WHY DOES CLIMATE CHANGE MATTER?

What is climate change?
Average global temperatures have been rising in the past century, largely due to emissions from burning fossil fuels (like oil, natural gas, and coal). Rising global temperatures have caused:

• Rising sea levels and flooding
• Increased frequency of extreme weather events, like hurricanes and flash floods
• Extinction of some plant and animal species
• Droughts
• Heat waves

In addition to climate change, fossil fuels and other industries can pollute air, water, and food.

What are the effects of climate change?
Climate change and pollution have real consequences, and they often burden marginalized communities more than others.

• Climate change can ravage coastal communities and island nations with flooding. Floods are becoming increasingly common and can devastate communities with homelessness and displacement, property destruction, and loss of crucial resources (like energy, food, and potable water).
• Climate change can greatly damage agriculture. Things like unstable and extreme temperatures, flooding, pollution, and drought can trigger crop failure.
• Climate change and pollution can cause respiratory illnesses (like asthma), heat stroke, and cancer, as well as health problems that relate to food and water scarcity.

Why should climate change matter to people of faith?
Climate change isn’t just a scientific or political issue. It’s a moral one, and therefore a religious one.

Climate change is a moral issue because it exacerbates hunger, poor health, political instability, and poverty. It’s irreparably damaging our one and only Earth, and harming marginalized communities first and most severely.

We depend on our environment! We can’t continue to destroy the air, water, and land that sustains ourselves and our neighbors.

We people of faith, whether Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, or spiritual, have a duty to care about these issues. We have a responsibility to be stewards of our environment and protect our Earth.

Want to learn more or become a partner of VAIPL?
VAIPL is a 501(c)(3) organization that started in 2004 and relaunched in 2016.

If you’re interested in learning more about the work that Virginia Interfaith Power & Light does, contact us at www.vaipl.org or call (804)505-4624.

Virginia Interfaith Power & Light collaborates, as people of faith, to grow healthy communities and advance climate justice through education, advocacy, and worship.