



Green Notes: We Got the Grant! We're Getting Solar Panels!

After nearly 150 years of worship on Main Street in downtown Missoula, Methodists are again leading the way, putting our faith into action. Next month, 66 solar panels will be lifted onto the Education Annex roof, enough to supply at least 80 percent of our historic building's electricity.

Our congregation made this happen. We believed in the future of renewable energy and a healthy planet. We researched solar energy and its potential to reduce our church's carbon footprint. We pledged \$18,353 to finance our part of a solar installation. We applied for and received a \$1,000 grant from the Mountain Sky Conference of the United Methodist Church.

[And we applied for](#) – and now received! – a \$46,323 E+ Renewable Energy Grant from NorthWestern Energy. What a testament to the power of generations of Methodists, at work in the little mountain town where they chose to live, work and worship!

We don't yet know the exact construction schedule. But we will keep you posted every week with any information we receive from our contractor, SBS Solar of Missoula. Right now, it looks like our installation will happen either the week of Sept. 5 or Sept. 12. Then will come several electrical inspections and the connection of our panels to NorthWestern Energy's grid – so any excess power we generate can flow onto the grid and into other homes and businesses.

Here's what we do know: It's time to bring in the contributions you so generously pledged to this project! We need the funds in hand by the end of August so we can write a check to SBS Solar. If you made a pledge, our First UMC Green Team has contacted you by email or regular mail with a reminder of the amount.

Just write a check to Missoula First United Methodist Church, put "Solar Panels" in the memo line, and either mail or bring it in to the church office. The church's volunteer counters only work every other Monday – this month on Aug. 8 and 22. So it's crucial they have your check in hand on one of those days. Questions? Email Green Team co-chair Jim Gillison at james.gillison@msn.com.

NorthWestern Energy has asked our church to hold off on any media releases until after the interconnection permit and contracts are signed – just in case anything changes. But we assure you that we'll invite Missoula media and our congregation to join us in celebrating our collective success in September. Stay tuned, Methodists! And thank you all for making this project a success and an inspiration to so many. We can hear the voices of all those generations of downtown Methodists singing in celebration!