



Lent 2020

The Vestry invites you to invest in the future of St Stephen's!

In early 2014, St Stephen's signed a contract with American Solar to purchase the energy produced by solar panels installed on the church's roof. Over 75% of the church's overall energy consumption is now provided by these panels. St Stephen's subsequently became the model program for a diocesan-wide program encouraging all churches in our diocese to move to clean and sustainable solar power.

Under our contract with American Solar, we paid no up-front costs to have the panels installed, but did pay a yearly energy usage fee of about \$10,000. We now have the opportunity to purchase these panels in full, remove this cost, and save over \$150,000 over the next decades.

At this time in the history of St Stephen's, you have the opportunity to invest in the future of the church and its two-fold ability to:

- 1) Engage as an environmentally responsible leader in the church and community.
- 2) Save significantly on energy costs now and going forward.

There are 77 solar panels. I have purchased a panel, and I invite you to join me in purchasing one panel, a pair of panels, 10 panels or more! You may decide to buy them in honor of someone or a special event in your life. You might decide to name your panel! The cost is \$1000 per panel which covers the panel and any ongoing cleaning and maintenance needed over the life of the panels.

During this season of Lent, as we await the coming light and the rising of the Son in glory, join with me and your vestry in investing in the future of St Stephen's in this joyful, sustainable, and forward-thinking way!

Many thanks for your generous and heart-felt consideration,

The Rev'd Christine Trainor
Associate Rector

Robert Moore
Senior Warden

FAQs

Q. How much energy do the panels produce per year?

A. Approximately 32,000 kWh of energy per year, which is over 75% of the average total used by the church per year.

Q. What is the life of the existing panels?

A. The panels have a guaranteed life of 25 years, although the actual estimated life of the panels is 40 years or more.

Q. Why can we buy them now?

A. Federal tax laws required that American Solar (AS) retain ownership of the panels for at least 6 years. After that they could sell the panels without losing tax credits. Now the church has the option to buy the panels and no longer pay AS for the energy produced by the panels.

Q. What is the savings to St Stephen's?

A. Currently, we pay AS for the energy produced at about \$10,000 per year, which will increase in future years by over 6% per year. By owning the panels ourselves, we will eliminate this cost.

Q. Will the panels cost anything in the future?

A. The only future costs of the panels will be incurred by routine maintenance and cleaning. As part of paying for the panels, we are building in funds to cover these minimal costs.

Q. I want to take advantage of this opportunity, what do I do next?

A. Return the enclosed card with a check or payment information.

OR, let the office know by email (elizabeth@ststephenschurch.org) how many panels you would like to purchase and how you would like to pay. There are lots of options to pay:

--by check.

--by stock/investments transfer (Elizabeth can provide details).

--by Paypal via our website: www.ststephenschurch.org, click Contribute, then click Donate and be sure to indicate "panels" in the memo section.

--By credit card, either through the PayPal instructions above or by calling the church office. with your card information (and maybe get frequent flyer miles for your gift!): you can help us by electing to pay the credit card service fee (approx. 3%).



I/We would like to purchase _____ solar panels, at \$1000 each, for a total of \$_____.

Full name _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Any dedication you would like the office to note _____

Please indicate how you wish to pay (*please see methods above*)

☐ by check ☐ by investment transfer ☐ by Paypal ☐ by credit card