Interfaith Power & Light

IPL emissions a stable climate where humans live in right and just relationship, interconnected with a healthy, thriving, natural world.

The mission of Interfaith Power & Light is to inspire and mobilize people of faith and conscience to take bold and just action on climate change.

Since the year 2000, IPL has built a powerful grassroots network of people of faith, to drive smarter energy policymaking and helped thousands of congregations address global warming by modeling energy stewardship in their own facilities. We have a track record of tangible results: shrinking carbon footprints and educating millions of people of faith about the important role they have to play in this challenging issue.

Today, IPL has a national network of 40 IPL-branded state affiliates and supporters in all 50 states reaching 22,000 faith communities. United in our mission to build a religious response to global warming, we have a diverse array of issues and programs, from fighting to retire dirty coal power plants to passing precedent-setting clean energy targets in states and cities across the U.S.

This model allows IPL to leverage its resources to have an impact at both the national and the state levels.

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VALUES: WHAT WE HOLD MOST SACRED

FAITH

Inspiring and engaging individuals, families, and faith and local communities to embody spiritual and societal transformation by reducing their greenhouse gas emissions while building a new relationship with Earth.

JUSTICE

Mobilizing people of faith and conscience to advocate for just and equitable climate solutions at the local, state, and national levels.

HOPE

Working collaboratively with the IPL national network, diverse partner organizations, and marginalized communities.

COURAGE

Modeling shared leadership and decision-making within our organization and our partnerships.

LOVE

Focusing on our common values, broadly communicating the moral obligation to address the urgency of global warming.

WE LIVE THIS OUT BY:

40 STATE AFFILIATES

22,000 CONGREGATIONS

6,500,000 PEOPLE OF FAITH

SUPPORTERS IN ALL 50 STATES

Because we embrace faith and spirituality, we are grounded in the interconnectedness of the sacred, the natural world, and one another.

Because we embrace justice, we act with inclusion and respect, working in solidarity with vulnerable and marginalized communities.

Because we embrace hope, we are empowered to live into our vision for the world for present and future generations.

Because we embrace courage, we speak with a prophetic voice to create equity and restore wholeness to all.

Because love is central to who we are, we are committed to ending the suffering caused by climate change.
As we reflect on the work of Interfaith Power & Light during 2018, we want to start with gratitude for your partnership in centering justice, courage, and active hope in solutions to the climate crisis. People of faith and conscience play a crucial role in this movement, by focusing on our values and calling for a moral and spiritual transformation in our society in order to protect our common home.

We are proud of the work accomplished by IPL over the past year, which is amplified at the local and state levels by our network of 40 state affiliates around the country. From testifying at Environmental Protection Agency hearings on environmental safeguards to protecting fuel efficiency standards through our Faith to Ford Campaign; from mobilizing strong faith contingencies at the September climate marches around the country to speaking on the work of faith communities at the Global Climate Action Summit; from inspiring faith leaders to preach and teach on climate change during Faith Climate Action Week to providing resources to help congregations invest in solar power—IPL has been leading the way on building the faith climate action movement.

We know that our work is far from over. Every day there are new threats from the current administration that need to be defended against, along with new scientific reports on the urgency of the climate crisis and the task at hand. At times the magnitude of the problem can feel overwhelming, yet as people of faith we know that we are stronger together, woven together by an unseen thread that binds us to one another and to all of Creation.

As we look to the year ahead, we reaffirm our commitment to building the IPL community around the country. Working together with all of you, we know that we are on the winning team!

With gratitude,

Rev. Susan Hendershot
President

Rev. Dr. Gerald Durley
Board Chair

Message from our President and Board Chair

Leading the Way on Building the Faith Climate Action Movement

2018 ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS
People of Faith Rise for Climate, Jobs, and Justice

On September 8th, the Saturday before the Global Climate Action Summit, tens of thousands of people took to the streets of San Francisco calling on world leaders to end fossil fuel production and transition our country to 100% renewable energy. This march was accompanied by more than 500 sister marches and events around the world. California IPL was instrumental in mobilizing thousands of people of faith to march with banners, signs and songs to inspire and motivate the faith contingent was the largest in the march.

For the faith community, the day of action started at 8:30 am with a guided meditation, followed by an Interfaith Service and a Shabbat Service before lining up for the march. We heard faith leaders from many diverse religions reflect on their spiritual and moral calling to care for the Earth and for one another.

On the eve of the Global Climate Summit, IPL also helped organize a ‘Multifaith Service of Wondering and Commitment’ with our partners, GreenFaith and Grace Cathedral. The service inspired an estimated 600 people to reflect on the wonders of Creation and make commitments to protect it. During the service IPL presented an 11-foot long scroll to U.N. leaders with the names of more than 12,000 congregations, faith leaders and households who took IPL’s Paris Pledge, committing to cut their own carbon emissions in half by 2030 and to be carbon neutral by 2050.

The following day, hundreds of people of faith returned to the Cathedral for a series of workshops led by IPL and our partners, engaging participants around the themes of faith, climate change, environmental justice, climate resilience and more.

“Faith leaders must hold lawmakers accountable for ensuring environmental justice for all people living in the United States.”

— Rev. Ambrose Carroll, California Interfaith Power & Light Steering Committee member and senior pastor of the Church by the Side of the Road in Berkeley
In 2017, the Trump administration announced the repeal of the Clean Power Plan – a plan to address global warming that would have set the first-ever national limits on carbon pollution – and in 2018 EPA Administrator and former coal lobbyist Andrew Wheeler unveiled their replacement plan. As we expected, it favors fossil fuel energy instead of renewables — it’s really a Dirty Power Plan. The EPA’s own estimates acknowledge that the new plan is likely to cause up to 1,400 more premature deaths a year from pollution-related illnesses.

Unbelievably, this proposed replacement for the Clean Power Plan would not only increase dangerous climate pollution and cost American lives—in many states it would actually be worse than doing nothing at all! At a time when we are seeing the increased impacts of climate disasters—severe storms, hurricanes, flooding, drought, and wildfires—we know that the need to act is more urgent than ever. The replacement rule puts polluters’ profits before the health of our families and communities—neighbors we are called to serve and love.

Throughout 2018 IPL supporters sent thousands of messages to the EPA in support of keeping the Clean Power Plan in place. We also turned out people of faith and conscience to testify at hearings held in several cities including San Francisco.

In 2011, Ford Motor Company was part of a historic breakthrough in cooperation on climate solutions when the company supported the Clean Car Standards, which would nearly double vehicle efficiency by 2025, save 6 billion metric tons of climate pollution, keep 12 billion barrels of oil in the ground, and save drivers $34 billion at the pump. With 24 million Americans—including more than six million children—suffering from asthma, these standards safeguard the health of vulnerable communities. But, under the current Administration, Ford began lobbying for a review of the standards, asking for “additional flexibility” in meeting the standards and now the Administration has proposed to rollback these critical standards. Those bearing the burden of pollution are most often lower-income households and communities of color. It is our moral obligation to protect the most vulnerable among us, the neighbors that our religious traditions call us to care for. Weakening the standards would harm these families and communities first and worst.

Transportation is the largest and fastest growing source of carbon pollution and oil consumption in the U.S. Our vehicles account for almost 50% of oil used in the United States and nearly one third of our climate pollution. The current standards are the most effective policy that we have to address global warming, and we cannot afford to retreat from climate solutions as our communities are being harmed by its impacts here and now.

To build the social pressure necessary to convince Ford to cease their lobbying efforts to weaken the Clean Car Standards, Interfaith Power & Light partnered with the United Church of Christ and United Methodist Women in the “Faith to Ford Campaign.” On September 24th faith leaders in Michigan delivered a massive 12-foot scroll petition (signed by 5000 faith leaders and individuals) to representatives of the Ford Motor Company at their headquarters in Dearborn, MI asking them to cease their lobbying to weaken the Clean Car Standards. Throughout the fall, we coordinated actions at Ford Dealerships across the country. For example, in Pennsylvania faith leaders delivered the petition with thousands of names to the State College Ford Dealership and the owner of the dealership sat down with faith leaders to listen to their concerns and agreed to pass them onto Ford Motor Co.

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Victory! On December 18th, the District of Columbia passed one of the strongest clean energy standards in the country, shifting the District to 100% renewable energy by 2032.

Councilmember Mary Cheh, the bill’s lead sponsor, credited Interfaith Power & Light, saying how pleased she was to see the faith community “leading the charge” to respond to climate change locally.

In the three-year journey to this victory our DC IPL state affiliate:

• Talked in person with hundreds of people of faith and conscience in congregations across the District, in both English and Spanish, and delivered hundreds of postcards signed by DC residents to members of the Council.
• Arranged for faith leaders to visit in person with councilmembers, where they delivered a letter signed by 38 of their colleagues.
• Published an Op-Ed in the Washington Post online, inviting neighbors and councilmembers to talk more about climate change as an opportunity to come together across differences.
• Raised up faith voices and clergy who testified at two Council hearings.

The work we do enables our faith communities to live out our deepest values, but that’s not all — as we saw in December, it’s also really powerful. We are reminded that when people of faith join together to speak out for Creation, real change is possible.

The 2018 UN Conference on Climate Change (COP24) was held in December in Katowice, Poland. Delegations from countries around the globe negotiated the “rulebook” on the Paris Climate Agreement, how each nation will be required to meet their stated goal.

Interfaith Power & Light sent two representatives to the conference: Avery Davis Lamb, Federal Policy Associate for IPL, and Bee Moorhead, Director of Texas Interfaith Power & Light to bring the perspective of over 20,000 U.S. congregations to the conference. They joined faith representatives in calling on negotiators to be moral leaders by deepening commitments to cut emissions and stop up their climate ambition.

One of the biggest themes of COP 24 was a commitment to Just Transition, the ideology that as we transition to clean and renewable energy, we do so in a manner that does not further disenfranchise those who are already vulnerable. Being part of a larger interfaith presence underscored the importance of faith in this endeavor providing a both a moral compass and spiritual resilience.

COP 24: UN Conference on Climate Change

With IPL Leading the Charge, DC Passes One of the Strongest Clean Energy Standards in the Nation

For years, DC’s faith communities have been responding to the climate crisis by shifting to cleaner power and speaking out to the Council for our neighbors and all Creation. In fact, over forty of the District’s congregations are already lighting their sanctuaries with solar power. Today, we’re so encouraged to see our city following our lead, and hope—as the nation capital—DC will serve as a hopeful beacon to the rest of the United States that our future is 100% renewable.”

— Joelle Novey, Interfaith Power & Light

DC-Maryland-Virginia Director
FAITH CLIMATE ACTION WEEK

Now in its eighth year, Faith Climate Action Week is IPL’s core program for inspiring and supporting clergy and lay leadership to preach from the pulpit and educate their congregations about climate change. Activities take place over a week around Earth Day each year and the participation continues to grow, reaching over 2 million people with more than 8,000 climate and Earth stewardship sermons and talks nationwide.

In 2018 our theme was “Charged With Faith: Leading the Way to a Clean Energy Future.” The U.S. needs to act to avoid catastrophic climate change. Our local, state and federal governments need to be creating laws and policies that reduce our dependence on rapidly depleting fossil fuels, and we should be investing in clean renewable energy. In 2018, as part of the week’s activities, people of faith sent 53,000 postcards to senators:

Dear Senator,

As a person of faith, I believe we have a moral obligation to future generations to leave them a planet that is not polluted or damaged by climate change. I support America’s transition away from dirty energy sources to clean energy and a brighter future. Power plants are the largest source of carbon pollution in the U.S. We must act now if we are to have any hope of preserving the Earth’s bounty for future generations. Please support legislation that gets us to 100% renewable energy by 2050. Thank you in advance for doing your part.

To support those wishing to participate in Faith Climate action week, IPL provides hardcopy and downloadable resources (example sermons, liturgical resources, prayers and inspiring books and films). This year 1200 resource “kits” were requested and 12,000 households and congregations participated in a nationwide climate prayer at noon on April 22.

CARBON COVENANT

IPL’s Carbon Covenant Program links faith communities in the U.S. with those on the front lines of climate change in the developing world. IPL supports faith-community led projects in four countries: Cameroon, Cambodia, Ghana and Tanzania. The projects include slowing deforestation and preventing illegal logging, reforestation of degraded areas, introducing sustainable livelihoods and promoting awareness and education about the need to conserve forest resources.

The IPL-supported program for Environmental Conservation in Northern Tanzania is on the southern side of Mount Kilimanjaro. Environmental degradation there includes deforestation, soil erosion, water supply scarcity and poor sanitation. To address these problems in Northern Tanzania, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (Northern Diocese) developed a partnership with Anglicans, Catholics and Muslims and formed a Network of Faiths on Environmental Action in Tanzania in March 2014. Their key goals have been to increase the number of planted trees, reduce soil erosion, improve livelihoods through tree products, stabilize climate and improve water while reducing air pollution, and improve community knowledge and awareness of climate change.

The first phase involved planting and caring for 40,000 seedlings. The results of their efforts exceeded initial expectations.

Close to 200 local schools, colleges, mosques and churches have participated in the program. Clubs and confirmation classes from the participating schools and religious institutions joined in the planting and maintenance efforts. Millions of seedlings have now been distributed to the Interfaith Network Partners, led by the Lutheran Diocese which cultivates the seedlings at two large nurseries and 20 smaller ones. The trees include about 25 local species, and a few foreign species particularly well-suited to difficult soil conditions or with particular economic value. The program itself has received local press, participation by the German Agency for International Cooperation, and was visited by Tanzania’s prior President, Jakaya Kikwete while he was in office. Some 40 individuals work as paid or volunteer staff at the program.

Interfaith Power & Light has been supporting this program for a number of years, and this year longtime IPL supporter Jerre Hitz gave a generous donation of trees as a memorial for his late wife, Nancy (who was also a long time IPL supporter and friend). Mt. Kilimanjaro was a special place to the couple and we were happy to direct his gift to create “Nancy’s Forest.”
The seventh principle of the UUA is the “respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.” Accordingly, since 2008, the Green Sanctuary Committee of UUS has been educating and motivating the congregation to be more aware of personal, congregational, and global environmental challenges. Over a 20 year period UUS struggled with the desire to make their historic 107 year-old building in downtown Iowa City greener and more energy efficient, but were limited by the age of the building. Eventually they decided to leave the old building and construct the greenest and most accessible church in Iowa. It was a challenge to raise the funds for the land and a whole new building, but they did it and the new building was completed in October 2017 and their large solar array went online in May 2018.

The building has many sustainable features including a geothermal heating and cooling system and on-site renewable energy production through the solar array. A group of committed UUS members formed an LLC to fund the solar array. The LLC sells the electricity produced by the array to UUS at a rate lower than the power company. There are four charging stations for electric cars. The cedar exterior cladding and interior ceiling is made of wood harvested in the U.S., the window glass was selected for energy efficiency, and the roof insulation exceeds that required by code. The carpet, adhesives, sealants, paint, and coatings were chosen for low VOC’s (volatile organic compounds). There are recycled glass countertops, a polished concrete floor for low maintenance, energy star appliances and LED lighting throughout with motion activated switches. They expect to be a net-zero building through the Living Building Challenge.

As for the old building, the buyer has preserved the original 100+ year-old sanctuary and it remains an Iowa City historic landmark.
2018 Annual Report
Interfaith Power & Light

2018 FINANCIALS

2018 Financial Commentary

In 2018, IPL’s total income was $1.1 million and total funds available for operations reached $1.9 million. IPL’s total operating budget was $1.53 million. Of this, $1.24 million of operating expenses went to support for state and national programming with $297,168 being granted out to state affiliates, partners and congregations, $224,054 supported the California Interfaith Power & Light program and $721,807 funded national programs and campaigns. Individual and congregational donations provided 44% of total funds raised. We are grateful to all of our donors for their generosity, which made this work possible.

Income

Foundation and Government Grants $562,216 55%
Individual Contributions $484,555 44%
Revenue from Programs $17,854 2%
TOTAL INCOME $1,104,705 100%

Expenses

National Program $721,807 47%
Regrants to State IPLs $297,168 19%
California IPL $224,054 15%
Development $172,420 11%
Administration $117,545 8%
TOTAL EXPENSES $1,532,994 100%

Ways to Help Interfaith Power & Light

IPL depends on our members and supporters to achieve our mission. There are many ways to help: volunteering, donating, and leaving a legacy gift. You can support our state affiliates by designating your gift for our re-grant program, and our Carbon Covenant program by designating the project of your choice. Another great way to provide reliable support is by making a monthly donation that is automatic, secure and convenient. To learn more please contact Sarah Berg at sarah@interfaithpowerandlight.org.

Ways to Make a Legacy Gift

• Bequest
• Retirement Plan Beneficiary Designation
• Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT)

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2018 Annual Report
Interfaith Power & Light