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Solar System Installed By Black Contractor

MINORITY CONTRACTOR Michael E. Baker, 32, president, Solar Contractors and Builders, Inc., installed the $90,000 solar heating system in the new Providence Baptist Church. He is pictured here at Providence showing panels that collect the sun's heat for storage in rock box. The heated air is then circulated throughout the spacious sanctuary. This structure is a first in Baltimore.

A 32 - year - old Kinston, N.C. native is the minority contractor who installed the $90,000 solar heating system for the new Providence Baptist Church.

"I congratulate Rev. Wood for getting minority participation in his contract," says Michael Baker, president, Solar Contractors and Builders, Inc., a four - year - old business located in Charles Plaza.

Baker's company installs solar systems for commercial and industrial organizations.

"I was put in touch with Rev. Wood who showed concern for the energy situation and eventually I was awarded the contract. Providence Baptist is probably the first church in the city and perhaps first in the country to have solar heat.

Baker is a pre - law graduate of North Carolina Central University in Durham. He came to Baltimore in 1970. He worked with drug abusers with Model Cities and then went on to sell real estate.

The hot air solar heating system for Providence is made by the Solaron Company of Denver.

It uses panels that collect the heat from the sun. The collected heat is then stored in heat storage rock box.

This allows the heat that comes in off of the roof to be held in storage for several days. Heated air is circulated by collector panels.

Just in case there is no sunshine for several days, there is a gas - fired furnace which will supply heat for the structure.

Rev. Wood's first sermon at Providence

In his initial sermon to his new Providence Baptist Church congregation in 1952, the Rev. Marcus G. Wood said; "Providence is more than a building of green stone, It is a building where the spirit of Christ is demons rated from the pulpit to the door."

Godspeed
Del. Walter R. Dean Jr.
41st District
Baltimore City

What Solar Heating Means

Over two years ago, the Rev. Marcus G. Wood, pastor, and members of his Providence Baptist Church congregation, decided they wanted their new church home to be economic to operate, as well as a comfortable place for members of all ages to worship.

They settled on a one - story design with easy access for the elderly and handicapped, and they consulted with Mark Beck Architecture vice president, Peter C. Powell, who had become an expert on solar heating.

The structure the church occupies this week is the result, and what many have described as one of the best looking in the Upton Renewal Area and the city at large. It is indeed a majestic sight at the corner of Lafayette and Pennsylvania Aves.

What does the $70,000 solar heat mean to the church? First, it is economic to operate. There is no charge for the sun.

Made by the Solaron Company of Denver, the system uses a series of solar panels that collect the heat from the sun. The collected heat is blown through pipes to a "rock box."

The rocks in the box absorb the heat and store it.

This cycle of sunlight collection and storage is repeated again and again until the temperature in the rock box reaches 140 degrees, Mr. Powell said.

Two systems have been built for the church. One will heat the office areas and the other will heat the school area.

A back - up heating system is a conventional forced - air system fired by natural gas.

Two days of cloudy weather will exhaust the heat stored in the solar system, and then the conventional heating plant will take over.

RUDOLPH SMITH
District Manager
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1511 Pennsylvania Ave.
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Del. HOWARD (Pete) RAWLINGS
40th District *Baltimore City*

Best Wishes from
PALMA
(Pa. Ave.-Lafayette Market Association)
A community-minded business association

Congratulations to . . .
Providence Baptist Church pastor, Rev. Marcus G. Wood, and members of his congregation, on this historic occasion . . . the occupation of their new solar -heated church home at Pennsylvania and Lafayette Aves.
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