

Green Notes: You're Invited! Celebrate First Church's Solar Power Success on Sunday, October 2

Say hallelujah and pass the chili dogs! On Sunday, October 2, First UMC will celebrate the installation of solar panels atop our Education Annex – and all the individuals and business people who made that miracle happen.

When connected to NorthWestern Energy's grid, the 66 panels will supply at least 80 percent of our building's electricity. And if we can identify new ways to conserve energy in the coming months, that percentage will grow. And grow!

And that's not the only good news about First Church's solar installation.

By generating nearly all our own electricity, we'll save hundreds of dollars each month. We'll drastically reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, including 18 tons of CO₂ each year. And we'll inspire other downtown businesses and Missoula churches to join us in going solar and helping our city reach its goal of 100 percent clean electricity by 2030.

So ... it's time to celebrate! On October 2, we'll say thank you to all the members of our congregation who supported the fundraising campaign that netted \$18,353 in just three months, enough to meet our required 30 percent match. And we'll give three cheers for the Methodist Church's Mountain Sky Conference, which contributed \$1,000 to the cause, and for our solar contractor, SBS Solar of Missoula, which donated \$1,500 of its time and expertise.

AND we'll shout out a heartfelt thank you to NorthWestern Energy, which brought what seemed like an impossible dream to reality by awarding First UMC a \$46,323 grant from its E+ Renewable Energy program.

After nearly 150 years of worship on Main Street in downtown Missoula, Methodists are again leading the way, putting our faith into action.

We all 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 our own money and applied for grants so the project was fully funded. What a testament to the power of generations of Methodists, at work in the mountain town where they chose to live, work and worship!

Please join us at 10:30 a.m. worship on Sunday, Oct. 2 to celebrate. Worship will be followed by a chili dog extravaganza on the front lawn, displays in our Narthex, and fun and fellowship for the whole family! The sun is shining on Missoula Methodists!