

Green Notes: Weekly Updates from the Green Team

First UMC Seeks Energy Efficiency Rebate for Light Bulbs

This week, First Church applied for an E+ Electric Lighting Rebate for the energy efficient LED bulbs recently installed in our sanctuary.

A program of NorthWestern Energy, the rebate could return \$500 or more of the \$1,400 cost of the project to our church. We should hear back from NorthWestern in about a month.

The rebate request marks the latest collaboration between the Green Team and our church's Board of Trustees. In April, trustees approved the lightbulb replacement and recruited Winton Kemmis to find the most energy efficient LEDs available.

With help from Western Montana Lighting, Kemmis located and purchased 200 SATCO LED bulbs (Model No. S12434) – next-generation LEDs that weren't even available two years ago.

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

A volunteer crew replaced all 180 light bulbs in our sanctuary's 24 large hanging fixtures one Wednesday in late April. The difference was immediately apparent!

In the meantime, Green Team members found the E+ rebate program and worked with Kemmis to apply for the money by this week's deadline. **Many thanks to all who contributed to the rebate application: Winton Kemmis, Scott Derenburger (Western Montana Lighting), Leslie Lindley, Carole Addis and Sherry Devlin.**

So why all the fuss over light bulbs? Because the savings are real – in energy use and electricity costs. Kemmis provided an example: "180 100-watt incandescent bulbs burn 18,000 watts of electricity an hour. But 180

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

Energy efficiency isn't as flashy as some global-warming solutions, but it's no less critical.

"It's very attractive for policymakers to cut the ribbon of a new wind farm, but less exciting to say: 'We saved this amount of energy,'" Jan Rosenow of the Regulatory Assistance Project told Cipher News this past week.

Energy efficiency "is invisible," Rosenow said, and its success hinges on actions by millions of households and businesses. As a carbon-cutting strategy, it's a surprisingly tough sell.

Three cheers for our church's trustees and Green Team for seeing the benefit of energy conservation and reducing the electrical use in our sanctuary. Where should we look for energy savings next? Share your ideas at fumcmissoula@gmail.com.