



Institutional Membership



ISAIAH is a community of congregations and thousands of Minnesotans who are motivated to act for justice and equity because of love for God and belief in the dignity and sacredness of all people.

We are building a faith movement together so that we can effectively influence decision makers to develop laws and policies that help lift people out of poverty, achieve racial equity, and remove barriers to opportunity.

ISAIAH has a strong track record of successfully engaging religious leaders and lay leadership from congregations across Minnesota, as well as influencing policy-makers around critical issues at the local, regional and state levels.

In this packet you will find an invitation to join ISAIAH as an institutional member, a snapshot of recent issue successes, the 2018 Faith Agenda and membership information.

February 2018

I know you are concerned, like I am, about the world as it is today and the world we're leaving to our children and grandchildren.

I believe that God calls us to work together in community to create a just world where everyone is treated with dignity, provided with the opportunity to thrive, and has a loving community surrounding and supporting them when they are unable to care for themselves.

The work for justice can be difficult, but it's not impossible when we band together and claim our voices. Over the years, thousands of lives across Minnesota have been improved because of ISAI AH's work for justice.

Today we are witnessing the incredible energy of people in motion for justice everywhere we look. There is no doubt that God is indeed doing a new thing among us!

From the energy across the country in response to the moral call of Pope Francis, to the movement to ensure that Black Lives Matter, to thousands of struggling and undocumented immigrants coming out of the shadows to claim both their right to be included and to stay with their families, to school children calling for gun safety measures, to the thousands of working families demanding a living wage, paid sick time and family leave – there are now more regular, everyday people in motion in our streets, churches and workplaces than there has been at any other time in my lifetime.

Though each of these movements can seem separate, they are not. They have in common the simple declaration that “people need to be put first.” Everyone is a child of God and everyone is made in the image of God. That simple truth is missing from our current political, social and economic systems.

ISAI AH is an organization that gives faith institutions and thousands of people of faith, like you and me, a place to respond to God's call to create a just and loving world. ISAI AH provides an avenue for people to act together to restore “people first” into the systems that govern our daily lives.

I believe that people of faith have an essential and unique role to play in this moment. Together we have the power to shine God's light on the moral choices before us as a State, connecting our struggles into one seamless declaration that we are one body, radically interconnected as human beings.

I invite you to become an institutional member of ISAI AH and join with congregations across Minnesota who are answering the call to create a just world for all God's children.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Doran Schrantz".

Doran Schrantz
Executive Director

Becoming a Member of ISAIAH

Congregations, not individuals, are members of ISAIAH. A faith institution becomes a member of ISAIAH by both paying membership dues and engaging in the vehicle of ISAIAH through the building of a team in the congregation to relate to the wider organization.

Membership Dues are paid annually and are negotiated based on the size of the congregation's annual budget. The suggested ranges are:

Small Congregation	\$500-\$1000
Mid-Size Congregation	\$1000-\$3000
Large Congregation	\$3000-\$5000

Full Members have the right to elect the Board of Directors of ISAIAH and have more governing power of the organization. Both Members and Partners of ISAIAH have access to the time of organizing staff, reduced rates for leadership development and training programs, and have influence in the development of the agenda and issues of ISAIAH.

ISAIAH is a vehicle for its members and partners. The agenda and programs of the organization are co-created collectively and rooted in the membership and constituencies of the organization. ISAIAH spends the majority of its resources investing in the strength, capacity and voice of its members, allowing people of faith to have a powerful voice in the public decisions that impact our communities and our families.

ISAIAH is an organizing organization, not an advocacy organization. This means that the people who are the leaders and the voice for any particular agenda, campaign or public initiative are those of the people grounded in member and partner institutions. Our collective resources, in ISAIAH, are devoted to making those voices as powerful as possible—through strategic support from organizers, communications support, policy and lobbying support, etc.



In return, the whole organization challenges all its members to participate and engage in the collective power of the whole organization—when ISAIAH acts, at times, with one collective voice, ISAIAH can move state-wide policy, influence state and federal decision-makers. Therefore, ISAIAH needs its members to co-create state-wide campaigns and strategies to lift up the collective voice and interest of the faith community.



A Snapshot of Success in the past 5 years

- **Immigrant Protection and Inclusion.** ISAIAH has been at the forefront of fighting for immigrant rights including winning \$250,000 for immigrant legal services in Hennepin County, passing Municipal ID in Northfield, pushing to restore access to driver's licenses in Minnesota, and demanding comprehensive immigration reform.
- **Healthcare.** ISAIAH organized to defeat the repeal of the Affordable Care Act and has repeatedly fought to preserve and strengthen MinnesotaCare.
- **Paid Sick Days for Workers.** ISAIAH led the coalition that passed the strongest paid sick days ordinance in the country in Saint Paul, MN.
- **Raising the Minimum Wage.** ISAIAH was a key faith partner on raising the Minimum Wage and ensuring that the wage increases every year as the cost of living increases.
- **Sentencing Reform and Stopping Private Prisons.** ISAIAH successfully pushed for drug sentencing reform in Minnesota while stopping the national lobbyists for private prisons from re-opening a facility in Appleton.
- **Home Owners Bill of Rights.** ISAIAH led a successful legislative campaign to put more power in the hands of homeowners facing foreclosure and predatory debt.
- **Defeat of the Voter ID Constitutional Amendment in 2012.** ISAIAH engaged 37,000 faith voters to persuade them to Vote No on Voter Restriction.



Claiming Our Voices Faith Agenda

*We are leading together to create a Minnesota that is **inclusive** and **just** for every person.*

A Democracy that Honors Every Person's Dignity

- Recognize and respect the full humanity of people of color and indigenous people through full democracy and restorative investment.
- A justice system that shifts from punishment to restoration and redemption.
- Full gender justice.
- A recognition that we are all interconnected and part of a community where we must be welcoming, especially to immigrants.
- A public education system that is fully funded and achieves education equity.

A Caring Economy that Allows Everyone to Thrive

- A state that supports all types of families and their ability to care for each other.
- Affordable, dignified places to live, work, retire and play.
- A guaranteed healthcare system that creates health and provides ongoing support for all.
- A system of finance, both public and private, that prioritizes needs where everyone can access the tools to create wealth.
- An ethic of caring for creation through environmental stewardship and a just response to climate change.

Claiming Our Voices Policy & Governing Priorities

The following are some examples of how ISAIAH leaders propose to achieve the “Claiming Our Voices” Faith Agenda. These examples are not exhaustive. They are a work in progress and are subject to change based on our engagement with the issues, our creativity in imagining, designing and implementing innovative solutions, and the extent of our collective power to make these ideas manifest.

Economic dignity. Create statewide Paid Family & Medical Leave insurance program, that is universal, prioritizes equity and access, offers access to up to at least 12 weeks of leave.

Childcare. Fully fund Childcare Assistance Program to serve all Minnesota families, and increase the reimbursement rate to pay for increasing cost of quality care.



Health. Guarantee statewide universal healthcare coverage through the creation of a MinnesotaCare for All program.

Housing. Create more affordable housing options so all have safe, comfortable housing that promotes and affirms community, is suitable for the disabled and elderly, and does not discriminate based on immigration status.

Finance. Eliminate payday lending which traps people into a cycle of debt and poverty.

Transportation. Invest in a comprehensive multi-modal transportation system that prioritizes transit service and infrastructure, with a focus on serving those who have been historically underserved.

Environment. Invest in renewable energy and enforce a goal of moving Minnesota to 50% sustainable sources of energy by 2030, and 100% by 2050.

Education. Create racial, socioeconomic and geographic equity in education by supporting adequate and equitable school funding, increased investments in Full Service Community Schools, increased support staff and diversity of teachers, and embracing restorative discipline.

Local Control. Preserve local governments’ ability to set policies that improve on statewide minimum standards.

Mass Incarceration. Re-define the purpose of criminal justice to focus on rehabilitation, not retribution, and invest in public defenders, restorative justice, diversion programs and other alternatives to incarceration.

Immigration. Restore access to driver’s licenses regardless of immigration status.

Voting Rights. Expand opportunities for voting, including automatic voter registration and the restoration of voting rights to formerly incarcerated people.

Safety. Pass strong gun safety measures.



Towanna's Story

Towanna is a single mother of two beautiful children with medical conditions that require special care and attention. "Because I did not have enough support from my old job, I had to choose between keeping myself employed and caring for my children. I chose my children."



This wrenching decision resulted in Towanna losing her home and ending up on public assistance. You would expect Towanna to complain about losing her job, but it's when she talks about her kids' school that you'll hear her true displeasure. Both her children have been suspended for actions and behaviors caused by their medical conditions. It infuriates her that the school treats her kids like problems rather than as children of God – worthy of investment, love, and patience.

Through her involvement with ISAIAH, Towanna is using her voice and her passion to change her school district's suspension policies and to change the appalling fact that children of color in Minnesota are suspended at much higher rates. As a community, we are standing with her to amplify her voice calling for justice.

Leadership Development

Leadership skill training and mentoring make ISAIAH's leaders key to our success. Our leaders work together building powerful relationships with one another and with public officials to reverse the injustices impacting their own lives and the lives of their neighbors.

ISAIAH provides leadership training for congregation members throughout the year using interactive and experiential adult education tools. Leaders learn how to research and analyze community issues and work with public officials to implement changes in public policy. Public actions train leaders to be effective in the public arena.

Once each year, ISAIAH sponsors a national Weeklong Leadership Training in Minnesota. This intensive training provides the tools and skills to become more effective at creating transformative change in our communities. Those who are on a leadership path are disciples who are trained to develop more disciples to create the beloved community.



Bill's Story

Bill is a retired commuter programmer who spends his time biking and baking bread for charity in his community. He was raised with Midwestern values of loyalty and pride in hard work. Shortly after college, Bill began working for the company that he would continue to work with for the next 39 years. He worked hard because he knew his labor reflected his values.

Bill's company announced plans to build a subsidiary in India and things started to change. Pensions were cut, and benefits were changed so that employees only had three sick days a year. Layoffs started and continued every six months for the next several years. Bill and his coworkers were terrified every time they were asked into a meeting. Eventually Bill lost his job. Luckily with the severance and his savings he was able to retire early. Others were not so fortunate and had to find a job in the economic downturn.

As the layoffs were happening, Bill's bosses would show slide shows at monthly staff meetings with photos of all the fun they were having visiting the Indian subsidiary. The month he was laid off, his CEO made a \$5 million bonus – enough to have paid Bill's salary more than 60 times over.

What happened to Bill was not just. The way he and so many other people in our economy are treated goes against our faith. Today, Bill is working with ISAIAH saying "we must put people first." He is working to build ISAIAH's power so that people of faith can counter the influence of well-funded corporate lobbyists.

ISAIAH 2018 Congregational Membership Form

Yes! I want to become a member of ISAIAH.

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Small Congregation Full Member Dues	\$500 - \$1,000
Mid-Size Congregation Full Member Dues	\$1,000 - \$3,000
Large Congregation Full Member Dues	\$3,000 - \$5,000

2018 MEMBERSHIP DUES COMMITMENT

Based on the suggested dues ranges outlined above,

OUR CONGREGATION'S 2018 ISAIAH DUES COMMITMENT IS: \$_____

Congregation Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

We will make payments:

☐ Quarterly ☐ Monthly ☐ Annually ☐ Other (Describe) _____

Optional: We would like ISAIAH to send us an invoice/s. Please send:

On or about *(date)* _____ in the amount of \$ _____

On or about *(date)* _____ in the amount of \$ _____

On or about *(date)* _____ in the amount of \$ _____

Send invoices to:

Name _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please return this completed form to ISAIAH. Thank you.

ISAIAH, 2356 University Avenue W., Ste. 405, St. Paul, MN 55114
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