



## *From the President*

### **FOOD IS SACRAMENTAL; EATING IS A MORAL ACT**

The act of eating unites us to the soil, water and animals of this planet like nothing else. Every purchase of food and every act of eating is a moral decision because our food choices are having a huge impact on the whole of creation. As we plan meals and shop for groceries, we need to consider the manner in which crops were planted and fertilized, the methods used to raise animals for eating, and the distance food has to be shipped.

Scientists have correlated food production and consumption to driving miles in terms of greenhouse gas emissions. Their study provides the following statistics:

- Replacing red meat with chicken/fish/eggs one day per week reduces emissions equal to 760 driving miles per year;
- Replacing red meat and dairy with vegetables one day per week reduces emissions equal to 1160 driving miles per year;
- Eliminating red meat completely from the diet reduces emissions equal to 8100 driving miles per year; and
- Consuming only locally-produced food reduces emissions equal to 1000 driving miles per year.

Many Christian congregations are now making preparations for the season of Lent, traditionally a period of self-examination and fasting. Instead of giving up chocolate or alcohol or some other indulgence, what about taking positive action by spending more of your grocery budget on locally-grown produce, locally-produced cheeses and other dairy products, and organically-grown fruits and vegetables? Try increasing the number of meatless meals on your family's menu, and encourage your favorite restaurants to patronize local growers and producers.

Members of faith communities may also be gathering gardening supplies as warmer weather approaches. Think about increasing the size of your garden, devoting more space to edible produce, and planting some fruit trees. If you know of land that could be used for a community garden, lobby for the establishment of one.

At [www.nm-ipl.org](http://www.nm-ipl.org) you will find a Lenten "carbon fast" calendar and several films that explore the connection between food production/consumption and climate change. You might also check out Lent 4.5, a seven-week faith formation program developed by the Passionist Earth & Spirit Center. Their website is [www.earthand-spiritcenter.org/lent45](http://www.earthand-spiritcenter.org/lent45).

*Bon appétit!*

*Edwina Beard*



Edwina Beard presents the SEED award to Marilyn O'Boyle.

### **FIRST ANNUAL SEED AWARD**

As part of NMIPL's annual meeting on October 30, 2010, the first annual SEED Award was presented to the First Unitarian Universalist congregation in Albuquerque for "sowing the seeds of sustainability" with their longstanding and exemplary leadership in the area of creation care. The award presented to Marilyn O'Boyle by NMIPL President Edwina Beard carried the following quotation from Monsignor Oscar Romero, Salvadoran martyr:

*We plant seeds that one day will grow.  
We water seeds already planted,  
knowing that they hold future promise.*

First Unitarian will soon become the first house of worship in Albuquerque to proclaim its commitment to environmental stewardship by devoting significant roof space to solar panels! The installation is scheduled for later this month, and NMIPL will participate in a service of thanksgiving and blessing when the installation is complete.



### COOL CONGREGATIONS KICKOFF

On Saturday, October 30, Green Teams from eighteen faith communities gathered for a training session led by Sarah Webb, the creator of the Cool Congregations program for Iowa IPL. Each Green Team received a Cool Congregations training manual, a resource CD, and a Cool Congregations Carbon Calculator designed specifically for New Mexico, along with tips for building a Cool Congregations program in their own congregation and networking with other Cool Congregations.

If your faith community was unable to participate in the October 30 training, it is not too late to get on board the Cool Congregations train! Contact NMIPL Executive Director Joan Brown at 266-6966 or [info@nm-ipl.org](mailto:info@nm-ipl.org) for information.

### GIVING THANKS

We acknowledge with gratitude the generous financial support of the following:

Barbara O'Connor  
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 The Rt. Rev. Michael Vono

Please visit the NMIPL website, [www.nm-ipl.org](http://www.nm-ipl.org), for information about how to contribute. NMIPL was recently awarded a \$15,000 challenge grant from The Regeneration Project, meaning that every contribution will be effectively doubled. NMIPL is eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions through United Way—just write “New Mexico Interfaith Power & Light” in the space provided on the United Way pledge form.

For a limited time, new member faith communities or individuals who contribute \$100 or more to NMIPL will receive a free copy of *Love God, Heal Earth: 21 Leading Religious Voices Speak Out on Our Sacred Duty to Protect the Environment*. In this useful and inspirational book, valued at \$17.95, religious leaders from across the spectrum make the case for environmental stewardship and show how their faith communities are tackling the issue of religion and the environment.

We also appreciate the many wonderful volunteers who:

- Make phone calls, work at tabling events, spread the word to their friends and neighbors;
- Serve on the NMIPL Board of Directors. We welcome new Board member Cheryl Foote and The Rev. Stephen Miller, new liaison to the NM Conference of Churches.

Please forgive any omissions or oversights—we are grateful for everything you do.

### THE WONDER OF WATER

On January 12 some thirty faith leaders gathered at Albuquerque’s Immanuel Presbyterian Church to enjoy a continental breakfast and Larry Rasmussen’s presentation on “The Wonder of Water.” Larry’s lecture, full of fascinating scientific information, poetry and hope, contained some compelling “sound bites,” among them the following:

- Moral complacency is the obstacle
- Planetary health is primary; human wellbeing is derivative
- Mother Nature doesn’t do bailouts
- The human economy has rolled along with pathological indifference to Nature’s economy

And best of all:

- The dream drives the action—Martin Luther King did not electrify the nation by saying, “I have a nightmare.”

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- March 9–April 26, Lent to Easter, Passover and Earth Day *Food, Faith and Climate*. Join NMIPL and other people of faith across the nation in making the connections between food and climate change.
- Sunday, March 13, 3:00 p.m. *Rachel Carson One-Woman Show* (see details p.3)
- Sunday, March 20, 2:00 p.m. St. Bede’s Episcopal Church, Santa Fe. *Meeting the Cosmic Christ at the Hearth*. Joan Brown and Ken Cuthbertson invite participants to gather around the hearth to drink tea and eat Irish bread as they explore spirituality, earth, ritual and sustainable action.
- Sunday, April 22, 3:00 p.m. St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, Albuquerque. *Serenade for Mother Earth II*. Second annual musical celebration of Earth Day, also a fundraiser for the work of New Mexico Interfaith Power & Light. Suggested minimum donation \$10.

## ADVOCACY UPDATE

NMIPL is finding multiple opportunities in this New Year to engage people of faith in advocacy at both the state and national levels. If you'd like to be on the advocacy list, contact [info@nm-ipl.org](mailto:info@nm-ipl.org):

- More than fifteen hearty souls braved sub-zero temperatures to participate in the Legislative Training Day and Action for People of Faith in Santa Fe on February 3. The day's events included a briefing by Conservation Voters New Mexico and a noon rally beginning with an interfaith prayer service calling for the care and conservation of water in New Mexico.
- NMIPL continues to generate constituent telephone calls, letters and e-mails to preserve the greenhouse gas emissions caps approved by the Environmental Improvement Board in December 2010
- Harrison Schmitt's nomination as Secretary of Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources has been withdrawn.
- Postcards to Senators asking them to support the EPA's continued authority to protect our air and reduce greenhouse gases were written in more than fifteen faith communities as part of the Valentine's weekend "Preach-In."
- NMIPL was represented at a February public hearing hosted by the EPA to hear testimony on the retrofitting of the San Juan coal-fired power plant in the Four Corners area. The EPA will take public comments until mid-March, and you can get tips on talking points from [info@nm-ipl.org](mailto:info@nm-ipl.org).
- On Dec. 6, 2010, the Environmental Improvement Board of NM ruled in support of a petition to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 3%/year from 2010 levels, with the goal of reducing emissions 25% below 1990 levels by 2020.

## WHAT NMIPL OFFERS

New Mexico Interfaith Power & Light (NMIPL) can help your faith community care for creation, reduce its energy consumption and expenses, and save money for ministry and mission.

- Contact NMIPL to arrange a free energy assessment of your house of worship, offices, social hall and/or school. Our volunteers will evaluate your facilities and recommend some energy efficiency measures, many of which might be "low-hanging fruit" that could be done easily and inexpensively.
- Contact NMIPL to take advantage of the Quick Saver Program sponsored through PNM. The program assesses lighting and pays for 40-80% of the recommended replacement lighting from certified lighting companies. Some customers have experienced a 100% payback within a year from utility savings.
- NMIPL offers homilies, presentations, study guides, films and other educational resources.
- Encourage your faith community to become a member of NMIPL and receive regular updates on activities and resources. Membership renewals for current NMIPL member faith communities are now due.

## Rachel Carson: The Wonder of Nature

Performed by Ann Beyke

Sunday, March 13, 3:00 pm

Albuquerque Mennonite Church

1300 Girard NE, Albuquerque

tickets \$10 or 3/\$25 in advance — \$12 at the door



Rachel Carson was a marine biologist when few women dared even tread the water. Her lifelong love of nature and science led to research on how uncontrolled chemical use in our cities, towns and farming communities devastated wildlife and food sources. *Silent Spring*, her bestselling book on the topic, detailed this devastation and led to the eventual ban on the use of DDT in the United States. Carson's work made environmentalism an integral part of our lives.

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## RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Winter 2011

**DATED MATERIAL**

### ABOUT NMIPL

New Mexico Interfaith Power & Light (NMIPL) engages faith communities and individuals in an active response to climate change.

NMIPL is a New Mexico non-profit corporation with 501(c)3 status through our fiscal sponsor, the Partnership for Earth Spirituality. NMIPL is governed by a Board of Directors whose current members are as follows:

Edwina Beard, <i>President</i>	Joan Brown, <i>osf, Executive Director</i>
Kathy Garland, <i>Secretary</i>	Sherry Lewis, <i>Treasurer</i>
The Rev. Anita Amstutz	The Rev. Janice Bales
Bunny Bowen	Ward Camp
John Dickel	Cheryl Foote
The Rev. Dr. Stephen Miller	Marilyn O'Boyle
Doug Stewart	Betsy Windisch

The Board meets quarterly in Albuquerque, with members in remote locations participating by conference call. Board meetings are open to all interested persons, and we welcome your attendance. Please contact us through the website [www.nm-ipl.org](http://www.nm-ipl.org) to ask about the dates and locations of upcoming Board meetings.

NMIPL's work with member faith communities outside the Albuquerque area is coordinated by regional satellite committees. When a faith community in another part of the state joins NMIPL and appoints a liaison, we will put that person in touch with the local satellite committee.