



Ga. AME churches to install solar microgrids to benefit communities

By Michael Gryboski, Editor | Thursday, April 24, 2025



A collection of solar panels that were installed in 2024 at North Decatur United Methodist Church of Decatur, Georgia, by Better Tomorrow Solar. | Courtesy Better Tomorrow Solar

A regional body of the African Methodist Episcopal Church is partnering with groups to install solar power microgrids at various churches to help provide energy to communities in need.

The AME Church Sixth District, which is based in Atlanta, Georgia, recently announced that it's planning to work with nonprofits to install solar panels at multiple church-owned properties by 2026.

Jay Horton of Georgia Interfaith Power & Light, an organization partnering with the AME Sixth District to implement the microgrids, told The Christian Post that the collaboration began when many AME pastors attended the group's Green Team Summits in Atlanta and Columbus in 2023 and 2024.



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"Inspired by the vision of congregations serving as community resiliency hubs, they approached us about conducting feasibility studies to explore clean energy solutions across a number of their churches," explained Horton. "Their energy, commitment, and well-organized coalition made it clear this was a natural fit."

"At GIPL, we're always looking to support bold, faith-driven climate leadership, and this partnership aligns perfectly with our mission to equip congregations to lead on sustainability and justice."

Last May, GIPL and the AME Sixth District conducted an extensive feasibility study for eight member churches in Georgia, which helped to pave the way for installing the microgrids.

"This integrated study allowed us to identify inefficiencies, recommend energy-saving improvements, evaluate the viability of solar installations, and analyze the requirements for EV charging stations, all in one streamlined process," Horton noted.

"We are now connecting these congregations with several vetted Georgia BRIGHT solar installers to continue the process, and will continue to support them with financing options and grant assistance as they move forward."

Horton told CP that his group has "a long history of working with churches across Georgia" to create sustainable energy, having "partnered with more than 600 congregations on practical climate solutions."

One example given was that of North Decatur United Methodist Church of Decatur, which underwent an installation of a 56-kilowatt solar system last year that is expected to offset approximately 77% of the church's annual energy consumption and, over the next two decades, will reduce the congregation's carbon footprint by over 1,200 tons.

"We believe these stories illustrate the transformational potential when faith communities are equipped with the tools and resources to lead on climate solutions," Horton said.

Aiding in the panel installations is the federally-funded group Georgia BRIGHT, which stands for Building, Renewables, Investing in Green, Healthy, Thriving Communities.

Alicia Brown, director of Georgia BRIGHT, told CP in emailed comments that the AME Church Sixth District has long supported the "Solar for All" initiative.

"There's so many reasons for this partnership," said Brown. "A shared desire to deploy community-serving solar at scale is the most important."

"To that end, Solar for All can provide funding at scale for the clean energy hub initiative, and the clean energy hub initiative provides a huge pipeline of project hosts to help solar for all reach households who may not be able to have systems of their own."

Georgia BRIGHT helps with the project by being a source of financing for the solar and storage elements of the hubs via their "Community Benefit Solar" program, according to Brown.

"There will also be opportunities to get churches solar ready through enabling upgrades and support workforce development and outreach and education," she added.

Brown noted that her group has "a handful of churches currently participating in our Georgia BRIGHT pilot," among them Trinity Episcopal Church of Statesboro.

Trinity Episcopal had solar panels installed in July of last year, which, according to Brown, should save the congregation approximately \$62,000 in energy expenses over the next 25 years.

The Christian Post reached out to The African Methodist Episcopal Church Sixth District for this story, however a spokesperson explained that they could not respond due to their ongoing annual conference business session.

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