

## **First United Methodist's Green Team says: Missoula should seize the day with solar power installations!**

The Biden Administration's recently announced goal to produce 45 percent of the nation's electricity from the sun by 2050 would help not only power companies, but also individuals and businesses make the change.

Combined with the solar-friendly leadership of Missoula homeowners and local government officials, the new federal initiative is good news.

According to the [New York Times](#), the president wants to use tax credits to encourage solar power installations at homes and businesses. Administration officials also want local governments to make it easier to obtain permits and build solar projects.

Under a new Clean Electricity Payment Program, utilities would be rewarded for adding renewable energy to the electric grid – including not only large solar farms, but also rooftop solar. Many power companies, including NorthWestern Energy, have long pushed back against expanded use of rooftop solar arrays, primarily because they see it as a threat to their industry, which is heavily invested in fossil fuels and coal.

Without the huge increase in solar power (the U.S. now produces 4 percent of its electricity from the sun), energy analysts told the Times it won't be possible for the president to achieve his climate goals. "In essence, the D.O.E. is saying America needs a ton more solar, not less, and we need it today, not tomorrow," said Bernadette Del Chiaro, executive director of the California Solar and Storage Association. "That simple call to action should guide every policymaking decision from city councils to legislatures and regulatory agencies across the country."

In Missoula, the good news is that we have homeowners like First Church's own Steve and Lorraine Carlson who are leading the way by installing rooftop solar arrays. The Carlsons recently added 10 more panels to their existing 24, enough to supply their home's annual electric needs and that of their new electric-charged Tesla. Along with contractor [SBS Solar](#), the Carlsons are a great resource for First UMC members ready to take the necessary first step to providing their own power.

On the government side, Missoula County is installing the state's largest rooftop solar array atop the regional detention center on Mullan Road. [According to MissoulaCurrent.com](#), the array will include 1,152 solar modules that produce 432 kilowatt hours of electricity. That accounts for about 20% of the jail's total electric consumption. The jail is the county's single largest consumer of electricity.

**TAKE ACTION TO REDUCE GLOBAL WARMING! Please join First Church's glass recycling program today by emailing Sherry Devlin at [sherrydevlin@gmail.com](mailto:sherrydevlin@gmail.com) or calling her at 406-546-1016.**