



December 2019

Dear Friends,

As I write this, I have just finished (survived) my first year as Executive Director of Michigan Interfaith Power & Light. I'm pleased to report to you—and all of our faithful supporters—what we've been up to this year.

One of the biggest things we did in 2019 turns out to have been moving our office from Southfield to Detroit. After renting space in Southfield for 5 years, we moved our operations to the Peace & Justice Hive of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Detroit.

Each day as I walk to the office, I greet and am greeted by guests of Manna Community Meal, a soup kitchen in the basement of St. Peter's that serves hundreds of people in the Corktown neighborhood. These individuals, many of whom are homeless, are an embodied daily reminder that the consequences of climate instability—especially extreme temperatures and wetter weather—are here, *now*, making the lives of the most vulnerable even harder.



We moved our office to St. Peter's Episcopal Church Detroit in July!

me, Leah

the other half of Team MI IPL, Jennifer Young

Being part of this community has helped us stay accountable to the goal of centering justice and equity in everything we do:

- In 2019, we finished our 5th year of our Light the Way program, which has helped 795 Michigan congregations (180 just in 2019) save energy, save money, and be better stewards of Earth. This year, we made a special effort to sign up congregations located in low-income communities like Flint. Unsurprisingly, it's a lot harder to reach congregations that don't have office staff and regular hours. We will persist with this outreach focus in 2020 because while our state energy laws don't incentivize utilities to

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help the commercial customers that need it the most, working to create a cleaner, healthier, *more just* world means that we do.

- We gathered over 160 people from all parts of the state—some all the way from the UP!—at our biennial sustainability conference: Building a Collective Voice of Moral leadership in Detroit, where participants learned from people on the front lines of water and environmental justice, racial reconciliation, and more. The next day, we brought a dozen folks out for an Environmental Justice tour in Detroit’s 48217 neighborhood, Michigan’s most polluted zip code.
- In partnership with the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Women, we kept up the pressure on Ford Motor Company to uphold the Clean Car Standards (aggressive targets on fuel economy and emissions reduction that are the most significant federal climate regulations out there). Thanks in part to our efforts, Ford is among a handful of automakers that are working with the state of California against the EPA’s efforts to roll back the 2012 standards.
- We started a Northern MI Chapter of Michigan IPL in the Petoskey area and are working with Kalamazoo-based Hope for Creation to start a Southwest MI chapter in 2020!
- In an effort to reduce carbon emissions and expand access to sustainable solutions for *all*, we put \$5,678 toward 2 Carbon Fund projects—installing solar lights for the parking lot of Lord of Lords Christian Ministries on the East side of Detroit and contributing to insulation and weatherization efforts at Haven House, an organization that houses and supports homeless families in East Lansing.
- We have also been involved in the Work for Me, DTE campaign, which is pushing back on DTE Energy’s fracked gas-powered 15-year energy plan and proposed rate hikes to argue for more affordability, more energy democracy, and healthier communities.



With Haslett Community Church, the Islamic Center of E. Lansing, and University Lutheran Church, we raised \$5,500 to provide Haven House with money-saving energy efficiency upgrades!



Owólabi William Copeland and Yoruba priest Oluwo Ifabayowa Adesanya Awoyade opened our conference with a libation (water) ritual.



Our "Clean water for all" and "Clean energy for all" signs were the must-have lawn accessory of 2019.



This joyful crew delivered 4,000+ faith signatures to Ford Motor Company leadership. Ford is now working with BMW, Volkswagen, and the state of California in defiance of EPA's efforts to roll back Clean Car (emissions and fuel economy) Standards.

I feel proud of all that we accomplished this year with our small but mighty staff of 2, a couple of very part-time contractors, and a small handful of really capable, really dedicated volunteers.

In early 2020, look out for an Eco-Chaplain Directory that we'll be publishing on our website. We'll also be facilitating "Climate Conversations" in congregations who are looking to reflect and connect with others on how their faith calls on them to act on climate, and we'll be continuing our efforts to expand access to solar energy. We look forward to sharing more details with you soon!

We have the challenge of a generation before us: to heal our relationships with the Earth and with each other and to build the power needed to bring about this transformation. If you can make a gift—\$25, \$50 or \$100—toward this effort, we will make your dollars go a long way.

We are \$4,806 from our fundraising goal. Can you help us get there? Mail us your gift in the enclosed envelope or give online at www.miipl.org/donate.

Thank you for believing in us and for participating in this work. We wish you all the best for a happy holiday season and new year!

With so much gratitude,

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