

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

We have much to celebrate this Sunday: November was a month of significant climate action by our congregation. Here are the highlights:

- First UMC began November with our annual Charge Conference unanimously adopting a Climate Covenant. This document reflects our commitment, individually and as a congregation, to “elevate climate action – and with it social justice – as a primary focus of our ministry.”
- The Green Team sent copies of our Climate Covenant to Montana Sens. Jon Tester and Steve Daines, Rep. Matt Rosendale and Gov. Greg Gianforte. The accompanying cover letter asked each official what he is doing to ensure a just and stable climate future and how we can support those efforts.
- Inspired by the success of Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Bonner, First UMC's Green Team began investigating the potential for a solar panel installation on our property. Carole Addis is leading that effort, which almost immediately provided promising news – including two possible ways to finance a project. We'll provide a more detailed report in next Sunday's Green Notes.
- Green Team members Karen Loos, Kathie Snodgrass and Ginny Therriault launched a weekly series called Foodie Fridays. Watch the First Church Facebook page each Friday for new posts about climate-friendly meals, locally produced meat and produce, and more.
- As a member of the Mountain Sky Conference's Creation Justice Task Force, Green Team chairman Jim Gillison contacted pastors throughout western Montana about their congregations' interest in starting “green teams.”

- At the urging of Kathie Snodgrass, Finance Committee members approved funding for the redesign of our First Church website, so our Green Team and others can spread our activism and information to a wider audience. In the months to come, you'll be able to find all our Green Notes there, as well as copies of letters we send, our First Church Climate Covenant, and updates on projects such as the possible solar installation.
- The Green Team, with support from our Faith and Justice Sunday School class, sent a copy of our Climate Covenant to Mayor John Engen and the Missoula City Council. In a cover letter, we urged city leaders to take immediate, decisive action toward 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," the letter said. "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 move into December energized by these successes and evermore committed to action that reflects our abiding love for God, for one another and for the natural world.