



# Tennessee Interfaith Power & Light

## a spiritual response to climate change

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February 2020

### Message from TIPL President

For many years now, I've been called to work on environmental issues. I wish I hadn't, it's discouraging and depressing work, and I'm not very good at it. I've tried to quit several times.

I think of ourselves and our varied faiths as gardens, our environmental work like the germinating seeds within us that will hopefully bear fruit.

I don't know about you, but my garden needs work. Life is complicated, and full of drama, and instead of cultivating good soil, I find myself becoming angry and resentful. When I'm like this, it's not good for me or the work I should be doing to decrease my carbon footprint, advocate for change, and raise awareness in others.

So, I remind myself that in the dead of winter, little progress is seen, plants look dead or totally disappear; and yet, even now, if you look closely, buds are starting to come out on trees, and seeds are preparing to germinate underground. And I sing to myself a verse from a song that Arlo Guthrie used to sing, and for some reason, it gives me hope. It goes like this:

**Inch by inch, row by row, Gonna make this garden grow.  
Gonna mulch it deep and low, Gonna make it fertile ground  
Inch by inch, row by row, please bless these seeds I sow.  
Please keep them safe below, till the rain comes tumbling down.**

As we inch forward, may this be a year in which our environmental activism bears fruit.

**Betsy Garber, Nashville**

### Clean Car Campaign

Tennessee, Michigan and Ohio are the three states focusing on the National IPL campaign to support strong standards for auto emissions. In 2012, major automakers agreed to make significant reductions by 2025. Now Ford, BMW, Honda, and Volkswagen agree to stay on track. However, GM, Toyota, and Fiat Chrysler are supporting the Trump administration plans to reverse progress.

Please sign the petition urging auto makers to stand firm on reducing emissions.

**Clean Cars Petition**

**Free Concert to Celebrate Creation  
in a time of climate challenge  
on behalf of Tennessee Interfaith Power & Light  
(Knoxville Chapter)**



**CARING FOR  
ALL CREATION**

- Osborne/Krause -- Contemplative Americana
- Church of the Good Shepherd Choir
- Youth art displays and storytelling

**SUNDAY FEB 23 4:00 - 5:15 PM  
CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

5409 Jacksboro Pike, Knoxville 37918  
Information -- [courtshea@aol.com](mailto:courtshea@aol.com)  
[www.facebook.com/TNIPL](http://www.facebook.com/TNIPL)

## Coming to Knoxville

There's a lot in the works. KIPL will be having events from April 18-25 all around the area, from Maryville to Oak Ridge to Knoxville (most in Knoxville).

In planning is tree planting, plant and seed exchanges, biking events, educational events, and several education opportunities including energy efficiency workshops and panel discussions.

Discussion with the city mayor's office to have an official proclamation is ongoing.

There will be a march on Earth Day at UT's campus; details for that Climate Strike being worked out. KIPL is currently planning a worship celebration event on Sunday, April 19 at the amphitheater.

**Earth Choir Event – 2/23**

**World Water Day – 3/22**

**Earth Day Worship Service – 4/19**

**Earth Day Event – TBA**



## [Creation Care Workshops in Nashville](#)

**Faith & Climate Academy Workshop ("Building a Powerful Climate Movement") led by Creation Care Ministry Coordinator, Dan Joranko: Sat., Feb. 29, 9-12, Calvary United Methodist Church, 3701 Hillsboro Pike, Nashville 37215. Free. RSVP to Paul Slentz, [pslentz53@gmail.com](mailto:pslentz53@gmail.com)**

As we approach the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day in April, Feb. 29th's workshop will explore effective social movements and look at how the current climate movement has progressed. We will conclude with an in-depth look at strategic nonviolent campaigns in the Gandhian tradition.

**"The Family of Life: Building Community with Earth and Each Other" led by Tammy and Jamey Whiting: Sat., March 14, 1:30-4:30 p.m. at the farmhouse home of Doug and Anne Hardin in Goodlettsville.** This will be limited to the first 30 who sign up. A love offering (suggested amount of \$25) will be taken up to compensate the Whiting's for their time and talents. To reserve a place, contact Paul Slentz, [pslentz53@gmail.com](mailto:pslentz53@gmail.com).

The workshop will explore the interconnection of all life on Earth, which of course includes us human beings. Science and spirituality will be addressed equally, including Native American, Buddhist, and Christian teachings and concepts.

At TIPL we have done much work to facilitate the urgent move from fossil fuels to renewables and toward a carbon free world. This great effort must continue, but there is another half to the story: living things themselves are the other half of fighting climate change. Through the saving of forests, species, intact ecosystems, and waterways, and through the conservation of wild nature and the setting aside of land to remain untouched wilderness, we can add to our goal of saving our Earth. Biologist and Pulitzer Prize winning author E. O. Wilson makes a great case for this kind of saving in his recent book Half Earth. **Tammy Whiting**



## [Bill McKibben to Speak at Vanderbilt](#)

Bill McKibben will be keynote speaker at the ***Liberating People and the Planet*** Conference on Thursday, March 19 at 7 pm. The talk is via video link in Benton Chapel at Vanderbilt Divinity School. The public is invited to this free event, but register for a ticket at: <https://www.religionandjustice.org/liberating>

William Ernest "Bill" McKibben is an American environmentalist, author, and journalist who has written extensively on the impact of global warming.

## [Tennessee Tree Day](#)

America's largest single-day tree planting event. Order tree seedlings by March 1st online at [Tennessee Tree Day: https://www.tectn.org/tennesseetreeday.html](https://www.tectn.org/tennesseetreeday.html). Tree pickup day is March 21 at locations near your home. Sponsored by Tennessee Environmental Council. **Help us plant 1 million native trees by 2022.**

Planting trees is a concrete and effective action that we can all take to fight climate change, help keep air and water clean, protect wildlife habitat, and make our communities more beautiful. Nashville horticulturist and TIPL member, **Jennifer Smith**, recently shared that "a ten-year-old tree can absorb 48 pounds of carbon a year."

Our Tree Project total now stands at 637,100 trees planted in Tennessee, providing the following ecological benefits:

- 2,300 acres of new tree canopy providing wildlife and pollinator habitat,
- 11 million tons of carbon dioxide captured,
- 26 billion gallons of rainwater filtered, and
- enough oxygen produced for more than 2 million Tennessee residents every year.

*Why is planting trees so important to us as an organization?*

- The U.S. Forest Service found that more than two million acres of Tennessee's native forests have been cut and more than 500 thousand acres of forest were converted to other uses.
- Studies indicate communities with more trees have less crime.
- Planting 30 trees each year offsets greenhouse gases from your car and home.
- In 50 years, one tree provides \$130,750 in total benefits including oxygen, air pollution control and stormwater drainage.

There are at least two good tree planting opportunities going on right now:

- Tennessee Environmental Council's [Tennessee Tree Day](#) and
- Nashville Tree Conservation Corp's [Nashville Tree Sale](#)

For more information on these opportunities, check out those links.

## Out of Chattanooga

This is an excerpt from a January article written by **Sandy Kurtz**, TIPL Steering Committee, for the *Chattanooga Pulse*

There are several trends in the energy sector. Fossil fuels for electricity generation and transportation contribute most to greenhouse gas emissions. The auto industry is already taking steps to move toward greener vehicles. Increasing demand for electric vehicles has resulted in automobile companies all designing such. Volkswagen will be producing their model in Chattanooga soon. Get ready!

TVA is slowly closing its coal-fired plants for making electricity. In place of coal, nuclear power, with its legacy of radioactive waste and high cost, plays a larger role along with natural gas. TVA is reluctantly being dragged into using solar and wind energy primarily due to price which has fallen 36 percent in five years. TVA mostly supports large scale solar contracts not residential. Demand has increased. Expect to see growth in battery storage business too.

The Solar Energy Industries Association says Tennessee is the seventh largest state for new solar generation in America for the third quarter of 2019. Locally, Volkswagen and the Chattanooga airport have large solar arrays as do many smaller business installations. Every kilowatt produced without fossil fuel or nuclear helps slow climate change. Get ready!

Waste treatment shouldn't be big business. If we can find use for everything we now throw away, there wouldn't be waste. All the energy embedded in creating new products plus the packaging, transportation to your home, and then to the landfill contributes to climate change as does all your light, heat and sound unless it's solar powered. Not all waste can be eliminated but creating more energy efficient buildings, buying locally made food and supplies, and separating needs from wants to reduce consumption can really help.

**Reduce, reuse, recycle** are good words to live by. Get ready!

Perhaps the most egregious trend is that toward loss of and/or mistreatment of land. Massive loss of birds and insects sends signals that humans have poisoned the land and are out of sync with the way nature works. Discarded plastic is killing ocean species. Urban sprawl and monoculture farming continue to cover up land that should be growing native plants or forests, supporting biodiversity, cleaning air and water, and regenerating soil. Holding carbon in soil, oceans, rocks, and trees slows climate disruption. Get ready.

It's a new year. Given these trends, isn't it time to incorporate likely climate change risks into our thinking? Ready! Set! Go!

*Sandra Kurtz is an environmental community activist, chair of the South Chickamauga Creek Greenway Alliance, and is presently working through the Urban Century Institute. Her website is [enviroedu.net](http://enviroedu.net)*

## Environmental Day at the State Capital

February 19 from 8:00 to 4:00. Small groups visit legislators to talk environmental issues. Talking points provided.

Contact Betsy Garber: [garberb@hotmail.com](mailto:garberb@hotmail.com)>

## Green Interfaith Network



The Wild and scenic Film Festival and Enviro-Fair are returning to East Tennessee State University and will be hosted by ETSU Department of Sustainability and Watauga Water Shed Alliance **Saturday April 4, from 6 –9 pm** at the Martha D. Culp auditorium.

Green Interfaith Network will participate to highlight our efforts and achievements and recruit new members! It is also an opportunity to view “Movies with a Message” regarding sustainability and human interaction with the natural environment.

More about the “Wild and Scenic Film Festival” at <https://www.wildandscenicfilmfestival.org>

## Fifty, Yes 50, Years of Earth Day

On this upcoming 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day, TIPL is joining several groups in Major actions.

- March for Science on Climate Saturday afternoon, April 25, at Public Square Nashville
- Nashville Interfaith Climate Vigil in that week
- Knoxville March at UT on Earth Day
- Knoxville Worship Celebration on April 19
- Chattanooga March to be announced



## Chapter Meetings

Nashville: Monday, February 24 - 6:45 pm - Holy Name Catholic Church, 521 Woodland Street  
Knoxville: Saturday, March 7 - 9am - Church of the Good Shepherd - 5409 Jacksboro Pike  
Chattanooga - Sunday, February 23 - 4 pm - Thankful Memorial Episcopal Church  
1607 W. 43<sup>rd</sup> Street

## Nashville Creation Care Recycle Day

Saturday, May 16, 9-12 at West End United Methodist Church (volunteers from 8:15 - 12:30)

**THE UNIVERSE IS BIGGER THAN OUR VIEW OF IT. – Thoreau**

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Tennessee Interfaith Power & Light is to respond to climate change through upholding the sacredness of life, protecting vulnerable communities, and caring for the Earth. We witness our spiritual values by reducing our carbon emissions within our daily lives, releasing the spiritual power of our faith communities, and by advocating effective climate protection policies. Tennessee Interfaith Power and Light is a state affiliate of Interfaith Power and Light (ILP), whose mission is to be faithful stewards of Creation by responding to global warming through the promotion of energy conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy.



## Donate

**Shalom Peace**

Send news to [ekrogman@comcast.net](mailto:ekrogman@comcast.net)



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