

Green Notes: Weekly tips for reducing your carbon footprint from First United Methodist's Green Team:

Thank you, Lorraine Carlson!

With grateful hearts, Green Team members began their December 1 meeting with praise for Lorraine Carlson, who is leaving the group to better focus her volunteer work.

Lorraine is the embodiment of service at First UMC and inspired every member of the Green Team as we began our climate change activism in recent years.

“We will miss your wisdom and commitment,” said Carole Addis. “But I am so glad you are taking care of yourself. You are so central to what is happening in this church, and have started many of us on the road to activism and commitment.”

Pastor John Daniels said Lorraine is one of First Church's busiest members, “yet you always come back to keeping the main thing the main thing.”

“Thank you for all your hard work,” he said, “but also for your perspective.”

Lorraine led the Green Team by example, most recently with the installation of solar panels atop her home – a project that inspired the team's ongoing effort to investigate options for solar power at our church building.

Carole Addis is leading that research, and reported substantial progress after a recent conversation with SBS Solar, the Missoula firm that installed both the Carlson family's rooftop panels and those at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Bonner.

“They were super enthusiastic about the possibilities,” said Carole, who is working to provide SBS with copies of First Church power bills and then will assemble a group of trustees and Green Team members to tour the church with SBS. That walkabout will give SBS a chance to assess the solar options for our property, and to start working with our team on financing options.

In her conversations with the Bonner church’s pastor, Carole learned about two programs – one for grants, the other for leases – that help churches with solar installations. Pastor Eric Huseth has offered his full support as we move forward with our project.

Lorraine bid her farewell from the group with a similar pledge of support. “I am really inspired by the vision you have and how you are going after it,” she said. “There is no doubt that you are on the way to accomplishing great things.”