



COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

More Diocesan Churches Implementing Energy Efficiency Projects to reduce their carbon footprints and save money on their utility bills

Diocesan Churches continue to improve their energy efficiency and save money on their utility costs. Here are recent updates from several churches as they take steps to be Carbon Neutral by 2030.

All Saints, Sacramento

Installing heat pumps in our church marked a significant milestone in our goal to become carbon neutral by 2030, as they allow us to heat and cool our building far more efficiently while reducing our reliance on fossil fuels. Alongside this major upgrade, we've also completed smaller but meaningful projects, such as replacing our old lighting with energy-saving LED bulbs, which help cut down both emissions and costs. Looking ahead, our next step will be to install weatherstripping around the doors to prevent drafts and improve insulation, ensuring that the energy we do use goes as far as possible. Taken together, these efforts reflect our commitment to caring for creation and steadily working toward a more sustainable future. - The Rev. Jana Branson, Rector, All Saints Memorial, Sacramento.

Church of Our Savior, Placerville

We replaced one of our HVAC units which is more efficient. We are also looking into solar with DC Solar. We are at the very beginning of working with them and would like to consult other companies to be able to compare them. - The Rev. Debra Sabino

Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Grass Valley

Project activities include:

- Replaced fluorescent lighting with LED lights – remaining lights in kitchen and church office will be replaced by 2025 year-end.
- Reduced use of paper products for coffee hour by using church dishes.
- Complete remodel of 240 Mill Street (3.00 sq ft building) in compliance with Title 24.
- Replaced 6 end-of-life heating/AC units in the Church, Rectory, St Cecelia's Room, Church Office/ Sunday School and 248 Mill Street with recommended upgrades. Cost of the upgrades was \$41,366 including discount for bulk installation, accomplished with \$37,366 parish member donations and \$4,000 Congregational Development Grant. - Roxanna Parker

Continued

St Michael and All Angels, Fort Bragg

We are striving for carbon neutrality at St. Michael's Church and have taken a number of steps. The carbon footprint of our Church for the year 2022 was 17.2 metric tons CO₂e. To be more energy efficient we've been working on simple projects such as installing weather stripping on doors and windows, the temperature setting on the water heater, refrigerator, and freezer, and working on major projects hoping to replace the single pane windows with double pane \$40,000 estimated cost and hoping to install solar panels \$70,000 estimate cost. These expensive major projects require grants to help out the expense. We've had no luck in finding any. We've looked at Fed Grants that only offer a tax credit of some sort and have gone to GrantWatch, but have found nothing. In the meantime, to reduce St Michael's carbon footprint, along with savings in energy usage, we've removed a number of Fluorescent Bulbs in our Church Hall. That's about it so far. - Rick Bondor

Grace, Fairfield

I'm writing to share some pictures of our recently completed mini-split project. We installed the system in nine rooms and removed two old gas furnaces for a total cost of \$41,400. Note the old window AC next to the mini split head in our parish hall. That will be removed as soon as we are prepared to close the hole in the wall the removal will create. - Larry Lindsay



In the past 3 years, led by the Commission on the Environment, individual churches have formed green teams, had their facilities assessed for energy efficiency, and created action plans to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.

Is your church improving its energy efficiency and saving money on its utility bills and at the same time healing our planet? If so, please let me know what you are doing so we can share your efforts with the other churches. If not, and you'd like to know how to improve your energy efficiency, please contact me.

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