

2019+ ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Friends and fellow travelers,
2019 has been a year of growth and transition for Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light and for the climate movement. As fires and floods ravaged communities, youth around the world

took to the streets, and our dream of a mass movement began to emerge. Thousands of individuals from hundreds of faith communities are waking to the uncomfortable reality that climate disruption shouldn't be on the back burner. It is the burner.

This past September, I had the privilege of working with incredible staff and faith leaders to turn out over 500 faith community actors for the Climate Strike on September 20th in St. Paul. Imagine trying to gather 500 faith actors into one corner for a "group photo" in the midst of thousands of others. The mood was joyful, desperate, yearning, and raw. Over 6,000 people were in the streets that day at the Capitol, with thousands more across the state. It was good, but we need more.

I'm sort of a numbers person, so I use the wisdom of political scientist Erica Chenoweth that 3.5% of the population needs to actively participate in mobilizing for change to turn the social tide. In Minnesota, that means 200,000 people getting engaged, taking to the streets, and filling meeting rooms. If we can

make this happen, we're almost guaranteed to win - movements that have surpassed this 3.5% threshold have never failed to bring about political change.

At MNIPL in 2019, we launched the Climate Justice Congregation certificate program in an effort to network hundreds of faith communities that are linked to mentors, action opportunities, messaging scripts, and to each other. We have learned so much from the first 43 congregations that have become part of the formal program, and I can't wait to see where this takes us.

I'll end with a question. What will my children Clara and Lucas ask when they look back on this time in history? I don't think they will ask if I knew, or even if I tried. I think they'll look back and talk about if we succeeded. And so our commitment at MNIPL is to connect the best social movement organizing tools to faith-led action and to use our resources in a grounded, loving way. May we come together in partnership to create a world where everyone can enjoy the miracle of being part of the earth family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Julia Nerbonne".

Julia Nerbonne, Executive Director

"When we start to act, hope is everywhere."

GRETA THUNBERG



Group photo from our gathering at the Mississippi Headwaters in partnership with Honor the Earth and RISE Coalition. Participants hold up the letter "W" to symbolize "water protector." Photo by Devon Cupery

Our MISSION & VISION

MINNESOTA INTERFAITH POWER & LIGHT is an interfaith community co-creating a just and sustainable world. We work in partnership with faith communities to build transformative **power** and bring the **lights** of people's unique gifts to addressing the climate crisis.

At MNIPL we work to build the inter-

faith climate movement in Minnesota by empowering faith communities across the state to take action that is authentic, effective, and energizing in their context.

We do this in two ways: leadership development programs and action opportunities that provide tangible ways to make an impact.

2019

MNIPL'S YEAR IN REVIEW

SOLAR

88 PEOPLE joined cooperatively-owned solar gardens

Launched the **LARGEST COMMUNITY SOLAR ARRAY** in Minneapolis at the "Ramp A" building

Supported **CLEAN ENERGY INDEPENDENCE** for Red Lake Nation

12 FAMILIES installed solar arrays through our two bulk buy programs

Hosted our new **YOUTH N' POWER CAMP** in partnership with Redeemer Lutheran Church

YOUTH

25 STUDENTS spoke on the Minnesota House floor to advocate for climate justice

GREATER MINNESOTA

Hosted "**BE THE SPARK**" **LEADERSHIP TRAININGS** in Duluth, Rochester, and St. Peter

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MOVEMENT BUILDING

Mobilized for the Global Climate Strike with **500 FAITH REPRESENTATIVES** in St Paul

Grew our team of **17 CORE VOLUNTEERS** to serve as Movement Builder mentors

Convened **100 FAITH LEADERS** for a gathering at the office of Governor Walz to stop Line 3

Engaged an active organizing team of **60 MEMBERS** in Northern Minnesota

DEVELOPMENT

Celebrated with **150 SUPPORTERS** at our first gala-style fundraiser

DOUBLED our donor base to **450 CONTRIBUTORS**

INTERFAITH

Gathered with **300 PEOPLE** for the fifth annual Unity Iftar at Gandhi Mahal, celebrating Ramadan with Muslim brothers and sisters

Collaborated with **3 ARTISTS** and **50 PARTICIPANTS** in Environmental Ancestry Story Circles

Supported **43 FAITH COMMUNITIES** in climate action with the Climate Justice Congregation program

COMMUNICATIONS

DOUBLED Twitter following to **2246**

Featured in **30+ NEWS ARTICLES**

55 NEW MONTHLY DONORS joined our sustaining donor drive

GROWING LEADERSHIP *for* CLIMATE JUSTICE

F AITH COMMUNITIES HAVE LONG BEEN AT THE forefront of movements for justice. From the civil rights era to Gandhi's Salt March, spiritually-grounded action has shaped the course of history. At MNIPL, it's our mission to teach the tools of social change, building out a bold moral movement for climate solutions from the bottom up.

Over the past year, MNIPL staff and volunteers engaged more than 4,000 people in climate conversations, workshops, and faith community events. We renewed relationships with our team of 17 Movement Builder volunteers, training and working with the team to empower faith actors across the state.

To deepen our support of faith communities in taking climate action, we launched our Climate Justice Congregation certificate program. More than 40 communities are now in the process of developing action plans, learning new skills, and bringing a

powerful faith voice to the movement for climate justice.

For the first time, we hired two Senior Clergy Fellows to help expand our network. Buff Grace joined MNIPL after serving as a priest in the Episcopal church for 12 years, most recently as the rector of Ascension Church in Stillwater. We also welcomed Susan Mullin, an ordained deacon in the United Methodist Church, who served as Minister of Faith Formation and Community Outreach at Faith UMC in St. Anthony Village. Together with staff, they engaged faith communities in climate conversations and worked to grow our Movement Builder network of volunteer leaders. *

*"Be the Spark provided me with a sense of **GROUNDEDNESS** and **CONNECTION** with the climate movement that has supported and will continue to support my work over time."*

RACHEL KERR, ST ANTHONY PARK
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



Faith community members gather for a group photo at the Climate Strike in St. Paul on September 20th. Photo: Julia Nerbonne

YOUTH N' POWER

Redeemer Center for Life

By Jessie Roelofs

SOME OF ANALYAH SCHLAEGER DOS SANTOS' BEST summer memories from childhood took place in camp at Redeemer Lutheran Church. So when she was tasked early on in her work with MNIPL to help create an energy efficiency camp at Redeemer, she was already full of ideas.

"My goal for them was to have the same kind of memories I had going to summer camp when I was little," Analyah said.

She knew from the start that the camp could not simply be a series of "lessons" – it had to be fun and optimistic, while building leadership skills and personal empowerment.

Thus, Youth N' Power was born. The name itself laid out the purpose of the camp. Where do we get our energy and power? How can I be a leader in my community and the climate justice movement? How can I use my personal talents, strengths and interests to make a difference?

Word quickly spread about the Youth N' Power camp. While they expected 8-10 young people, Analyah and the team were stunned when over twenty kids showed up on the first day.

During introductions, they discovered two things: 1) most of them had heard about climate change and knew it was "scary" and 2) most of them were there more because they wanted something to do than because of a particular interest in climate change.

But that would change after three weeks with Youth N' Power. The students learned about aquaponics, toured gardens, visited a community solar array, and even spoke on the floor of the Minnesota

House. With a mere week-and-a-half of learning under their belts, these young people were able to speak confidently (with a little prompting) about the need for more affordable solar solutions, why we should plant more trees, and more.

Throughout camp, students were normalizing conversations about the climate crisis, reimagining the kinds of communities they wanted to be a part of, and discussing their career aspirations and how their unique skills and interests can intersect with climate justice.

"To build young people of color in this movement, we need to make it clear that it's not an untouchable topic," Analyah said. "It's something that is for us because we all live here and we all breathe this air."

The third and final week was Business 101. In setting up the camp initially, Redeemer felt it was important to focus on workforce development – a goal which melded well with the camp's mission to connect the young people's aspirations with climate justice. The youth designed sustainable food trucks, presented their ideas to a panel, and even sold energy efficient light bulbs in their communities, while calculating the carbon saved by doing so.

"It was really important for me to see smiles on their faces and to see them excited and not anxious about climate," Analyah said. "If they can be presented with an opportunity to be excited, because there's different options for them to engage and to showcase their skills and actually build upon their skills, I think that makes all the difference." *

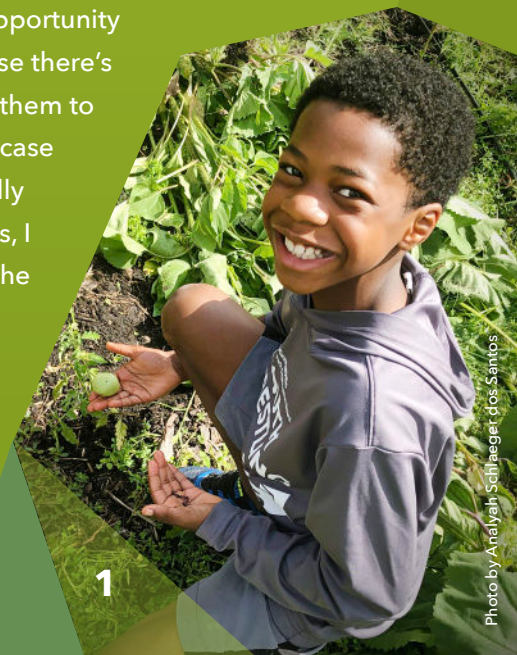


Photo by Analyah Schlaeger dos Santos



Photo by Julia Nerbonne

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Photo by Anayiah Schlaeger dos Santos

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1. A student from Youth N' Power picks vegetables from the Gandhi Mahal Interfaith Garden 2. Youth play with ducks at the garden 3. The Youth N' Power class gathers on the roof of Shiloh Temple to visit the community solar array 4. MNIPL staff member Jayda Pounds leads students in a game outside Redeemer Lutheran Church

RIVER PRAIRIE NETWORK

MNIPL'S RIVER PRAIRIE NETWORK REPRESENTS congregations and community members across Southern Minnesota. Together, we're building a movement dedicated to living out a shared commitment to sustainability and resilience. This year for the first time, we held our 'Be the Spark' leadership workshops in Mankato and Rochester. Thirty residents from around the region learned organizing

skills and explored opportunities to deepen their climate activism.

This was an exciting year for community solar in Southern Minnesota, with 46 people joining solar gardens in Waseca, Faribault, and Clark's Grove. To spread the word, we hosted community solar education events, talked with residents door-to-door, and tabled at community centers in collaboration with Community Power and Cooperative Energy Futures. The solar arrays in Waseca and Clark's Grove both went live this year, representing the culmination of three years of partnership. *

MNIPL volunteer Mark Bohnhorst and Ralph Jacobson of IPS Solar show their spirit at the September Climate Strike in St. Paul. Photo by Julia Nerbonne



Minnesotans for 100% CLEAN, EQUITABLE Energy

WE BELIEVE IN A CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE THAT BENEFITS everyone, regardless of your race, class, age, and zip code. In the spring, Minnesotans came together around a bold and necessary vision for 100% equita-

ble and clean energy. In partnership with a broad coalition of organizations, we advocated for legislation to make Minnesota's electricity carbon-free by 2050. MNIPL engaged dozens of members to meet with legislators, deliver interfaith petitions, and gather for rallies at the Capitol.

Soon after, Governor Walz announced support for 100% clean energy legislation, and the bill passed the Minnesota House. While it didn't clear the Senate, Governor Walz took major executive action in September, making Minnesota the 15th state to adopt California's Clean Car Standards. In the fall, we engaged our network to attend Clean Cars hearings across the state, where our members spoke strongly in support of a transition away from fossil fuels. In the coming year, we'll continue to advocate for full adoption of the Clean Car standards statewide in a second round of hearings. *

#CLIMATESTRIKE

IN 2019, A POWERFUL YOUTH MOVEMENT SWEEPED the world. Following the lead of 16-year-old Greta Thunberg of Sweden, students and adults participated in massive climate strikes, walking out of school and work to call for immediate action to address the climate crisis.

- Together we made history the week of September

20th, joining 7.6 million people worldwide to interrupt business as usual in an unprecedented global week of action. MNIPL mobilized people of faith to attend 17 youth-led events across the state, from Duluth to Rochester to the Twin Cities. We estimate that more than 500 faith community representatives attended the Twin Cities strike, which drew a total of 6000+ youth and adults. *



Thousands of youth and adults pack the Minnesota Capitol lawn at the September 20th climate strike. Photo by Devon Cupery

ENERGY JUSTICE

ONE OF THE WAYS WE ADVOCATE FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE is through energy efficiency programs, working in partnership with diverse faith communities. Over the past several years, our staff have supported two North Minneapolis communities, Masjid An Nur and Shiloh Temple, in cutting carbon emissions and electric bills. Both are partners of the Shiloh Temple solar garden, which went online in 2018. Now

Shiloh Temple is switching over to LED lights, the biggest and easiest way for them to save electricity. Masjid is working to build an eco-friendly water management system, install solar, and upgrade their heating system. As part of this program, we're also engaging students to connect community members with efficiency resources. We look forward to celebrating the progress of these projects in 2020! *

HONORING *the* SACREDNESS *of* WATER

THE PROPOSED LINE 3 PIPELINE IS A DANGEROUS fossil fuel expansion we can't afford – equivalent to building 50 new coal-fired power plants. Together with Indigenous allies and partners around the state, we successfully held off construction of the Line 3 pipeline for another year.

*"We call on the Governor and Lt. Governor to make **HISTORY**, to Stop Line 3, to be **WATER PROTECTORS**."*

REV. CURTISS DEYOUNG, MINNESOTA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

In February, we convened an interfaith prayer circle on Governor Walz's front doorstep at the Capitol. We were convinced he wasn't going to go through with a key legal appeal against Line 3. However, showing up just days before he had to make the decision with more than 100 faith leaders and community members, we were told that our presence was

a tipping point for the Walz Administration to follow through on their duty to protect our water.

In September, we rode up to the Mississippi Headwaters to gather in community with frontline water protectors in partnership with RISE Coalition and Honor the Earth. We camped together at Itasca State Park and held an interfaith vigil at the source of the Mississippi River, which is threatened by Line 3. The following Saturday, we rode over to the shores of Gichi Gami (Lake Superior) in Duluth to celebrate community resilience, centering the stories of missing and murdered indigenous relatives, and to say no to fossil fuel industry expansion. We joined more than 1000 people to send a powerful message that Line 3 won't be built. *

Renowned activist Winona LaDuke of Honor the Earth with MNPL Board member Ruhel Islam. Photo by Devon Cupery



ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

By Jessie Roelofs

IN THE MASSIVE ROTUNDA OF THE MINNESOTA STATE Capitol, surrounded by 500 people from across the state, the members of St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Minneapolis held signs and listened to speakers set out a vision for a carbon neutral state by 2050.

"We're becoming activists!" Joe Ward laughed, "And we're just ordinary churchgoing people."

What led Joe and his fellow parishioners to this time and place? In short: connection and action.

"We're convinced this is a problem," Joe said.

"We're convinced that this is not a partisan problem. It's a problem we're all going to have to deal with. We are for sensible solutions and want to advocate for them."

St. Mark's Episcopal Church initially got involved with MNIPL because of a hunger within the congregation to move from passive education to action. For many years, St. Mark's had engaged with the Episcopal Earthkeepers Circle which helped raise awareness around environmental issues. But when parishioner Joe Ward and Br. Columba returned from an MNIPL Be The Spark training full of inspiration and ready for action, their excitement truly

was a spark for the church. An article in the bulletin and a Climate Conversation held by MNIPL led to the creation of a task force within the church that was committed to steering the process of making St. Mark's a certified MNIPL Climate Justice Congregation.

"Truly what will bring about change is if we all feel in our hearts, in our guts, in our own spirituality the need to work together to do this," Joe said. "And we really are called to do this together."

As part of the year-long congregational certificate program through MNIPL, St. Mark's has developed a wide range of practical, systemic and spiritual action steps to support the church and individual members in fighting climate change. This includes everything from energy audits to creating a "Quick Response Team" that can spring into action and show up whenever policies are being decided at City Hall, the State Capitol and beyond.

Since beginning the process of becoming a Climate Justice Congregation, St. Mark's clergy and members talk more about the changing climate and its impact in their sermons, prayers, events and more.

"We're bringing people together with the common ground of being really concerned about climate change, but the effect it has is a spiritual one," said Joe. "It's becoming a community around climate change. And that creates a spiritual awareness that we are all linked. That we all are connected. And it's not just connections between people - it's connections with the earth and all of its inhabitants." *

1. Minnesotans gather in the Capitol Rotunda to rally for 100% clean, equitable energy 2. Rev. Ann Vining shows her support for clean energy at the rally 3. Members of St. Mark's Episcopal Church gather at a hearing to advocate for clean cars 4. A young person making a powerful statement for clean energy!

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Photo by Joseph Ward

Photo by Devon Cupery

LAKE SUPERIOR NETWORK

OUR STATEWIDE REGIONAL NETWORKS EMBODY THE values and core structures of MNIPL, while telling the unique story of local communities and drawing on specific regional assets and resources.

Over the past five years, our "Lake Superior Network" in the Duluth area has grown to become an influential and vibrant community powerhouse. This volunteer-led group co-organized more than 30 events in 2019 while growing and strengthening our coalition partnerships. We helped connect local residents with solar power, hosting our first solar group buy program together with REAL Solar. In the

months leading up to the Global Climate Strike, we deepened our collaboration with local youth organizers and worked together on multiple actions.

The year culminated with a celebratory win for the network. For several years, volunteers have been educating the public about the potential harms of a proposed fracked gas plant in Superior, Wisconsin. In partnership with Sierra Club, Honor the Earth, Izaak Walton League, youth leaders, and others, we submitted a petition to the Environmental Quality Board, stating that the company had failed to complete a necessary Environmental Impact Statement. In December, the Minnesota Court of Appeals ruled in our favor, overturning approval of the project. *

OWNING OUR POWER

TODAY, MOST OF OUR ENERGY COMES FROM monopoly-owned utilities that rely on dirty fossil fuels. We envision a different energy system: one that's community-owned, powered by clean energy, and accessible to all.

"This is a game changer for Red Lake. It's ENERGY SOVEREIGNTY for the tribe. It means self-determination."

BOB BLAKE, RED LAKE TRIBAL MEMBER, MNIPL STAFF MEMBER AND OWNER OF SOLAR BEAR

Toward this vision, MNIPL supported staff member Bob Blake in building an inspiring project for his tribe, Red Lake Nation. Responding to a call from Tribal Council Chairman Darrell Seki Sr., Bob is working in partnership with Ralph Jacobson of IPS Solar to shift Red Lake's energy use to 100% renewable sources, owned by the community. In 2018, Bob's company Solar Bear installed a 70kw solar system on the Red Lake Tribal Government Center, and he currently has several more installations planned at schools, colleges, and casinos. MNIPL assisted Bob in launching his company and is promoting educational sessions about the project.

To help Minnesotans go solar, MNIPL hosted residential bulk buy programs in Duluth and the Twin

Cities for the first time. These programs allow people to receive a group discount to install solar on their homes and businesses, while shifting the story of how we produce our energy. Together with our partners REAL Solar and Apadana Solar, we supported a dozen families in generating their own solar electricity. Bulk Buy participant David Weiss called his family's array "one small step in bringing the practical side of our life into closer alignment with the values of our hearts—and the needs of our planet."

In addition to residential solar, we continued to recruit Minnesotans for community solar gardens, in collaboration with Cooperative Energy Futures and Community Power. CEF's cooperative model helps to make clean energy accessible to renters and homeowners alike, regardless of credit score. Residents can sign up to be part of a local solar garden without having to install panels, all while saving money on electric costs. Together we subscribed 88 people for community solar, representing 730 kW of electricity generated by the sun! We filled our four solar arrays in Southern Minnesota, and in October, we celebrated the launch of Minneapolis's largest community solar garden at the 'Ramp A' building. *

"Installing solar is one small step in bringing the PRACTICAL side of our life into closer alignment with the VALUES of our hearts and the needs of our planet."

DAVID WEISS, JUST SOLAR BULK BUY PARTICIPANT



SUSTAINING *the* MOVEMENT

ONE OF OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES AT MNIPL IS “MOVE slow to move fast”. We recognize that by building trusting relationships and a strong foundation, we can take action nimbly and quickly, sometimes at lightning speed. MNIPL donors and volunteers provide this essential framework, and we are deeply grateful for all the ways that people contribute toward our mission. In 2019 thanks to the generous support of our network, we doubled our donor base to 450 contributors, allowing us to scale up our or-

ganizing and deepen our impact.

In March, we gathered with 150 supporters for our first gala-style fundraiser at the Bell Museum of Natural History. It was a vibrant, heartfelt celebration of our collective action, featuring a program of inspiring local speakers, poetry, and music. We recognized the work of Program Director Erin Pratt as she embarked on a new journey to start a family with her partner in Colorado. By the end of the night, the audience was up dancing to the music of Tiyum-ba Drum and Dance! We honor the generosity and energy that our community brought to this special evening. *

2019 INCOME & EXPENSES

STATEMENT OF REVENUE & EXPENSES

INCOME

Congregations	\$32,710	5%
Foundations	\$322,263	50%
Gifts in Kind	\$3,267	1%
Government Contracts	\$24,150	4%
Individuals	\$96,677	15%
Organizations/businesses	\$46,757	7%
Solar Revenue	\$114,447	18%

Total Income **\$640,270** **100%**

EXPENSES

Personnel	\$459,526	79%
Program	\$31,385	5%
Administration	\$41,956	7%
Fundraising	\$8,004	1%
Grant Distribution	\$21,000	4%
Misc. Expenses	\$548	0%
Travel	\$15,849	3%

Total Expenses **\$578,268** **100%**

Net Income **\$ 62,002**

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$191,970
Accounts Receivable	\$80,166
Other	\$19,236

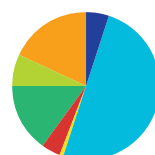
Total Assets **\$291,372**

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

Liabilities	\$23,119
Equity	\$268,253

Total Liabilities and Net Assets **\$291,372**

2019 INCOME



- Solar Revenue
- Organizations/Businesses
- Individuals
- Government Contracts
- Gifts in Kind
- Foundations
- Congregations

STAFF

Sam Benson
Solar & Policy Outreach Coordinator

Robert Blake
Just Solar Outreach Coordinator

Devon Cupery
Engagement & Development Manager

Buff Grace
Solar Outreach Manager

Joe Meinholz
Outreach Coordinator

Susan Mullin
Senior Faith Leader Fellow

Emily Minge
Solar Outreach Manager

Julia Nerbonne
Executive Director

Bret Pence
Greater Minnesota Director

Jayda Pounds
Office Manager & Energy Efficiency Coordinator

Erin Pratt
Program Advisor

Analyah Schlaeger dos Santos
Environmental Justice Youth Program Coordinator

Whitney Terrill
Environmental Justice Program Manager

Charissa Verdoorn
Outreach & Policy Manager

FORMER STAFF

Joshua Marzahn
Outreach & Administrative Fellow

Gunther Melander
Solar Outreach Coordinator

Emily Minge
Solar Outreach Manager

Alina Yaman
Pipeline Resistance Coordinator

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2019 DONORS

Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light extends our deepest gratitude to our donors, volunteers, partners, and supporters.

We've carefully prepared this list for accuracy and apologize for any mistakes or omissions. If you find an error, please contact Devon Cupery, Engagement & Development Manager at devon@mnipi.org.



Staff photo by Julia Nerbonne

\$40,000 & ABOVE

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100% Campaign
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RE-AMP Network Administrative Fund
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 Howard Bell
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\$5,000 AND ABOVE

First Universalist Church Foundation
 Plymouth Congregational Church
 St. Luke Presbyterian Church

\$1000 - \$4,999

Edina Community Lutheran Church
 First Universalist Church
 Mount Olive Lutheran Church
 Prospect Park United Methodist Church
 Unitarian Universalist Church of
 Minnetonka

\$500 - \$999

Cathedral Church of Saint Mark's
 Christ Methodist Church
 Episcopal Church of the Ascension
 Faith Mennonite Church
 First Congregational of MN
 First Lutheran Church
 Guardian Angels Church
 Hamline United Methodist Church
 Mayflower Community UCC
 New Life Church
 Pilgrim Lutheran Church
 St. John's Episcopal Church
 St. Mary's Episcopal Church
 St. Paul's United Church of Christ
 The Grove United Methodist Church
 Unitarian Church of Underwood
 University Lutheran Church of Hope

\$250 - \$499

Central Lutheran Church
 Church of St. Joan of Arc
 Macalester Plymouth United Church
 Michael Servetus Unitarian Society
 Pax Christi Catholic Community
 SpringHouse Ministry Center
 St. Andrew's Lutheran Church
 St. Paul's Monastery
 Union Congregational United Church
 of Christ
 Unity Church-Unitarian of St. Paul

\$100 - \$249

All Saints Lutheran Church
 Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church
 Concordia Evangelical Lutheran Church
 Faith United Methodist Church
 First Congregational United Church of
 Christ
 House of Hope Presbyterian Church
 Lutheran Church of Christ Redeemer
 St. Croix Valley Friends Meeting
 St. John the Evangelist
 Trinity Lutheran Church



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Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light works in partnership
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