



Green Notes: Weekly updates from First United Methodist's Green Team

Behold Our Brighter, Energy Efficient Sanctuary!

If you're reading this week's Green Notes in First UMC's sanctuary, you no doubt noticed the – dare we say – heavenly light upon the page.

On Wednesday, a crew of volunteers led by Winton Kemmis replaced all 180 lightbulbs in the sanctuary with new-generation, energy efficient LED bulbs.

Our thanks to Winton Kemmis, Dick Shimer, Jack Chapman, Joe Loos, Jim Olivarez and Jim Gillison for tackling this project – and to MCT for loaning our church the 24-foot ladder.

Now for the good news about the bulbs and all the electricity (and money) they will save.

Each of these LED bulbs burns just 13.5 watts of electricity, but provides the same illumination as a 100-watt incandescent bulb. Kemmis thinks the replacements brighten our sanctuary by 30-40 percent.

The new bulbs replaced LEDs that were of much lower quality, efficiency and illumination. In fact, these new bulbs weren't even available two years ago.

“For those of you wondering about the efficiency of LED lights, think about it this way,” Kemmis said. “180 100-watt incandescent bulbs burn 18,000 watts of electricity an hour.

180 13.5-watt LED bulbs burn 2,430 watts per hour. That's a savings of 15,570 watts per hour!"

First Church's sanctuary has 24 light fixtures, each with six bulbs. On Wednesday, Kemmis climbed the ladder, dusted and cleaned every fixture, and replaced every bulb. His co-workers held the ladder steady, then lifted it around the pews to the next fixture.

"Crawling up and down the ladder 24 times gets to one's legs. You can't have vertigo and do this job," Kemmis said. "In the future, we will be looking for younger legs!"

The burned-out bulbs were taken to Lowe's for recycling. The used, but still functioning bulbs removed from the fixtures will be offered to the congregation at Sunday's worship service.

Kemmis gave a shout-out to Scott at Western Montana Lighting, who gave the church a discount. List price of the bulbs was \$9 apiece; First Church was charged \$7, or \$1,400 for the 200 bulbs purchased. We may be able to get a rebate for some or all of that cost from NorthWestern Energy. We'll keep you posted on that effort.