

Interchurch Center, Suite B □ 0245 SW Bancroft Street □ Portland, Oregon 97239
phone (503) 221-1054 □ *fax* (503) 223-7007 □ *Web site* www.emoregon.org

For Immediate Release

May 15, 2008

Contact: Jenny Holmes, Environmental Ministries Director
(503) 221-1054, ext. 214

Congregations challenge each other to reduce carbon footprints Workshops offer tools to save energy and money

Gorge Ecumenical Ministries, a coalition of local congregations, challenges area congregations and communities of faith to take steps to reduce their "carbon footprint" by at least 10 percent in 2008. Tools will be provided at Oregon Interfaith Power & Light (OIPL) workshops on May 29 to measure current energy use and emissions, including a new carbon calculator from OIPL made just for congregations.

Hood River congregations will pilot the new calculator. Congregations and individuals will also be given concrete, practical steps to significantly reduce the size of their "footprint." The challenge will culminate with the presentation of the "Greenest Faith Community in the Gorge" award at the end of 2008 to the faith community that has most dramatically reduced its negative impact on the planet. "We have a deep concern about our planet," explained the Rev. Linda Presley. "This friendly challenge and competition is a concrete way of showing that we, as communities of faith, are serious about caring for creation."

Individuals and congregations can learn how to reduce their carbon footprint and energy costs at two May 29 workshops—one for congregations (12 to 2:30 p.m.) and one for households (6 to 8:30 p.m.)—at **Hood River Valley Christian Church, 975 Indian Valley Christian Church, Hood River, Ore.** The workshops are sponsored by OIPL, a program of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Oregon Department of Energy and Energy Trust of Oregon.

The workshops will provide consumers with tools—including a five-year plan to dramatically reduce carbon footprints—and know-how to increase energy efficiency and use renewable energy. "Scientists say we have less than 10 years to stabilize carbon emissions to prevent the worst effects of global warming," says Jenny Holmes, Environmental Ministries director for Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon and OIPL. "Although major policy changes are needed, OIPL offers these workshops because everyone can be a part of the solution of global warming and lead by example. No step is too small."

- more -

MEMBER DENOMINATIONS

African Methodist Episcopal Church ■ American Baptist Churches of Oregon ■ Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) ■ Christian Methodist Episcopal Church ■ Church of the Brethren ■ Community of Christ
Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon ■ Episcopal Diocese of Oregon ■ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ■ Greek Orthodox Church ■ Presbyterian Church (USA)—Presbytery of the Cascades
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) ■ Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland ■ United Church of Christ ■ United Methodist Church ■ Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

The first workshop, “Save Your Congregation Energy and Money,” will be held **from 12 to 2:30 p.m.** Geared to the needs of congregations, the workshop will cover key principles of energy stewardship for congregations, low-cost and no-cost measures to save energy costs, and funding energy efficiency projects for religious facilities. The second workshop, “Energy Stewardship,” will be offered for individuals **from 6 to 8:30 p.m.** Topics will include top ideas to save energy costs for homes and businesses, affordable renewable energy options and the ethics of energy stewardship.

Keynote speaker for both workshops is Doug Boleyn, who has over 30 years of experience in renewable energy and energy efficiency and is energy consultant for OIPL, board member of the Solar Energy Association of Oregon, president of Cascade Solar Consulting, LLC, and a member of the Energy Trust of Oregon Renewable Advisory Committee. The Rev. David Presley of Hood River Valley Christian Church will give an opening reflection on faith and care of creation at both workshops.

A project of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, OIPL engages the faith community to strive for accountability in our individual and collective energy decisions in an interdependent world. OIPL offers opportunities for putting faith into action through wise electricity choices and energy conservation.

Registration will be accepted at the door. Cost is \$15 per workshop or \$25 for both workshops. Youth are free. A light meal and materials included. Scholarships available. For discounts available to groups from a single congregation, call (503) 221-1054. To download a complete brochure, go to www.emoregon.org.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s (EMO) Oregon Interfaith Power and Light project engages the faith community to strive for accountability in our individual and collective energy decisions in an interdependent world. EMO is a statewide association of Christian denominations—including Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox bodies—congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, environmental ministry and public policy advocacy.