



# green light

The quasi-quarterly newsletter of Georgia Interfaith Power & Light

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## Executive Director's Note

It's hard to believe that 2006 is coming to a close already! It seems like just yesterday that we were sitting down with our calendars to plan out this year's activities and now it's time to plan for next year! Where did the time go?

We have a lot of great things planned and many upcoming opportunities for congregations and individuals. Coming up first: the GIPL book club will meet January 20. See below for details!

We have been so blessed this year in our work, and we thank all of you for being involved in activities and supporting our ministry. We hope that you have a wonderful holiday season and that you will continue to join Georgia Interfaith Power & Light in activities and events in 2007. Make it your New Year's Resolution!

Katy Hinman, Executive Director

## Congratulations GIPPY winners!

Our People of Faith, People of Action event was a huge success! Almost 100 people turned out to see Dr. Heidi Cullen from the Weather Channel and Rev. Sally Bingham, co-founder of Interfaith Power & Light, and to hear their inspiring messages about the responsibility of the faith community to address global warming.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the First Annual Georgia Interfaith Power & Light Awards (or "Gippies" for those in the know). We were proud and pleased to recognize four congregations for their outstanding contributions to creation care:

- \* **Trinity Presbyterian Church** received the **Power Award** for their work in educating their community and taking concrete steps to become better stewards of creation.
- \* **Congregation Bet Haverim** received the **Light Award** for their development of One for Each Night, the Hanukkah CFL guide, and for their carbon-neutral High Holidays services.
- \* **Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta** received the **Trailblazer Award** for their leadership in incorporating sustainability into their congregational building projects.
- \* **St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church** was our **Congregation of the Year** for their efforts in bringing environmental concerns into the work of the church in all aspects of congregational life.



## The GIPL Book Club

We are excited to announce that starting in the New Year, GIPL will select one book per quarter to read along with you! **GIPL's Book Club** will choose books that help us think about our relationship with creation in new and different ways. By reading and discussing together, we hope to engage our spirits and our connections to other living beings and the environment that sustains our lives.

We also hope this book club will provide you with an opportunity to meet and support one another in your endeavors to lead your congregations in caring for creation. To make it easy for you to participate, we will have several ways to interact with each other and the books. We will meet for a 'live' discussion at a coffee shop once a quarter (this time, **January 20, 10 am, location TBD**). In addition, you will be able to go to our website and 'discuss' the book online. Following these discussions, GIPL will develop curriculum (available on our website) so that you might use the book in your own congregation to facilitate the conversation about what our faith requires us to do in caring for creation.

**Our First Book!** For January, we have selected **Janisse Ray's *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood***. Set in rural southern Georgia, Ray's book is a memoir about her family and the natural environment that forms and nurtures them. This book's reflections will prove familiar and poignant for all those who call Georgia home. We hope to see you January 20<sup>th</sup> or 'hear' from you online! Email [jdowns@gipl.org](mailto:jdowns@gipl.org) with any questions.

## Green Giving – A Holiday Guide – by Jennifer Downs

We at GIPL have put together a list of ideas and resources that will **help you simplify and ‘green’ the season** so that your holidays are filled with joy and so that we might, collectively, leave a smaller footprint on the earth. As you will see, there are lots of ways to do so!

**To conserve energy** while preparing for the holidays, choose energy-efficient LED holiday lights, which use 80% less energy, and select gift wrapping alternatives like reusable bags, boxes, tins and jars. When you buy and use wrapping paper, choose recycled papers and save wrappings for reuse.

When it comes to **‘green’ gift giving**, the possibilities are endless! Here are some of the best ideas out there:

- **Give the gift of local and/or organic food!** You can find local produce and organics at neighborhood natural food markets, farmers markets or Sevananda ([www.sevananda.coop](http://www.sevananda.coop)) in Little 5 Points. Include organic chocolate, fair trade, shade grown coffee and local produce in your family’s stockings!
- **Give and/or share films that educate people on the issues surrounding climate change and global warming.** Give *An Inconvenient Truth*, the book or the film ([www.climatecrisis.net](http://www.climatecrisis.net)), or host a holiday screening party at your home. Make a donation and give a copy of the film *Kilowatt Ours: A Plan to Re-energize America* ([www.kilowattours.org](http://www.kilowattours.org)). This gift will keep on giving as more and more people are educated and encouraged to make conserving energy a priority in their lives.
- **Give the gift of an experience.** Whether tickets to a play or sporting event, or a museum membership, giving experiences not only save precious resources but will give you a chance to spend time with the recipient of the gift! Check out <https://buy.nationalparks.org/default.asp> to purchase a National Park Pass or look in local newspapers or online at [www.accessatlanta.com](http://www.accessatlanta.com) for performances, museums, local restaurants or sporting events.
- **Plant a tree!** Give a tree to be planted or donate a tree to be planted in someone’s honor through Trees Atlanta ([www.treesatlanta.org](http://www.treesatlanta.org)).
- **Give the gift of green energy.** Purchase renewable energy certificates for friends and family to help spread the word about global warming and keep carbon dioxide out of the air at the same time. See [www.nativeenergy.com/cards.html](http://www.nativeenergy.com/cards.html) for holiday gift cards that support clean, renewable energy.
- **Make a donation to an environmental organization** in a friend or family member’s name or give the gift of membership to an environmental organization. Check out the National Resources Defense Council at <http://www.nrdc.org/cities/living/ggift.asp>, Heifer International at [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org) or Georgia Interfaith Power & Light at [www.gipl.org](http://www.gipl.org).
- **Remember to shop early and avoid overnight shipping.** Ground shipping uses less fuel than air shipping.
- **Send greeting cards made from post-consumer recycled paper** or send email greetings.
- Give **handmade gifts or pass on a book** you have loved. And **shop thrift stores.**
- **Give Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs.** They use ¼ the energy of incandescent bulbs and last years longer, thus saving bundles of money! A win-win!
- Go to [www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org) and download their **Simplify the Holidays guide**, which includes a guide to ‘green’ gifts. Or go to [www.coopamerica.org](http://www.coopamerica.org) for a green gift catalogue and/or organizations to which you may donate.

**And last but not least, follow these links for more great GREEN gift ideas.**

<http://www.thegreenguide.com/>

<http://www.earthisland.org/getinvolved/store.cfm>

<http://nationalwildlife.stores.yahoo.net/holidayandornaments.html>

[http://panda.org/how\\_you\\_can\\_help/gifts/index.cfm](http://panda.org/how_you_can_help/gifts/index.cfm)

<http://www.wilderness.org.au/shops/>





## The Great Light Bulb Swap – by Woody Bartlett

Early on Saturday morning, November 4, 2006, the Men of Antioch North started gathering for their monthly Prayer Breakfast. But this month would be different. Sure, they would have prayers, singing and a meditation, but this month they would also learn about compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) and the savings they could provide to both CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as well as utility bills.

At 10 am about 50 men started across the street in front of the church to Herndon Homes Apartments, a 273-unit complex belonging to the Atlanta Housing Authority. There they joined with members of the maintenance staff, forming into 15 teams, which, in 3½ hours, systematically replaced 3,500 75-Watt incandescent light bulbs with 3,500 14-Watt CFLs.

Since the CFLs are rated to last 10,000 hours compared to 1,500 hours for the incandescents and since the CFLs use only 14 Watts as compared to 75 Watts for the incandescents, the savings are apparent. Over the projected lifetime of the new bulbs, there should be savings of almost 1,600 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere as well as savings of over \$135,000 from utility bills and the cost of replacement bulbs.

The effort was a wonderful collaboration of many parties. Georgia Interfaith Power & Light was the overall coordinator. The Atlanta Community Food Bank facilitated the connection with Antioch Baptist Church North. Antioch North's Joe Beasley connected the idea with the Men's Prayer Breakfast. The Atlanta Housing Authority and the Herndon Homes Tenants' Association made the units accessible. The Habitat Company (Herndon Homes property managers) provided the logistics and the maintenance workers to get the job done. Most significantly, Georgia Power Company through their Change A Light, Change the World campaign provided the light bulbs free.

Now the Housing Authority will track the savings to utility bills and, if the savings turn out as projected, will strongly consider doing the swaps in the rest of their properties. In this way we will significantly cut down on our carbon emissions and really make progress against global warming. On that Saturday, everybody won.

## St. Bartholomew's Leads the Way with their Green Guild

One of the reasons that St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church was honored as our Congregation of the Year was their commitment to building a program that could be replicated in other congregations. To that end, they have developed a "Green Guild" model that builds on the Episcopal tradition of establishing guilds to carry out specific ministries and missions within the church. They have received the blessing of their parish to proceed in this ministry and offer their mission statement as an example for other congregations (both Episcopal and other denominations and faiths) that wish to formalize their commitment to creation stewardship:

### Mission Statement for the Green Guild

WHEREAS, the Episcopal Church has a tradition of establishing Guilds to carry-out specific ministries that require more than temporary commitments and,

WHEREAS, we believe we are, as human beings, called to "live together as siblings, at peace with one another and with God, and in right relationship with all of the rest of creation"(1) and,

WHEREAS, we believe we bring harm to the earth through overproduction, unchecked consumption, and reluctance to employ alternatives, thus creating disparity of energy and wealth among global communities, and a dangerous environment for ourselves and future generations; and, WHEREAS, we believe the cost of inaction is too great,

WE, THE GREEN GUILD OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, ATLANTA, GA, affirm our willingness and commitment to rebuilding a right relationship with God's earth by:

- Embracing servanthood of God's creation in our everyday actions and choices for self-care;
- Fostering awareness, appreciation, and respect for creation through green leadership of our parish;
- Providing a model for green leadership for other congregations and joyfully spreading the good news of God's gracious generosity.

We recognize and affirm that our ministry will require God's help and the support of this parish. We embrace this commitment knowing that ours is not to over-harvest, but to partake of and care for the gift of God's creation, while gratefully nurturing this gift for the enjoyment and sustenance of future generations.

(1)Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori's investiture sermon, 11/4/06 [http://www.episcopalchurch.org/78703\\_79214\\_ENG\\_HTM.htm](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/78703_79214_ENG_HTM.htm)