



## CREATION CARE PARTNERS: SOLAR GRANT GUIDELINES & APPLICATION FOR EVANGELICAL CHURCHES



We are so pleased that your church may be interested in a [Creation Care Partners](#) solar grant. If you think that your church might apply for a grant, please email [CreationCarePartners@gmail.com](mailto:CreationCarePartners@gmail.com) or call us at (812) 391-3679 as soon as possible. We can answer questions, include you in a grant information session, estimate what your church will save from your panels, and meet virtually with your building committee and governing body. ***Once you let us know that your church might apply, we can send you details on the information sessions for the grant,*** which will be held on Zoom on:

- May 27, 4 PM to 5 PM
- June 2, 9 AM to 10 AM, and
- June 9, 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM

More sessions may be scheduled as needed.

The application deadline is **August 21 at 5 PM**. Although the application is just four pages, it will give you a good start on the grant activities: it asks you to provide energy conservation plans, baseline energy use data, a list of congregants who commit to reducing their energy use, and written commitments for whatever financial match the church and its members choose to provide. **This means that preparing the application requires the commitment and support of numerous members of your church.**

**Therefore, we suggest that you review the application and start securing support from your leadership and members right away.** If you are seriously interested but the application is not complete or your governing body has not yet given its approval by August 21, you may submit a provisional application.

**We look forward to hearing from you.**

Contents

Grant Application Guidelines ..... iv

Grant Application ..... 1

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION..... 1

2. YOUR SOLAR PANELS ..... 1

3. ENERGY CONSERVATION IN HOUSE OF WORSHIP ..... 2

4. ENERGY CONSERVATION AMONG CHURCH HOUSEHOLDS ..... 4

5. GETTING THE WORD OUT ..... 4

DOCUMENTS TO INCLUDE WITH APPLICATION ..... 4

## Grant Application Guidelines

### Grant Amount and Use

Grants of up to \$29,000 are available for the purchase and installation of solar panels on church roofs and may also include up to \$10,000 for energy conservation. These funds are not available for personnel, administration or program costs, or site preparation.

### Application Deadline

Applications are due to [CreationCarePartners@gmail.com](mailto:CreationCarePartners@gmail.com) by 5 PM on August 21, 2020. ***Please notify CCP right away if your church may apply.*** If you are seriously interested but the application is not complete or your governing body has not yet approved it, you may submit a provisional application.

### Grant Availability and Award Process

We anticipate awarding seventeen to twenty grants to non-denominational evangelical churches and churches representing a wide range of evangelical denominations, in cities across the state. ***We are particularly seeking high-profile churches that can serve as models for their region and denomination.***

### Background

[Creation Care Partners](#) supports evangelical churches and Jewish synagogues in Indiana to serve as models of caring for God's Creation. The grant funds come from American Electric Power (AEP), I&M's parent company, under a legal settlement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, eight states, and 13 citizen groups. The settlement included an agreement by AEP to invest \$3.5 million to improve air quality and to reduce pollution in Indiana. The AEP settlement monies are being overseen by an oversight committee that includes Citizens Action Coalition, Clean Air Council, and Indiana Wildlife Federation, with the Sierra Club as a non-voting member and Environmental Law & Policy Center as a non-voting legal advisor.

### Required Grant Activities

To receive a solar grant, a church must commit to the following objectives and activities, which Creation Care Partners will equip and support the congregation to achieve:

- implement the energy plan that it submits with its grant application with the aim of reducing electricity and natural gas use in its house of worship by at least 25% from its base year.
- engage a third of the households in its worshipping congregation or membership rolls to reduce their energy use by at least 25%.
- promote and host a Solar Information Session for individuals and an energy conservation workshop for congregations to be organized by CCP.
- publicize its solar panels and conservation on its website and in its newsletter and by placing a sign or banner of its choosing in the front of its building indicating that it is using solar energy.
- its senior clergy person meet with senior clergy of other grantee churches in the region.
- provide CCP with a two-page case of what it did to reduce its and its members' energy use.
- report to CCP as described below.
- if possible, contribute at least \$17,500 in matching funds to install solar panels on its roof.

Creation Care Partners will provide tools, resources, and technical and peer support. The application itself will help your church get a good start on meeting the grant requirements. Please contact us with questions - [creationcarepartners@gmail.com](mailto:creationcarepartners@gmail.com) or (812) 391-3679. We want to support you.

## Eligibility

An evangelical church in Indiana is eligible to apply for a grant if it:

- is incorporated as a not-for profit (501(c)3) and owns its own building,
- is eligible for net metering or a similar interconnection arrangement, has been a registered nonprofit in Indiana for 5 years, and does not expect to move in the next three years, and
- commits to meeting all the grant requirements.

For this grant, “evangelical” refers to non-denominational evangelical, Assemblies of God, Church of Christ, Church of God, Church of the Nazarene, independent Baptist, Missouri Synod Lutheran, Southern Baptist and Wesleyan denominations among others. Please feel free to be in touch with questions.

## Financial Match

Churches are asked to provide a match of \$17,500 or more. However, if this is not feasible for your church, please include in your application the match amount that is feasible and a copy of the church’s most recent annual financial statements. *The match amount should not prevent any church from applying for a grant.* The following are not considered as a match: tax incentives, utility rebates, and funds used for other items such as administrative or personnel costs. In-house labor can be considered an in-kind match if the applicant demonstrates that the laborer has the capacity to perform the services, maintains appropriate certifications, and documents the value of the in-kind contribution.

## Awards and Reimbursement

CCP expects to award up to 20 grants to geographically and denominationally diverse churches that are leaders in their regions and denominations. Funds are disbursed on a reimbursement-basis only. *To be reimbursed, CCP must have approved the grantee’s selected bid(s).* Bids must be for the entire amount – the grant plus the matching funds – and must be for at least the kilowatts agreed upon in the memo of understanding between the church and CCP. CCP will reimburse as quickly as possible after the church submits: invoices and evidence of payment for the entire amount, and photos of the finished work. We will aim for a one week or quicker turnaround.

## Reporting and Communication Requirements

Quarterly reports are due by February, April, July, and October 15<sup>th</sup> for three years or until all grant requirements are completed, whichever comes first. The simple two-page report format includes the following:

- progress on the solar installation
- monthly electricity and natural gas use and costs
- list of energy conservation measures taken in the house of worship,
- list of activities and progress related to its household energy conservation work,
- list of media coverage and other education and outreach activities.

Grantees will stay in touch with CCP until all grant requirements are met and will report any changes related to the grant commitments – budget, installation or energy conservation details, workshops, etc. - to CCP as soon as the grantee becomes aware of them.

## Grant Application

### 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. **Describe your church.** Include its name, city, denomination / faith tradition, age, number of households in your worshipping congregation, number of households on your membership rolls, main activities, and a detail or two that makes it distinct or interesting. If the church is already involved in creation care, explain briefly how. One paragraph only.

B. **Optional.** Is your church a leader in your region or denomination? If so, how?

C. **Your building.** Your building or buildings' size in square feet \_\_\_\_\_

The year or years it was / they were built \_\_\_\_\_

The year the church was registered in Indiana as a not-for-profit \_\_\_\_\_

Does your church have any plans to move its location in the next three years? \_\_\_\_\_

If your church has a preschool, for how many hours a day? \_\_\_\_ How many children are enrolled? \_\_\_\_

### 2. YOUR GRANT REQUEST AND FINANCIAL MATCH

A. Please indicate the amount of your request and the sources and amount of funds you will provide.

SOURCES OF MATCHING FUNDS FOR SOLAR PANELS	AMOUNT
Grant request	\$
Funds you will provide as a match:	
Your congregation's funds	\$
Individual members of your congregation	\$
Bank loan	\$
(Other source – add as many lines as needed)	\$
<b>Total funds you will provide</b>	\$
<b>Total project cost (grant request plus total funds you will provide)</b>	\$

\* If feasible, the church should provide a match of at least \$17,500. If you are proposing to match less than \$17,500, please include with your application copies of your most recent financial statements.

B. **Letters of Financial Commitment:** For each financial commitment above, please attach to this application documentation of that commitment. For example, if you are securing a bank loan, please

attach a letter of commitment from the bank for the amount of the loan. If a congregant or your congregation has committed to contributing, please attach a letter of financial commitment from each. *Before you will be reimbursed, you will need to provide an invoice for the full amount of the investment – both the grant portion and the financial match - and proof of payment.*

- C. Energy conservation bids.** If you are awarded a grant, you will be asked to solicit three competing bids for solar panels. For now, however, you can ask to use up to \$10,000 of your grant for a specific investment(s) in energy conservation. If this is of interest, please submit three competing bids for this conservation work and note here what you wish to do, which bid you favor and why.

### 3. ENERGY CONSERVATION IN HOUSE OF WORSHIP

- A. Please list any measures that your congregation has taken to date to conserve energy.**

- B. Fill in the energy use table below.** Find your energy bills for your base year and for 2019 or contact your utility company to obtain figures and billing period dates for your use during those years. Your “base year” is the year before your congregation began its energy conservation efforts. The billing period dates allow us to do accurate temperature adjustments so that we can calculate how much energy your congregation has conserved to date.

**Historical Energy Use**

Base Year _____	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
Natural Gas Use (in therms or CCF)													
Dates of base year billing periods													
Base year use (therms or CCF)													
Base year use (\$)													
Dates of 2019 billing periods													
2019 use													

(therms or CCF)													
2019 use (\$)													
<b>Electricity Use</b>													
Dates of base year billing periods													
Base year use (KwH)													
Base year use (\$)													
Dates of 2019 billing period													
2019 use (kWh)													
2019 use (\$)													

- C. Energy Reduction Plan:** You must submit a preliminary plan for how your team will reduce your congregation's natural gas and electricity use by 25% or more from its base year. This plan should be approved by your stewardship or building committee and your council or board. In the first column below, we've included some general headings to help guide your plan. Please do not hesitate to ask us for help with this. Feel free to use this table or submit a plan in your own format that includes what measures you expect to take and the expected reduction in electricity or natural gas use. Please note that, if your church has already reduced, for example, its electricity use by 10% from its base year, then it need only reduce its electricity use by an additional 15%.

#### Energy Use Reduction Plan

Specific measures church will take	Expected % reduction in electricity use	Expected % reduction in natural gas use
<b>Heating and cooling people not spaces</b>		
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
<b>Turn lights and appliances off</b>		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
<b>Sealing our building envelope</b>		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
<b>Replacing HVAC Equipment</b>		
13.		
14.		
15.		
<b>Lighting Efficiently</b>		
16.		
17.		
18.		
<b>Total from these measures</b>		

#### 4. ENERGY CONSERVATION AMONG CHURCH HOUSEHOLDS

To apply for the grant, a third of the households on your membership rolls or in your worshipping congregation must sign a covenant (sample in Appendix A) by which each commits to reducing its energy footprint relative to an average Hoosier household's by 25%. Achieving this goal is straightforward and will reduce household utility bills.

Taking this quick anonymous survey - [https://iu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_3Vs7JIZKRULDRJP](https://iu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3Vs7JIZKRULDRJP) - may motivate households to sign on: their final score will show them that they've already reduced by a lot. (To use the survey, under city, scroll down to the bottom and select "other\*". For congregation, select "other" again.) To make it easy to help households achieve this goal, see resources in Appendix B.

##### A. Household Energy Reduction Participation. 33% of your households should sign on to participate.

1. Total # of households in your worshipping congregation or on your membership rolls	
2. # of households that have signed a pledge to reduce their household energy use by 25%	
3. Percentage participation (Line 2 divided by line 1.)	%

B. **Pledgees.** Please submit a list of last names of pledged households or copies of your pledge forms.

##### C. Household Reduction Plan. How you will motivate and support households to cut by 25% or more.

Action	Who is responsible	By when will they do this

#### 5. GETTING THE WORD OUT

A. How will you get other churches to participate in the energy conservation workshop you host?

#### DOCUMENTS TO INCLUDE WITH APPLICATION

**Documentation of each of the church's financial match commitments:** such as a letter of financial commitment from the governing body along with a bank statement showing it has these funds, a letter from a bank extending the church a line of credit, and a letter of financial commitment from each donor.

**Letter from congregation's leader** stating that congregation has investigated and found that there will be no codes violated by installing solar panels.

**Proof of building ownership** and **proof of non-profit status since at least May, 2015.**

**Numbered list of last names of households that have signed a household energy reduction pledge.**

**Quotes from 3 contractors** *if* you are requesting that some grant funds be used for energy conservation.

**Most recent annual financial statements** *if* you are proposing a financial match of less than \$17,500.

## Appendix A. Sample Covenant between Church and Member Household

Church logo  
can be  
inserted here

### Household Serve & Preserve Covenant

As Christians, we are enjoined to care for God's gift of The Creation, for future generations and for our global neighbors, "the least of these". As a member or active participant in \_\_\_\_\_, I pledge to serve as a steward of this great gift and, in doing so, to care for our children, grandchildren and neighbors near and far. Along with other members of this church and other churches, I strive to reduce my household's energy footprint, relative to the footprint of an average Hoosier household, by 25% or more.

**To help me fulfill these commitments, in its turn, the Church will provide:**

- detailed guidance each month on one or a few actions that I can take to reduce my energy use,
- an info session to provide all the information and support I might need to have solar installed.

By acting together, we will, God willing, serve as a model and make a difference.

My signature for my copy \_\_\_\_\_

וְלִשְׁמֶרָהּ לְעִבְדָּהּ עֵדֶן בְּגֵן וַיְנַחֲהוּ הָאָדָם אֶת וְיִקַּח  
G-d placed the human in the Garden of Eden to serve and preserve it. Genesis 2:15

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### Copy of my Serve and Preserve Covenant for the Church

As Christians, we are enjoined to care for God's gift of The Creation, for future generations and for our global neighbors, "the least of these". As a member of \_\_\_\_\_, I pledge to serve as a steward of this great gift and, in doing so, to care for our children, grandchildren and neighbors near and far. Along with many other members of this church and many other churches, I strive to reduce my household's energy footprint, relative to the footprint of an average Hoosier household, by 25% or more.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member / Household Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email address or phone (how you'd like to be reached)

וְלִשְׁמֶרָהּ לְעִבְדָּהּ עֵדֶן בְּגֵן וַיְנַחֲהוּ הָאָדָם אֶת וְיִקַּח  
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## Appendix B. Ideas and Resources to Help Households Reduce Energy Footprint

The following can help inspire and equip church members to reduce their energy footprint.

### GETTING STARTED

**Start a creation care team or committee:** Gathering a small team of dedicated individuals to lead the way – using some of the tools below – is a proven way to get started and gain momentum.

### GETTING MOTIVATED

The [Household Creation Care Covenant](#) is an important way to motivate members to act – and enables your team to communicate just with members who have signed on to the initiative.

**Celebrations and educational events:** A communal celebration followed by a speaker or film event with small group discussions can inspire and make members aware of why we should reduce energy use.

**Monthly newsletter articles** can provide guidance, tips and / or stories of what your members are already doing to reduce their use and why. We often follow the lead of our friends and neighbors.

**Pastors leading the way:** Seeing a pastor take the lead on reducing energy use or hearing from the pulpit why stewardship of The Creation is a faith issue can powerfully inspire members to act.

**A commitment and a carrot...** Many churches find that members are motivated to achieve an energy conservation goal when they know that doing so helps the church secure funds for solar panels.

If your church uses these, a **bulletin board** that is changed monthly can show members how to reduce household energy use while pictures of how members are saving energy can inspire others.

### LEARNING HOW

**For everyone,** the “**For the Least of These**” **Household Energy Program for Churches** breaks home energy conservation into 12 bite-size pieces and provides posters information sheets and more for each. This [short entertaining video](#) shows how *the program brings* home energy conservation into the pews.

**For groups,** the [Low Carbon Diet Workbook](#): This short, easy and fun guide to lowering a household’s energy footprint uses playful illustrations, plentiful choices and small bits of information.

**For do-it-yourselfers,** the **single-page household energy checklist** conveys the most effective actions a household can take, their cost and how quickly they will generate savings.

### GETTING HELP

**Intergenerational youth group project:** Church youth groups who have been taught a set of simple skills – how to caulk or wrap a hot water pipe – help older members who request help to save energy.

**A discussion or coffee table** between Sunday morning services or at a holiday fair can be a place to purchase supplies, see how to do an energy-saving measure, or chat about what we each have done.