

**Minutes**  
**Public Policy and Environmental Action Team**  
**February 11, 2025 6-7 PM**  
**Via Zoom**

Facilitator: Sam Allen, Sarah Braik

Minutes: Sarah Braik

Present: Elinor Roberts, Sam Allen, Dick Farnsworth, Mary Linneman, Barbara Ryland, Meredith Tipton, John Hennessy, Sarah Braik

1. Territory Acknowledgement:
  - a. Eleanor read USM's land acknowledgement.
2. Diocesan and legislative updates (John, Dick)
  - a. PPEAT advocacy focus: local Maine or broader USA or both?
    - i. We decided to focus on local and state action, as Maine is closer to home and a smaller chunk of things and would be more effective.
  - b. Weekly Legislative Report provided by John
  - c. It was proposed we invite Jill Saxby, the Environmental liaison with the Maine Council of Churches, to speak at a coffee hour forum.
  - d. At last evening's meeting, Dick Farnsworth mentioned a national organization, Indivisible, that has an active local group that is engaged with efforts to protect democratic freedoms. Here is a little more information for those interested .
    - i. National website: <https://indivisible.org/>
    - ii. Local website for Portland area affiliated groups:  
<https://indivisible.org/groups?terms=04103>
    - iii. Finally, there is an upcoming Indivisible event that may be of interest: Wednesday 2/19 from 6 to 7:30 pm at the Foreside Community Church located at 340 Foreside Road in Falmouth, ME. This will be a public form with Rep. Chellie Pingree's Chief of Staff, Jesse Connolly, to answer your questions about what we can do to move the needle in Washington during these tumultuous times.
    - iv. To sign up, or for more information:  
<https://www.mobilize.us/indivisible/event/755217/>
3. Ongoing matters
  - a. Looking for new PPEAT Co-Chair to serve this year alongside Charles
  - b. Update on review/update of our [flier](#) (Charles)
    - i. They met and determined a few things they need to find out. Dick checked out the status of a five year old report created by the Racial Equity

Steering Committee at the direction of City Council. Nothing has been done since. We should take another look at it. Dick will get a copy and share it with us. Regina Philips would be happy to work with us. We will put it on the March agenda.

- c. Creation Care Team
  - i. Solar Faithful, which is building a solar farm in Fairfield, is recruiting 150 households who are congregants of Maine religious congregations of any faith or denomination. The Bishop will be writing the priests in the Diocese to ask them to spread the word in their parishes. More information will be forthcoming in March.
- d. Approve [St. Luke's Covenant to Care for Creation](#) (Sarah made suggested changes from last meeting)
  - i. Sarah provided an upright sign re: composting napkins and food waste for the counter in the upper hall. She will bring it to church on Sunday provided we don't have a prohibitive amount of snow.
- e. Food Waste
  - i. St Luke Composting (Ruth & Mary)
    - 1. We propose beginning with the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter for planning purposes, given the potential focus of attention that may be needed in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.
      - a. Quarter 2 - Composting – possible coffee hour demo, contact local grocery stores, e.g., Hannaford's, Whole Foods, Shaw's
        - i. Ruth and Mary met and thought April 13 might work doing a coffee hour discussion about food waste. Check your pantry before shopping, composting G to G. They want to distribute green countertop composting bins that can be brought to one of the collection sites in Portland or South Portland. Dick will get 10 buckets. It is Palm Sunday. More people may be willing to stay.
      - b. Quarter 3 – Garbage to Garden contact, EPA's Sustainable Management of Food, Food Stewards Tool Kit
      - c. Quarter 4 – Low Income housing extra food not used; explore redistribution via food pantries
    - 2. Legislative bills (Charles & John )
      - a. Senator Brenner has introduced a bill, working with NRCM, CLF, and Zero Waste. Maine is the only state in New England without some kind of organic recycling law –

is this of any interest to PPEAT for any type of action?

TABLED

- f. White Christian Nationalism forum (Dick)
    - i. Dick talked to George and talked about having a guest speaker and a study group. Probably after Jill Saxby. Connect with Josh Hill at St. Alban's.
  - g. Citizen book discussion update (Sarah)
    - i. The start has been delayed a week due to an illness and a car accident. There are three participants.
  - h. Preparedness Committee (now called Walking Together) update (Ruth)
    - i. Resources from Faithfully Supporting Our Vulnerable Neighbors webinar
      1. [The Baptismal Covenant found in the Book of Common Prayer](#)
      2. [Diocese of Maine's document outlining considerations for clergy and lay leaders about "sanctuary"](#)
      3. [Immigration Resources from the Maine Council of Churches](#)
      4. Maine Council of Churches webinar on Thursday, Feb. 13, [Here We Are. Send Us! Part II](#): Sharing resources for a faithful response to threats of harm to the LGBTQ+ community
      5. [The Episcopal Church Immigration Action Toolkit](#)
      6. [The Washington National Cathedral Sanctuary Ministry](#)
      7. [Refugee Sunday Toolkit](#) - March 9 has been designated Refugee Sunday in the Diocese of Maine
      8. The group is meeting on Sunday.
4. New Topics:
- a. Randi Hogan let us know that a [new wetlands protection ordinance passed in Scarborough](#). She has suggested that we find an issue one of the local conservation commissions is trying to address, and show up at public meetings to voice support. Mary will find out about South Portland, and Eleanor, Portland.
  - b. [National Faith + Climate Forum 2025](#) is looking for host churches to livestream on March 27 from noon to 5:30 PM
    - i. We have too much on our plate to do this.
  - c. Green Teams 2025: June 21 at Wolfe's Neck Farm
5. Next meeting: March 11, 2025 6 PM