

## 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

### THREE-LEGGED STOOL



In our organizing work, we use the three-legged stool as a metaphor for how we make change — each of these is a critical approach in building towards a more just and sustainable world.

### PRACTICAL

Tangible things we can do to end our fossil fuel dependence and care for each other and our world

### SYSTEMIC

Policy and administrative advocacy to disrupt the fossil fuel economy and create a climate future centered on equity and justice

### RELATIONAL

Building strong networks of care and interdependence and fostering resiliency in the face of climate disruption

### PRACTICAL

- We developed new solar proposals for **30 community groups** across the state and helped **6 groups convert their buildings to solar** (with many ready to go in 2024)
- Because of the new incentives for solar-conversion in the Inflation Reduction Act, we **hosted more than 10 events** to educate Minnesotans on how individuals and community groups can access those financial incentives
- In partnership with Cooperative Energy Futures, we helped neighbors in Minneapolis to **save money and invest in a sustainable future** by signing up for the Midtown Solar Garden
- We hosted **3 webinars** on heat pumps for more than **30 residents of Northern Minnesota**, helping connect them to resources and contractors
- We worked with Solar United Neighbors, a solar cooperative, to **put solar on nine homes** in Northern Minnesota

### SYSTEMIC

- Through advocacy at the Capitol, we secured **\$45M for Minnesota Climate Innovation Financial Authority (MNCIFA)** to support Minnesotans in their transition to sustainable energy, with a focus on communities of color and Indigenous and low-income communities
- We hosted a **Youth Climate Justice Summit with 135 young people** from all over Minnesota to center the voices of the generation most impacted by climate disruption
- The Rise & Repair Lobby Day brought **hundreds of Minnesotans (including young people!)** to the Capitol to demand respect for **Indigenous rights and climate justice**
- Duluth and Twin Cities Policy Teams met throughout the year to identify places where Minnesotans can advocate for climate-centered policies on a local level
- We solicited **more than 500 signatures** to demand an environmental impact study to protect the Red Rock Ridge, a sacred space for the Lower Sioux and the site of the Jeffers Petroglyphs
- **Our staff represented Minnesota at COP28**, where we delivered a letter with **more than 600 signatures** demanding aggressive action on climate disruption

### RELATIONAL

- We certified **26 Climate Justice Congregations**, helping support their commitment to climate justice and provide education on practical things they can do
- We spoke to over **40 congregations and did nine Song Circle events** to help build our network of people passionate about climate justice
- We hosted **4 webinars** about the importance of reparations and tangible recommendations for action — **209 people were enrolled and the recordings were viewed more than 775 times**
- As a next step, we hosted two Reparations Learning Labs with **136 people enrolled**
- We participated in more than **20 networks and coalitions**, including one with 5 organizations to develop a **pilot resiliency network** in the Phillips neighborhood
- We hosted **nine college interns** and supported youth climate apprentices, six of whom graduated from college in 2023!

## 2023 SPOTLIGHT: HEADWATERS GATHERING

In 2023, Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light co-hosted the Headwaters Gathering with environmental and Indigenous leaders across the state to commemorate an important moment in protecting the health of our water and land. Two years previously, the ceremonious Fire Light Treaty encampment had held space over the Mississippi River and temporarily halted production on the Enbridge Line 3, a tar sands pipeline that crosses Northern Minnesota and endanger water sources, including the Mississippi river.

The Fire Light Encampment was not just about preserving the beauty and health of our state's water, but also about the rights of Indigenous people to access to the land and species they hold sacred: in the 1855 Treaty of Washington, the Anishinaabe people had ceded the land that Line 3 crosses to the U.S. government, but reserved the rights to hunt, fish, gather, and occupy the land for Anishinaabe people.



The Fire Light Encampment was by some measures unsuccessful — Enbridge completed Line 3 and put it into service in October 2021 — and the Headwaters Gathering held space for how devastating that defeat felt. Even still, many of those at the Headwaters Gathering pointed to the long-term successes for this movement. Eóin Small, who has worked alongside Indigenous-led movements, named many of the places where the movement saw success: **a petition with 68,000 signatures, community activism at permitting meetings, cooperation across tribal nations and non-native people, and thousands of activists putting their bodies on the line.** “We have to be aware of the other things that we’re fighting for in addition to what we’re fighting against,” he said.



The work around Line 3 has continued, and it will continue to change. Rather than preventing the construction, volunteers are now fighting to end its use and working to mitigate its harm. And many folks wondered what will we need to create the environmental change we want to see. “I am just trying to figure out what’s going to wake people up. The only thing I can think is, you have to come here. You have to be in this land, you have to see her, know her, hear her, and commune with her,” said Jami Gaither, co-founder of Waadookaagad Amikwag. **“I wish I could help people see that if you love her, she will help you in your fight. She will give you every opportunity to help her. If you listen.”**

## 2023 SPOTLIGHT: INVESTING IN MINNESOTA'S GREEN ECONOMY

The creation of the Minnesota Climate Innovation Finance Authority (MNCIFA) was a huge win for MNIPL – and for Minnesota’s sustainable energy future. MNCIFA will provide loans and educational resources for clean energy projects through an environmental justice lens, prioritizing Indigenous communities, communities of color, and people with lower incomes who are heavily affected by pollution.

This focus on addressing the harms of climate disruption through racial and Indigenous justice was intentional – as MNIPL’s Legislative Affairs Organizer Juventino Meza, J.D. put it, **“The green economy is the new white economy, so for us it was important that there was embedded racial justice in the work.”**



Legislative Director Patrica Torres Ray, Strategic Policy Director Sara Wolff, and Juventino spent months in conversation with community members, legislators, and administrators, addressing the concerns of small businesses, labor organizers, Indigenous communities and communities of color. **“What mattered was engaging people in meaningful conversations,”** Juventino said. **“Once we sat down with people, even if we didn’t convince them, we were able to change the MNCIFA language to accommodate their concerns.”**

When hundreds of folks showed up at the Capitol for the Rise & Repair rally to show their support for bold legislative action, they helped push the legislation to the finish line. In May of 2023, the Minnesota legislature passed the bill, allocating \$45 million to transition into a new equitable green economy. **Our work in 2024? Making sure those funds get into the hands of the Minnesotans who need them most.**

## THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!

Apadana Solar  
Avisen Legal  
Beth Zemsky  
Climate Generation  
Coalition to Dismantle the Discovery  
Doctrine  
Cooperative Energy Futures  
CURE  
EcoFaith Network  
Episcopal Church in Minnesota  
Friends of the Boundary Waters  
Go Solar Installs  
Institute for Local Self-Reliance

Intermill Land History Consulting  
Jewish Community Action  
Land Stewardship Project  
Macalester Plymouth Congregational Church  
MCEA  
McKnight Foundation  
Mi C.A.S.A.  
Minnesota Environmental Justice Table  
Minnesota Multifaith Network  
Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social  
Justice Action  
MN350  
Mountains and Waters Alliance

Prospect Park United Methodist Church  
R.I.S.E. Coalition  
Recycling Electronics for Climate Action  
Rise & Repair Alliance  
Shir Tikvah  
Sierra Club North Star Chapter  
Take Action MN  
The Center for Sustainable Justice  
The Ministry Lab  
The Repair Communities for Makoce Ikikcupi  
Twin Cities Nonviolent  
Unitarian Unitarian Church of Minnetonka  
Vote Solar



## THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

### CONGREGATIONS

Apple Valley Community of Christ  
 Catholic Community Foundation  
 Central Lutheran Church  
 Christ United Methodist Church  
 Church of St Frances Cabrini  
 Edina Community Lutheran Church  
 Epworth United Methodist Church  
 Faith Mennonite Church  
 Faith United Methodist Church  
 First Congregational Church of MN  
 First Lutheran Church  
 First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis  
 First Universalist Church  
 Gethsemane Lutheran Church- Hopkins  
 Grace University Lutheran Church  
 Hamline United Methodist Church  
 Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church  
 Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
 Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church  
 Lutheran Church of the Resurrection  
 Lyndale United Christ  
 Macalester Plymouth United Church  
 Mayflower Community UCC  
 Mount Olive Lutheran Church  
 New Life Church

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church  
 Pax Christi Catholic Community  
 Pilgrim Lutheran Church  
 Plymouth Congregational Church  
 Prospect Park United Methodist Church  
 St. Anne's Episcopal Church  
 St. Cloud Unitarian Universalist  
 St. John's Episcopal Church  
 St. Luke Presbyterian Church  
 St. Luke's Episcopal Church  
 St. Matthew's Episcopal Church  
 St. Paul's United Church of Christ  
 The Grove United Methodist Church  
 Trinity English Evangelical Lutheran Church  
 Unitarian Church of Underwood  
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 Valley Community Presbyterian Church  
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