

Leah Wiste

From: Leah Wiste, Michigan Interfaith Power & Light <director@miipl.org>
Sent: Friday, April 10, 2020 4:30 PM
To: Leah Wiste
Subject: April e-Newsletter



Friends,

I recently heard this story, and it seemed *a propos* for this moment:

The Parable of the Long Spoons

A person is ushered through the gates of hell where he is surprised to find that they are made of finely wrought gold. They are exquisite, as is the lush green landscape that lies beyond them. He looks at his guide in disbelief. "It's all so beautiful," he says. "The sight of the meadows and the mountains. The sounds of the birds singing in the trees and the scent of thousands of flowers. This can't be hell."

When the tantalizing aroma of a gourmet meal catches his attention, he enters a large dining hall. There are rows of tables laden with platters of sumptuous food, but the people seated around the tables are pale and emaciated, moaning in hunger. As he gets closer, he sees that each person is holding a spoon, but the spoon is so long he can't get the food to his mouth. Everyone is screaming and starving in agony.

Now he goes to another area where he encounters the same beauty he witnessed in hell. He sees the scene in the dining hall with the same long spoons. But here in heaven the people seated at the tables are cheerfully talking and eating because one person is feeding someone sitting across from him."



(Excerpted from David Kessler's [Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief](#).) Kessler concludes: "Heaven and hell offer the same circumstances and conditions. The difference is the way people treat each other."

Even more than just "be kind to each other," the parable shows that our ability to survive-- and thrive-- is rooted in our interdependence. We must nourish each other and also accept nourishment from one another.

In the story, the spoon's unusual length makes it impossible to use in the way we normally imagine. But in this time of physical distancing, the length of the spoon can be seen as an unexpected gift, a means of protecting self and community against the transmission of the virus, or even more, as a metaphor for the new imperative of connecting at from a distance.

This is my hope for all of us in this moment: that we may find the long spoons, extend them extravagantly, and open ourselves to receiving what is offered. Happy Easter, Pesach Sameach, and take care of yourselves!

Love,



Leah

Leah Wiste
Executive Director

P.S.: Jennifer and I are working from home these days, which means we have some new coworkers you should meet. Here is the expanded Team Michigan IPL, from left to right: Loverboy Young ("LB"), Liza and Charles Wiste, Winston Wiste.



Pet pics always brighten our days! We would love to meet your furry friends, too. Feel free to post photos on our [Facebook page](#).

Coronavirus Resources



Blessed are the organizers, for they shall make sure we stay connected and get what we need. Here are a few links you may find useful:

- [MI COVID-19 Community Response](#), where you can find tons of information, opportunities to advocate, and Mutual Aid forms and spreadsheets for: [Detroit](#), [Lansing](#), [Kalamazoo](#), [Grand Rapids](#), and [more](#)
- [Congregations Responding to Coronavirus Facebook group](#)
- Religious organizations CAN apply for Small Business Administration loans. [Read the FAQs.](#)
- ["How to Live-Stream Church for Free" guide](#)
- [How to Keep Uninvited Guests out of Your Zoom Event](#)

#CleanWaterSavesLives

#turnwateron
#keepwateron
#makewateraffordable
#cleanwatersaveslives

DUGGAN'S OFFICE
(313) 224-3400

TELL MAYOR DUGGAN
TURN WATER ON! KEEP WATER ON!

Since 2014, DWSD has shutoff water to over 100,000 homes. Thousands are **facing COVID-19 without water !**

Water Shutoffs = Pandemic
 ▼ ▲
 Poor Sanitation → Disease

EMEAC      

In spite of orders to restore water service, thousands of Detroit households still have none, meaning that it will be that much harder for them to stay safe during the pandemic. (Read Sylvia Orduño's [recent Op Ed](#) for more.)

Here are 2 ways you can help:

1. [Sign Frontline Detroit Coalition's letter](#) to Mayor Mike Duggan
2. [Make a donation to We the People Detroit](#), which has been holding it down from our home base at St. Peter's Church for years, providing water to those who have been shut-off

Please take a few moments to help by doing one or both of the above. The gift of your time and money in support of

Detroiters living without water access could literally save lives.

Connecting Virtually: Climate Conversations



The 50th Anniversary of Earth Day is less than 2 weeks away on April 22, but everything you were planning on doing is probably put on hold in the pandemic...

So consider inviting us to facilitate a virtual Climate Conversation in the coming months!

In this 1-2 hour Zoom workshop, we will facilitate a heart-based, values-based Climate Conversation in your congregation or community. We will begin by sharing stories of connection and aliveness, then articulate together the realities of our changing climate, and finally discuss how to take faithful action together.

Want Michigan IPL to facilitate a *virtual* Climate Conversation in your community? [Sign up here.](#)

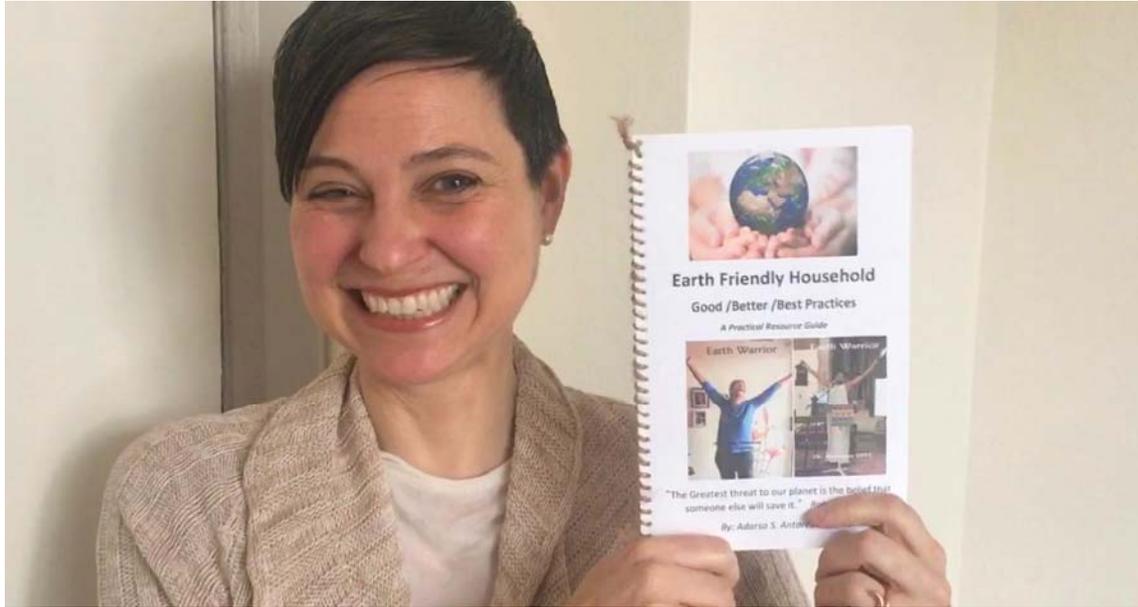
Hold an Earth Day Sermon

This April 22 marks the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day!

We're working on another email with more ideas about commemorating Earth Day during this pandemic, but in the mean time wanted to encourage you to consider giving an Earth Day sermon.

Find Earth Day inspiration and tell us about your plans [here](#).

The first 10 people we hear from will get a copy of *Earth Friendly Household*, a practical guide to green living in Michigan, by Adarsa Antares.



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