



May e-Newsletter

As you might have noticed, Michigan IPL has a new look. We've moved our website to a new platform and refreshed our logo. We're still spiffing a few things up, but invite you to [check it out!](#)

The Poor People's Campaign

On Monday, May 14, Michigan IPL joined hundreds of supporters-- including many clergy friends-- at the state Capitol in support of the [Poor People's Campaign](#), a national moral fusion movement that's challenging "the evils of systemic racism, poverty, the war economy, ecological devastation and the nation's distorted morality."

Photo credit: [Petra Productions](#).

The Campaign is a reprisal of the [Poor People's Campaign of 50 years ago](#), which was organized by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (and carried out after King's assassination). The demands of the '68 Campaign--



especially the call for justice for those who have been made poor-- remain pressing in a nation of tremendous wealth and tremendous inequity.

During the 40 days of action that began on Monday, the campaign will highlight specific issues each week:

- **Week 1** (May 13-19)
Somebody's Hurting Our People: Children, Women and People with Disabilities Living in Poverty
- **Week 2** (May 20-26)

Linking Systemic Racism and Poverty: Voting Rights, Immigration, Xenophobia, Islamophobia, and the Mistreatment of Indigenous Communities

- **Week 3** (May 27-June 2)
The War Economy: Militarism and the Proliferation of Gun Violence
- **Week 4 (June 3-9)**
[The Right to Health and a Healthy Planet: Ecological Devastation and Health Care](#)
- **Week 5** (June 10-16)
Everybody's Got the Right To Live: Education, Living Wages, Jobs, Income, Housing
- **Week 6** (June 17-23)
A New and Unsettling Force: Confronting the Distorted Moral Narrative

We are enthusiastic about the Poor People's Campaign because of how it spotlights the issues of injustice that are interconnected across many fronts AND because this is a movement led by faith leaders, born of a moral call to action.

What kind of power can be unleashed if people of faith and people of conscience come together across distance, identities and issues to speak for justice in one voice? This is our chance to find out.

Here's how YOU can get involved:

1. Educate yourself. Read the ["Declaration of Fundamental Rights and Poor People's Moral Agenda."](#)
2. [Learn more about how you can get involved, including meetings and nonviolent direct action trainings near you.](#)
3. Join us in Lansing on Monday, June 4 for the rally on ecological devastation and health! Contact Leah at 248-376-4603 or outreach@miipl.org.

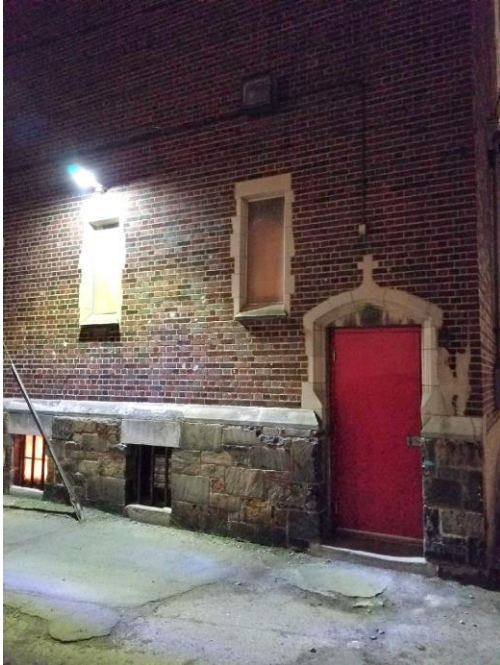
If not now, when?

Ramadan Mubarak!

"...who is it that has created the heavens and the earth, and sends down for you [life-giving] water from the skies? For it is by this means that We cause gardens of shining beauty to grow." -Qur'an 27:60



The Muslim holy month of Ramadan began Tuesday, May 15!



In the spirit of giving back to humanity and showing gratitude toward the Creator, [Green Muslims](#) and [Virginia Interfaith Power & Light](#) have created the [Ramadan Care Creation 2018 calendar](#) -- a calendar that suggests an Earth-related activity or prayer to do each day. Check it out!

The Ann Arbor Friends Meeting Pays it Forward

Since 2016, the Ann Arbor Friends Meeting (Quakers) has collected a self-imposed carbon tax from its members and donated a sum to Michigan IPL to be used as a "Carbon Fund." The Fund provides small grants to congregations in economically disadvantaged communities to help them reduce their carbon footprints.

In March 2017, we used the Carbon Fund to send a solar generator to the demonstrators at Standing Rock. Late last year, the Fund paid for an exterior solar light outside the Manna Meals Soup Kitchen at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Detroit (pictured at right). This summer, we will use the Fund (with the help of a matching grant!) to provide solar-powered exterior lighting for Pilgrim Baptist Church, also in Detroit. This will increase safety and illumination at the church's food distribution center without adding to the facility's electric bill or carbon footprint.

We express our gratitude to the Ann Arbor Friends Meeting, the spiritual home of our late Board member Prof. Max Heirich, for its generosity and leadership on being a faith response to climate change. Thank you!

[Read more about our Carbon Fund here.](#)

[Donate to Michigan IPL and our Carbon Fund here.](#)

Line 5 Letter Drop Off

On Monday, April 23-- the 65th birthday of the Line 5 oil pipeline that runs under the Mackinac Straits-- we gathered a group of religious leaders in Lansing to deliver a letter to the Governor and Attorney General.



The letter, signed by more than 700 people of faith, demanded the immediate decommissioning of Line 5, which will cause catastrophic damage to Lakes Michigan and Huron when (not if) it springs an underwater leak.

Top step (left to right): Bob Chapman, Rev. John Schleicher, Sarah Nash, and Rev. Deb Hansen. Middle step: Rev. Rayford Ray and Rev. Sue Ray. Foreground: Rev. Dan Nowiski, Fr. Charles Morris, Leah Wiste, and Rev. Dr. Campbell Lovett.

An official decision about the future of [Line 5](#) is expected in late summer/early fall. In the mean time, Enbridge, the Canadian oil company that operates the line, is courting the powers that be by sponsoring the annual Mackinac policy conference. If you'd like to weigh in on this sponsorship or take further action on Line 5, go to [Oil & Water Don't Mix](#).

[You can also read our letter and add your name here.](#)

Just Water Conference Resource Materials

On April 21, we co-sponsored "Just Water: A Daylong Conference on Building Better Faith-Based Approaches to Storm Water Runoff," held at Hartford Memorial Baptist Church (Detroit).

[Find the PDFs from the presentations and the handouts from DWSD here.](#)

In Case You Missed It: Our 2018 Earth Day Sermon Contest Winner is...

...Rev. Salvatore Sapienza, Pastor of Douglas Congregational United Church of Christ!

Pastor Sal's thought-provoking sermon, "Honor Thy Mother," introduces a fresh way of seeing our relationships with God and the Earth.



While written in the Christian tradition, the sermon provides a fresh perspective for people of any faith who take for granted a vertical, hierarchical relationship between the earthly and the divine.

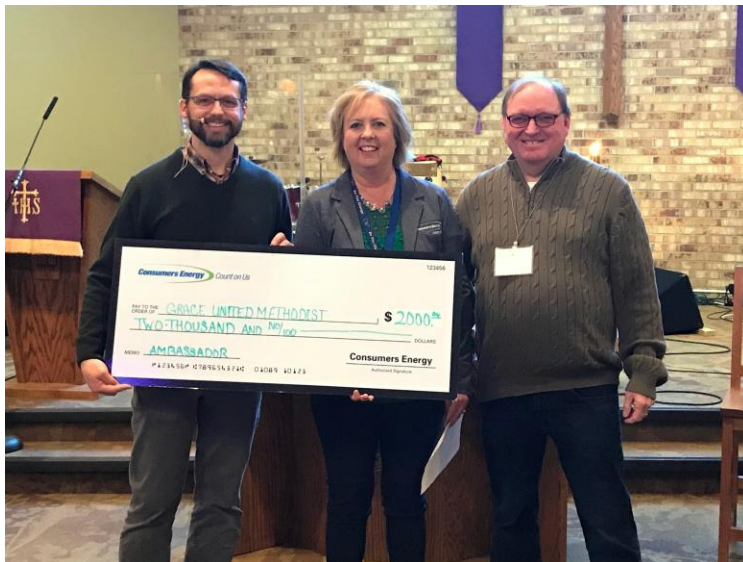
Below is an excerpt. [Watch the video](#) or [find the full text on our website](#).

“... [W]e as people of faith need to shift our thinking from a vertical understanding of God to a horizontal understanding of God.”

Christian theologian Diana Butler Bass writes, “we in the Christian church have been taught for centuries now that there is this 3-tiered vertical Universe. That the devil’s down below, we’re in the middle, and God’s way up there. And, we’ve been taught that the purpose of religion – the purpose of our faith – is to make sure we get up there, and not go down there.”

The spiritual revolution, then, is to “Stop seeing God ‘up there,’ and start seeing God right here. God is not separate from us. God is not distant from us. God is here with us. If we are to grow spiritually, we must shift from the ‘Distant God’ of conventional religion and experience an intimate sense of the sacred that is with us in the world...”

Congratulations to Pastor Sal, and may his words inspire you!



Evangelize about Energy Efficiency and Earn Money for your Congregation

In March, Pastor Eric Kieb and the Grace United Methodist Church of Bay City congregation earned \$2,000 through Consumers Energy's [House of Worship Rewards program](#).

By signing up for the home energy analysis, members of Grace Church also prevented

69.1 metric tons of CO₂ from being released into the atmosphere. That's equivalent to the CO₂ emissions that would be created by burning 75,602 pounds of coal.

Way to go, Grace!

Your congregation can do it, too! Here's how:

1. Sign up and host an energy efficiency workshop for your congregation (led and sponsored by Consumers Energy).
2. Promote the benefits of energy efficiency at home and encourage congregants and friends to schedule a free home energy analysis with Consumers Energy. They provide a unique code (something easy like "Grace Church BC") so that your house of worship gets credit for the referral.
3. Earn up to \$2,000 for your congregation, based on the number of sign ups!

Eligibility: Your house of worship DOES NOT need to be a Consumers Energy customer to participate. Those signing up for residential energy efficiency services with Consumers Energy DO need to be Consumers Energy customers.

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

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.](#)



Ocean plastic is horrifying. Don't be part of the problem!

12,000,000 tons of plastic-- especially single use plastic items like food containers, cutlery, and bags-- enter our oceans each year. But biodegradable, affordable options are available! **Michigan IPL member congregations receive an 8% discount at [MI Green Safe](#)**, which sells eco-friendly alternatives to disposable plastic (petroleum-based) products. Just mention that you're a member when you place your order for 8% off.



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



Upcoming Events

5/17/18: [Audobon Environmental Advocacy Workshop](#), Belle Isle Nature Center (Detroit), 7-9pm.

5/18/18: [Annual Rouge Rescue River Cleanup Day](#), various sites in metro Detroit (check the website for details).

5/23/18: [House of Worship Green Team Meeting & Tour](#), Christ Church Detroit, 5:30-7:30 pm. RSVP to ConnieLilley@2030districts.org

5/23/18: Solar for Churches Workshop, Church of the Servant (Grand Rapids), 7-9pm. The event is free, but [please RSVP!](#)

5/25-28: Detroit Audobon's [Memorial Day Weekend Nature Get-Away](#), Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center (Hale). Must purchase tickets in advance!

9/8-9/18: Environmental Justice 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.