

November 20, 2021

Missoula City Council  
Mayor John Engen  
435 Ryman Street  
Missoula, MT 59802

Mayor Engen and City Council members:

As members of Missoula First United Methodist Church's Green Team, we urge you to take immediate, decisive action toward achieving the city-county goal of 100 percent clean electricity by 2030. We are concerned about the lack of progress in converting our city to clean, renewable power. We stand ready to work with you – and advocate for you – to take the action needed to eliminate fossil fuels from our power supply.

We know your attention has been pulled in many directions in recent years: the pandemic response, homelessness, labor shortages, and skyrocketing home and rental costs. Our congregation is at work on these issues as well. But the climate crisis needs the same, or more, attention. The consequences of our warming planet already affect our community, and grow evermore dire. The urgency to act is real.

Other cities across the U.S. have provided Missoula with stories of success to both inspire and guide our efforts. One example: Ithaca, N.Y., recently voted to electrify and decarbonize its 6,000 homes and businesses – and has a plan (down to the appliance-level) to achieve that goal by 2030. By 2025, Ithaca will have converted all city government operations to clean electricity. The hardest part, leaders there say, is finding "the courage to make the commitment."

We believe Missoula has that courage, and realistic paths to achieve our goal. A 2019 analysis said energy efficiency measures could net 15 percent of the 300,000 megawatt hours of carbon-fired power Missoula must replace. A solar farm could account for another 45 percent; wind could replace another 25 percent. But these are big projects. We need to start work now, and see real progress in 2022.

So we come today, asking you to put clean electricity at the top of your agenda as the new year approaches. Let's convert our urban area to wind, solar, geothermal and hydro power. We will do our part; earlier this month, First United Methodist's congregation put our commitment in writing with the attached Climate Covenant. Please take a moment to read our pledge to elevate climate action, and with it social justice, as a primary focus of our ministry. We are ready to join you in action.

Sincerely,  
Missoula First United Methodist Church Green Team

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