

THE GREENING OF BINKLEY

Earth Ministries Committee

Saving Energy

When reconvening the Earth Ministries Committee last summer, we focused first on energy conservation. Many people in the church have worked on this by:

- Assisting in an energy audit conducted by the Interfaith Council of NC
- Researching the benefits and then securing Church Council approval for purchasing a centralized thermostat control system
- Installing many LED light bulbs
- Installing a new energy saving refrigerator in the kitchen
- Installing overhead fans in the kitchen - that also increases the comfort of kitchen volunteers
- Planning to increase signage in our building about energy conservation

Producing Energy

Now we are proposing a focus on producing energy by installing solar panels on Binkley Church. Since we first introduced this idea in October, Earth Ministries met twice with our Church Council, which enthusiastically granted permission to present our proposal to the congregation.

Our rooftop can accommodate up to 100 panels. However, we have set a goal to install 35 solar panels at a cost of \$40,000. On this Valentine's Day we are proposing to raise this amount by way of a "Love Offering for the Earth." Why do this?

- This will reduce our carbon footprint and help do our part in reducing global warming
- This will be a public statement by Binkley about our commitment to renewable energy, as we join a growing number of churches that are doing the same
- This will make a statement about our commitment to social justice, since global warming hits the poor hardest here and around the world
- This will reduce our energy bill an estimated \$52,000 over 25 years

The Binkley Church Solar Initiative

How do you give?

We have enclosed envelopes in the bulletin to be used for your gift. We have set February 14-March 20 as the time for fundraising on this project. Be sure to list “solar panels” on your checks. This will allow us to keep these gifts separate from regular gifts to our church budget, and will be used only for solar panels. You may mail your gift or place it in the offering plate.

Are there tax deductions?

Your donation will, of course, be eligible for a standard tax deduction to a non-profit, just as your other financial gifts to Binkley Church. The state eliminated additional tax deductions for solar panels last year. There are no federal tax deductions that apply to your donation to this initiative.

When will the solar panels be installed?

When we have finished our fundraising, “Yes! Solar Solutions” (the company installing the panels) will apply for the necessary permits and proceed quickly to get us operating.

What will be the impact of 35 solar panels?

- Save mining and burning 11,000 lbs of coal annually, or
- Reduce the amount of CO₂ produced annually equal to 18000 car miles, or
- Reduce the release of over 18000 lbs of CO₂ annually.
- The solar panels should function past 25 years, but with reduced efficiency.

We urge everyone to participate and make this church-wide project. All gifts are welcome – and all individual gifts are returnable should that become necessary.

