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Let there be light: Local Church's Solar Array Benefits Congregation and Earth

*Environment North Carolina Research & Policy Center hosts tour of Peace United
Church of Christ's solar array*

GREENSBORO, N.C. – Local residents joined leaders from Peace United Church of Christ (PUCC) and the nonprofit environmental group Environment North Carolina Research & Policy Center on Saturday for a tour of the church's rooftop solar panel array. The tour was held to educate Greensboro residents and church leaders about the benefits of solar energy and the process of switching to solar energy, as well as federal incentives in place to make the transition smoother.

Solar energy is abundant, efficient and increasingly affordable, and houses of worship often are great candidates for rooftop solar panels. While people may frequent these buildings less during the week, their panels will still generate power that churches can sell back to utility companies. Beyond the financial benefits, solar panels increase a community's energy resilience during extreme weather events. Solar panels and batteries can be independent from the grid, meaning the lights stay on during power outages – a quality especially critical for houses of worship that provide shelter during emergencies.

"As we toured PUCC's solar panel array, the benefits of switching to cleaner, healthier and more efficient energy options such as rooftop solar were made clear," said [Emily Mason](#), **Advocate with Environment North Carolina Research & Policy Center**. "If we want more solar energy and the cleaner air that comes with it, we'll need the support of federal policies that incentivize this switch. North Carolina's representatives should protect clean energy tax credits and rebates, so that we can have the power to choose clean energy here at home."

In March 2023, PUCC installed a solar array on its roof after members of the congregation expressed passion about installing solar for spiritual, economic and environmental reasons. In its decision, PUCC was counting on the support of federal clean energy incentives that reduced the cost of the installation, although the project is expected to deliver significant utility bill savings over time. PUCC has not yet received the federal [rebate](#) it applied for.

“Until we learned of rebate assistance, both through a federal program as well as through Duke Power, solar panels were financially out of reach for us. We now anxiously await our federal rebate – for without it, we’re between a rock and a hard place,” said **Reverend Tom Warren, Pastor at Peace United Church of Christ**.

The solar array delivers significant savings to PUCC on their monthly electricity bill with an average of 50% savings per month. In April, 2024 the church’s electric bill was over \$1000, but in May, the congregation’s first full month of solar panels operating, the bill was only \$386. Other religious institutions that want to follow suit still have the benefit of [solar energy rebates](#) that can dramatically lower the price tag for their congregations to go solar.

“Our solar power system has brought us together around creation care as well as financial stewardship,” said **Reverend Warren**. “We are excited about saving money while saving God’s creation!”

Photos and video available upon demand

Resources:

- [How your house of worship can go solar](#): Federal tax credits are helping churches, synagogues, temples, and other houses of worship go green with solar energy.
- [Clean Energy Home Toolkit](#): Guides & resources for weatherizing your home, cutting energy bills, buying an electric car, and information on the rebates & incentives in the Inflation Reduction Act.

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Environment North Carolina Research & Policy Center is dedicated to protecting our air, water and open spaces. We work to protect the places we love, advance the environmental values we share, and win real results for our environment. For more information, visit www.environmentnorthcarolinacenter.org.