

Oakland's Lakeshore Avenue Baptist partners with nonprofit to bring solar to the church

In an effort designed to contribute “to greening our world,” Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church in Oakland, Calif., has launched a crowdfunding campaign to solarize its building.

The church, an Alliance of Baptists congregational partner, has joined with RE-volv ‘Solar Champions’ to raise \$40,000 for the 19.5 kW solar array it needs. Once in place it will save the church more than \$143,000 during the lifetime of the system and stop more than 1 million pounds of CO₂ from being emitted into the atmosphere.

“It’s time we take responsibility for our own energy use,” said Allison Stanton, minister of Christian formation at Lakeshore Avenue. “As the church goes solar, it’s my hope that members of the congregation feel empowered to go solar as well. This is taking us one step closer to greening our world.

A focus on renewable energy falls right in line with Lakeshore’s commitments to justice and community. Among other things, the church houses its own food bank and has been working with other churches to find and coordinate shelters for refugees.

RE-volv empowers people to take direct action on climate change by donating to local solar projects. The solar energy system at Lakeshore will be leased to the church by RE-volv and installed by SunWork Renewable Energy Projects.

The crowdfunding campaign will conclude Dec. 17th and the project is expected to be installed and operational in winter 2019. Tax-deductible donations to the campaign can be made at www.re-volv.org/lakeshore.

“This project is a giant win-win for Oakland,” said Andreas Karelak, executive director of RE-volv. “Not only is the church going to save money on their electric bills, but those savings will help fund the multitude of services Lakeshore provides to the homeless, hungry and disenfranchised.”

Catherine Stanton of Diablo Valley College, Jared Wong of Northwestern University and Hamza Kamran of Napa Valley College joined forces to bring this project to life as part of RE-volv’s ‘Solar Champion’ program.

Other organizations also have played a role in the project, including Interfaith Power & Light and Green the Church. RE-volv’s most frequent solar panel supplier Jinko Solar has donated solar panels.