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**FREEDOM SOLAR POWER PARTNERS WITH RIVERBEND CHURCH TO GO GREEN AND SAVE ON OPERATIONAL COSTS WITH SOLAR INSTALLATION**

*Riverbend Church Becomes One of the First Churches in Austin to Go Solar at Their 50+ Acre West Austin Campus*

**AUSTIN, TEXAS – March 22, 2023.** Austin-basedFreedom Solar Power, a national industry leader in turnkey commercial and residential solar energy installations, has partnered with Riverbend Church to further their energy independence and install solar panels at their 50+ acre campus in West Austin. The installation will make them one of the first church communities in Austin to go solar and one of the largest installs on a place of worship in the country.

“We are honored that Riverbend Church made the decision to go solar and trusted us in their path towards gaining energy independence and reducing their carbon footprint,” said Kyle Frazier, Freedom Solar Power Commercial Sales Director. “The savings they will incur from going solar allows them the opportunity to make an even bigger impact in Austin and beyond.”

Riverbend Church serves a broad and diverse range of people from all over the metropolitan area with more than 3,500 members. The church is committed to reducing their carbon footprint and this solar project is the catalyst in their list of sustainability and stewardship initiatives. Riverbend is dedicated to the execution of a bold green initiative strategy. Through extensive research Riverbend selected Freedom Solar based on discussions they had with previous customers about their experience with Freedom Solar, the quality and performance of SunPower panels, and the Austin Energy rebate that will save them $750,000 over the next 25 years.

“We are grateful to Freedom Solar for making the solar process seamless,” said Chris Hanson, Operations Pastor at Riverbend Church. “We believe in being good stewards of our resources on campus while always looking to be innovative and efficient in our daily operations, and we look forward to utilizing our energy savings to better aid our community and the city of Austin.”

Freedom Solar installed more than 550 SunPower solar panels, the equivalent of a 217.8 kW solar array, producing 295,000 kWh annually. The power produced on-site at Riverbend Church will offset 60% of the usage at the Home for Hope (2600 seat main auditorium). Riverbend's PV system will also keep 210 metric tons of CO2 from entering the atmosphere annually, the equivalent of 84 cross country flights and 21,000 Austin commutes.

Riverbend Church is a leading religious organization in the community with the goal of creating a more sustainable campus. Currently, the organization is considering the following initiatives as part of their overall sustainability programing: upgrading old HVAC systems, add or replace aging window tint, add landscaping that helps reduce direct sunlight into windows, develop water usage reduction plans, replace aging gas-powered vehicles, add vehicle charging stations, replace all Styrofoam usage, increase recycling plans, and exploration of on-site composting.

 “We are exploring other green initiatives, such as more solar and wind energy, to position our campus to better serve Austin for generations to come,” said Hanson.

As solar energy becomes more affordable and accessible, nonprofit and charitable organizations across the country are actively moving toward reducing their carbon footprint, both in infrastructure and practice. Solar provides more reliable energy for their volunteers and guests, while increasing net operating income. Under the Inflation Reduction Act, solar systems installed by non-profit entities are eligible for a 30% Investment Tax Credit through a new direct pay provision. This is designed to make solar as attractive an investment for non-profits as it has historically been for businesses. Austin Energy also offers a favorable rebate exclusively for non-profits.

In addition to Riverbend Church, Freedom Solar Power has partnered with other Austin nonprofit organizations to help them go solar, including the Dell Foundation, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Texas (RMHC CTX), Mothers’ Milk Bank at Austin, and Westminster, the city’s oldest and most established senior living community.

“The solar industry is based on integrity and respect for our planet and human life,” said Frazier. “As industry leaders, Freedom Solar is here to support all organizations that choose to go solar by ensuring the arrays installed are of the highest quality and continue to serve customers well for its full lifespan.”

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**About Freedom Solar**

Founded in 2007, Freedom Solar Power is an industry leader in turnkey solar installations, providing high-quality, cost-effective, reliable solar solutions for residential and commercial markets nationwide. Headquartered in Austin, Texas, Freedom Solar also has full-service offices in 11 markets across five states (Colorado, Florida, North Carolina, Texas and Virginia) and has installed commercial projects in 27 states. A Tesla Powerwall Certified Installer and the only SunPower Master Dealer in Texas, Colorado and Florida, the firm has installed more than 191 megawatts of solar power since 2007, ranking as a top 10 solar installer in the US. In 2023, Freedom Solar Power ranked number 70 on the Inc. 5000 Regionals Southwest list, the most prestigious ranking of the fastest-growing private companies based in Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. Freedom Solar has completed projects for numerous national and multinational corporate clients, including Whole Foods Market, Shake Shack, Office Depot, Holiday Inn Express, Home2 Suites by Hilton, The University of Texas at Austin and numerous automotive dealerships, such as Alfa Romeo, BMW, Chevrolet, Ford, Maserati, Subaru and Toyota. For more information, visit [https://www.freedomsolarpower.com](https://www.freedomsolarpower.com/) or follow @freedomsolarpwr on Twitter and @freedom\_solar\_power on Instagram.

**About Riverbend Church**

The message of Riverbend is simple. Come just as you are, and experience God’s grace. Our vision is to make Austin a great place for all people as a leading spiritual voice in the community. We strive to create authentic community by celebrating the arts, serving our city and world, and championing the message of grace and hope. For more than 4 decades, Riverbend’s mission has been to welcome the bruised, battered, broken, and bored into community. We strive to reclaim, restore, and reproduce the cause of Christ and the Kingdom of God in Austin and beyond. For more information, visit <https://www.riverbend.com>.