boston
- Daniel McKanan, Harvard Divinity School
- Rabbi Or Rose, Hebrew College
- Tallessyn Grenfell-Lee
- Andrea Vicini, S.J. Boston College

Panels include: Ecological (In)Justice, Local Conditions and Activism, Visions and Practices in Education (and Beyond), Visioning Together.

RSVP requested by April 1, via the registration at: <https://goo.gl/forms/yBkwpGAuZ2xGGguk1>



### Local Environmental Action

**Saturday, April 27, 2019 in Worcester, MA**

Keynote Speaker: Sandra Steingraber!  
A biologist, award-winning author, and cancer survivor, Sandra Steingraber writes about climate change, ecology, and the links between human health and the environment, while calling us to local climate action. She is a co-founder of New Yorkers Against Fracking, a statewide coalition of more than 280 grassroots organizations, and the author of the highly acclaimed book *Living Downstream: An Ecologist's Personal Investigation of Cancer and the Environment*.

[Local Environmental Action is less than one month away! Register today to reserve your spot.](#)

What: Local Environmental Action 2019  
When: Saturday April 27, 2019  
Where: Worcester State University  
Register: <http://www.localenvironmentalaction.org/>

### Prayers of the Month



*Great Spirit,*  
Give us hearts to understand,  
Never to take  
From creation's beauty more than we give,  
Never to destroy wantonly for the furtherance of greed,  
Never to deny giving our hands for the building of earth's beauty,  
Never to take from her what we cannot use.  
Give us heart to understand that to destroy earth's  
Music is to create confusion,  
That to wreck her appearance is to blind us to beauty,  
That to callously pollute her fragrance is to make a  
House of stench,  
That as we care for her, she will care for us. Amen

*UN Environmental Sabbath Program*

#### Climate Blessing

We Hold the Earth.  
We hold brothers and sisters who suffer from storms and droughts intensified by climate change.  
We hold all species that suffer.  
We hold world leaders delegated to make decisions for life.  
We pray that the web of life may be mended through courageous actions to limit carbon emissions.  
We pray for right actions for adaptation and mitigation to help our already suffering earth community.  
We pray that love and wisdom might inspire my actions and our actions as communities. . .  
so that we may, with integrity, look into the eyes of brothers and sisters and all beings and truthfully say, we are doing our part to care for them and the future of the children.  
May love transform us and our world with new steps toward life.

*Interfaith Power & Light*

*Peace and blessings,*

*Your friends at Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light*