



## Tennessee Interfaith Power & Light 2015 Annual Report

**Public Policy Work:** During 2015, TIPL's policy work focused on protecting the people most vulnerable to climate change: the lower income and especially lower income people of color.

- We began the year with meeting the TVA board chair and in the spring presented comments to the TVA board about TVA not having any lower income energy efficiency programs, even though these customers suffered the most when they had to pay high energy bills caused by the extreme temperatures of climate change. By the end of the year, we had started planning with TVA staff a lower income stakeholder engagement group.
- TIPL submitted verbal and written comments to EPA on its lack of environmental justice provisions within its draft Clean Power Plan rule. When the final rule was published in October, EPA had added groundbreaking environmental justice requirements to have states engage lower income communities in the development of state plans to ensure that these communities were not harmed by the state plans but benefited from them. By the end of the year, TIPL has taken leadership in working with the state to help develop its lower income engagement process.
- Clergy partners met with Senator Alexander's office to urge the Senator to stay awake and aware to the needs of being good Earth stewards.

**TIPL Regional Events:** TIPL held climate prayer vigils in Knoxville in February, Oak Ridge in October and Nashville in December. In September, Knoxville TIPL offered to the community a clergy panel that discussed Pope Francis' climate change encyclical.

**TIPL Tele-seminars:** Three tele-seminars (conference calls with a presentation) were offered to the TIPL community. Topics and leaders of the tele-seminars were Jerry Lawson on DOE's Energy Star for Churches program, Reverend John Butler on climate justice, and Cliff Cockerham on Pope Francis' encyclical on climate change.

**TIPL Outreach:** TIPL translated its faith group recruitment letter into Spanish. Through our Green Halo business recognition program, TIPL presented to Elizabeth Eason Architecture (Knoxville) a certificate honoring the firm's engagement in climate protection.

**TIPL Media:** TIPL was featured in three major media stories. The *Tennessee Ledger* in June did a feature article on spiritual approaches to climate change, featuring TIPL. The *Knoxville News Sentinel* ran a TIPL op-ed on the significance of Pope Francis' encyclical on climate change. The *Knoxville Mercury* in October, upon our urging, did an investigative article on the projected climate change effects on Knoxville, again featuring TIPL.

**Membership:** TIPL ends 2015 with 23 faith group partners and 205 individual members. We have online application forms for members (individual) and partners (faith groups). We use a data management system to help us keep track of both members and partners. TIPL members received a Spring Sustainability Calendar filled with reminders of how to live lightly.

**Member and Partner Services:** TIPL made presentations to its partner faith groups Messiah Lutheran Church (Knoxville) and Westminster Presbyterian Church (Knoxville). Members and partners monthly receive a TIPL e-newsletter. The Greater Knoxville TIPL has bi-monthly planning calls open to all of its regional members. TIPL and Southern Alliance for Clean Energy partnered with TVA to offer partner faith groups free TVA energy audits of their worship buildings.

**National Interfaith Power and Light Engagement and Support:** The TIPL steering committee president attended the national IPL annual conference in Washington, D.C. in April. TIPL promoted IPL's Preach-In initiative and Cool Congregations recognition program. We regularly participated in the bi-monthly national IPL phone conferences. TIPL leads an IPL group on engaging the vulnerable within the Clean Power Plan process. TIPL received from IPL a Challenge Grant to further develop our work in Tennessee.

**Communication:** TIPL has a number of ways to communicate with our members, partners, and larger community. Our website ([www.tennipl.org](http://www.tennipl.org)) is our communication anchor. We have a monthly TIPL newsletter that is e-mailed to our members and partners. TIPL uses a conference call service for our steering committee calls, planning calls, and tele-seminars.

**Annual Meeting:** TIPL convened its third annual meeting in September at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Knoxville. On Friday night, we hosted a community program, a clergy panel on Pope Francis' encyclical on climate change. At our Saturday all-day annual meeting, we made our plans for 2016.

**Governance and Administration:** The TIPL Steering Committee has monthly calls to conduct business and develop plans. Steering Committee members are Cliff Cockerham (President), Gene Burr (Vice-President), Rev. Kay Reynolds (Treasurer), Toby Rogers (Secretary), Jennifer Alldredge, Taylor Allred, Ted Jackson, Dan Joranko, Rev. Steve Musick, and Todd Waterman. The Southern Alliance for Clean Energy serves as our fiscal sponsor. TIPL contributors allowed TIPL to fully match the IPL Challenge Grant of \$2,500.

## Tennessee Interfaith Power & Light

*A Spiritual Response to Climate Change*

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