



June e-Newsletter

Dear friends,

You'll notice that this month's lead story is about the Poor People's Campaign, a national call for moral revival. This is the 50 year anniversary of the original Poor People's Campaign, which Martin Luther King was organizing when he was assassinated. This time around, climate change and environmental justice (both essentially unknown terms at the time) have been added to issues which demand our attention.

The Michigan IPL staff and Board who participated in the demonstration did so as individuals, not as representatives of the organization, but felt it was perfectly in alignment with Michigan IPL's mission to bring a sense of urgency to matters of climate, health and justice.

*It is not a choice between "practical" actions OR impassioned advocacy. It is **both/and**.*

As people of faith, we have a prophetic voice and sometimes that voice needs to rise up. For me, such advocacy is a necessary complement to the sustainable practices and measures we promote. I welcome your thoughts.



Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Bob'.

Bob Chapman
Executive Director
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A New and Unsettling Force



Last week we joined hundreds in Lansing to rally with the [Poor People's Campaign](#) on the theme of the Right to Health and a Healthy Planet. We heard powerful testimony from people who suffered lead poisoning in Flint, who lost family members to unclean air and pulmonary disease, and whose families have been denied the basic right to water.

These stories are full of heart ache. And yet, the day had an emotional resonance that

was so much bigger than grief, so much more than righteous anger. It was an event staged to say "No!" to the inhumanity shown to the poor and to the Earth and "Yes!" to the need for a radical social transformation.

But even more than that, it was an experience of community and of joy-- a joy that helps us feel ready to say "Yes!" to the hard work that lies ahead.

After the rally, we marched from the Capitol to the Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and wrapped it with "Caution" tape to symbolically declare it a crime scene.



In an act of nonviolent civil disobedience, 30 of us-- including national Campaign co-Chair Rev. Liz Theoharis (pictured)-- blocked egress from the DEQ and were arrested.

Next week, on Monday June 18, the PPC's 40 days of Moral Action wraps up with a final rally: "A New and Unsettling Force: Confronting the Distorted Moral Narrative."



What can you do?

- Read our Board Chair [Rev. John Schleicher's reflection](#) on scripture that calls us to cherish the earth and the most vulnerable members of the human family.
- Educate yourself about the interconnected struggles of the poor and marginalized by reading [The Souls of Poor Folk: Auditing America 50 Years](#)

[After the Poor People's Campaign Challenged Racism, Poverty, the War Economy/Militarism and Our National Morality.](#)

- **Come to the last PPC rally on Monday, June 18 from 12-4pm,** location TBD! Check the [Michigan PPC's Facebook page](#) for details. We hope to see you there!
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Action Opportunity for Religious/Faith Leaders: Water is Life Declaration

"Turning off water in homes that are in hardship is inhumane. People are not able to flush toilets, bathe, or cook. As a result, there has been a dramatic increase in waterborne infectious diseases since the shut offs... No running water creates a major public health risk for adults and children affected and those they come in contact. Water can be made affordable through an affordability plan passed in the city of Detroit." - [Declaration by Michigan Religious Leaders on the Sacred Gift of Water](#)

This April, the City of Detroit announced that it could shut off water service to more than 17,000 households in the coming months. The United Nations has called the aggressive water shut off campaign a violation of human rights.

If you are a religious/faith leader, or represent a religious organization, please consider endorsing this statement and participating in a public action for declaring the water shut offs as immoral.

[Add your name here.](#)

The letter has 45 signatures so far. The organizers would like to gather 100 or more!

Upcoming Workshops: How to Know if Solar is Right for Your Congregation

Michigan IPL will be hosting workshops in Detroit this summer about: the faith basis for Earth stewardship, how solar energy works, and how to determine if solar panels are a good investment for your congregation.

Solar sessions:

- [Solar 101](#) - Tuesday, July 17 from 9:30am-1pm at Pilgrim Baptist Church (18474 Binder St, Detroit)
- [Solar 101 \(repeated\)](#) - Tuesday, July 31 from 9:30am-1pm at a location TBD in Detroit



- **Financing Your Solar Project** - Tuesday, September 18 at 10am, location TBD.

The workshops are free. [RSVPs are required](#) for the lunch order.

Detailed agendas are forthcoming!

"Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain, difficulty..."

Theodore Roosevelt was right in his assertion that a lot of meaningful things only happen through struggle. But he wasn't 100% right :)

[Light the Way](#), our free energy efficiency program with Consumers Energy, is both super easy and totally worth it.



Just ask Pastor Ed Meyer of St. Mark Lutheran Church and Preschool in Saginaw. This year, his congregation expects to save \$4,000 on energy with new, ultra-efficient LED lighting and a new smart thermostat system received through this program.

That's \$4,000 more each year that St. Mark can put into its Preschool and toward its goal of providing healthy, safe spaces for children, families and the community. And 22 other Missouri Synod Lutheran churches in Michigan are reaping the benefits as well!

(If it sounds suspiciously easy, it might help you to know that Michigan IPL and other clean energy organizations worked very hard, indeed, advocating for the continuation of Michigan's Energy Efficiency Resource Standard. This is the law that *requires* utilities to pay for efficiency products and services for their customers, through programs like this one. TR was mostly right, but in this case we've done the hard work so you don't have to!)

Eligible congregations are:

- located anywhere in Michigan
- have Consumers Energy electric or electric + gas service
- own their building

[Learn more and sign up for Light the Way.](#)

Or contact Jennifer Young: projectmanager@miipl.org, 248-463-8811.

LiTES Program: Rebates & Training on Advanced Lighting Controls

[Next Energy's Lighting Technology Energy Solutions \(LiTES\) program](#)

aims to reduce the energy footprint in small and medium commercial buildings by accelerating the adoption of advanced lighting controls. Program participants:

- Can take advantage of LiTES exclusive utility incentives for advanced lighting controls
- Will receive training on advanced lighting controls



Free Energy Audits Available for Houses of Worship in Grand Rapids

The US Green Building Council West Michigan Chapter is offering a limited number of FREE building audits to small businesses and non-profits to help them save energy and save money. [Apply here.](#)



Upcoming Events

6/20/18: [Energy Summit: Reaching for Zero](#), Fetzer Center (Kalamazoo), 8am-5pm.

6/21-23/18: [Michigan Clean Energy Conference & Expo](#), Northwestern Michigan College (Traverse City).

7/10/18: Free Workshop - Help for Houses of Worship: How you can SAVE and even EARN money for your congregation, Flint Ferris Wheel (615 E. Saginaw St.), 10-11:30am.

7/17/18: Workshop: How to Know if Solar is Right for Your Congregation, Pilgrim Baptist Church (Detroit), 9:30am-1pm.

7/31/18: Workshop: How to Know if Solar is Right for Your Congregation, Location TBD (Detroit), 9:30am-1pm.

9/8/18: [Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition](#) Summit, Flint. Details TBD.

Do you have an event other members of the Michigan IPL community might be interested in? Let us know: admin@miipl.org, 248-537-9175.