



# NEWS of the 24 Churches of the York Association

*Partners in Blessing - Cooperative Mission,  
Cooperative Ministry*

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## OCTOBER 2024 – Newsletter

### Mission Statement

We, the members of the York Association of the United Church of Christ, are called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to represent Christ by:

- supporting one another in our covenantal relationship;
- calling clergy and laity to mutual accountability to the faith and order of the church;
- witnessing together to God's redeeming love. (Adopted April 28, 1991)

### HERE COMES THE SUN

With apologies to John, Paul, George, and Ringo. This is not about the Beatles, but rather a story about how a small, but mighty church, **Dover United Church of Christ**, used our assets to power our building with solar energy. This not only improves the environment but improves the financial outlook for the long-term survival of our congregation.

In the Beginning... starting in the summer of 2023, we entered the address of the church into a web site called Energy Sage ([www.energysage.com](http://www.energysage.com)), a privately owned enterprise, supported by the U. S. Department of Energy. This is a solar energy calculator and marketplace. We provided a copy of our electric bill and within several days, we had four bids from companies willing to install solar panels at our site. Preferring to work with local companies, we solicited an additional bid from Bright Eye Solar in Lancaster Co. The church council voted unanimously to award the contract to Bright Eye Solar at our March 2024 meeting. On April 7<sup>th</sup>, we held a special congregational meeting to present and discuss this project. After discussion and the vote, 90% of the congregation was in favor of the project.

In the Middle... Uh Oh! DUCC owns not only our church building but a separate 1.34-acre parcel behind the parking lot. Our original intention was to install a ground mount system on this parcel so we could orient the panels due south (180-degree azimuth) for maximum production. As it turned out, Dover Borough had other ideas. Our building and our lot are zoned differently, and the vacant lot is zoned residential, where installing solar panels without a house under them was not considered a, "use by right" and therefore not allowed. The

borough engineer also objected to our plan to carry power from the panels to our building by boring underneath the borough owned alley, Locust Lane, which separates our two parcels of land. Despite gallant lobbying efforts, it ultimately seemed like a battle that we would not win.

In the End... The Bright Eye engineer assigned to our project, Josh Sheppard, quickly pivoted and came up with a roof mounted system design on 6/6/24. We were reluctant at first, not knowing whether the roof structure could take the weight. As it turned out the design put 30 panels on a flat roofed addition to the church that was completed in 1959, and 40 panels on a sloped roof addition that was completed in 1993, sparing any additional load on our 100+ year old building. We did need to find structural drawings of the additions, but after finally cracking the combination to an 80-year-old York safe, it yielded the construction drawings for the additions. These were submitted to the engineers on 6/16/24 and the roofs were deemed adequate for the additional loading.

So far so good, right? Well, the roof of the '93 addition was nearing the end of its useful life, so we decided to replace the roof. We quickly obtained two roofing quotes, ultimately awarding the contract to Chrismer Construction. They started work on the '93 addition on 7/28/24, and finished on 7/30/24, three of the hottest days of the summer with temperatures in the high 90s each day.

On 7/31/24, The Bright Eye crew arrived to start work on the sloped roof, installing the racking and the solar panels there before moving to the '59 addition with the flat roof. Again, these were some of the hottest days of the summer, with workers

carrying the mounting trays, panels and ballast blocks up a ladder to the roof. They did an excellent job! After the Bright Eye electricians made the connections to our electric panel, we generated solar power on August 12, 2024!

Our utility, Metropolitan Edison (Met Ed), is a net metering utility. That means that any power that we generate more than our consumption goes back to the grid and we receive a credit, that is, “banked.” This credit is equivalent to the cost of power that we consume, so when we use more than we generate, we can draw from the bank to offset our electric bill. On 8/30/24 Met Ed installed our bi-directional meter and issued our Approval to Operate letter. The power that we generated from 8/12-8/30 was not banked because the new meter had not been installed.

The final issue was a 75-year-old Pin Oak tree on the west side of our building. This large mature tree had been dropping branches and acorns on the flat roof for years and would have shaded the solar panels on the roof. We reluctantly had a tree service cut down the tree.



Throughout this process we had overwhelming support from church council, our Pastor Cam and the congregation. Not all the days were pleasant, but in the end, we got it done. Special thanks to our council president, who was always willing to sign whatever document we gave him, our treasurer and bookkeeper who made sure that the bills got paid.

That is the story, here are some numbers:

- System Size: 28kW DC
- System Cost: \$62,754
- 1-Federal Tax Credit (Direct Rebate): 30% = \$18,826.20
- 2-Total System Cost: \$43,927.80
- Solar Renewable Energy Credit (annual est): \$1,003.34
- Payback Period: 5.92 years
- Net Savings: \$277,449.14
- Estimated Solar Saving Over 30 Years: \$321,376.94

*1-Revisions to the Inflation Reduction Act now provide for direct reimbursement of 30% of the installation cost of clean energy projects. This is available to non-profit organizations.*

*2-This is not accurate in our case. We will be able to include 1/2 of the cost of the new roof and possibly the tree removal.*

*Submitted by: Tom Miller, Dover Council Member*

## Around the Association

### St. Paul's UCC

2173 Stoverstown Rd, Spring Grove

**What: Soup Sale**

**When: Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Time: Pick up orders between 10am – 12pm**

Pre-orders only. Chicken corn, ham and bean and gluten free chicken corn soup. Cost is \$8.00 a quart. To order call 717-225-4497 and please leave a message.

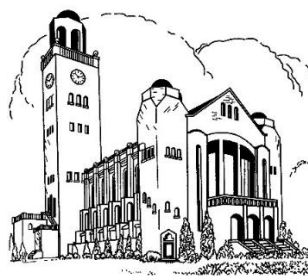
### St. John's UCC, 161 North Main St, Red Lion

**What: Chicken BBQ**

**When: Saturday, October 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Time: 11am – 2pm (or until sold out)**

Dinner consists of ½ chicken, baked potato, applesauce, roll & butter. Tickets are \$12.00. You may pre-order by calling 717-244-5031. If no answer, please leave a message including your name, phone number and the number of dinners.



## ZION UCC ZION WOMEN'S 'GIVEAWAY'

**DATE: Saturday, October 26, 2024**

**TIME: 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

**LOCATION: 100 Lafayette Street, York  
Zion's Downstairs Social Room**

**(Maple Street Entrance ... Park in Maple Street Lot)**

'Giveaway' items, which are FREE, will include but not be limited to clothing, linens, lighting, small appliances, cleaning supplies, accessories, books, etc. All items are on a 'first-come' basis. Refer any questions to our church office at 717-854-1184.

## Organist And/Or Pianist Wanted

**Position:** Organist/Pianist/Accompanist (Sunday Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.)

**Church:** Zion United Church of Christ  
100 Lafayette Street, York, PA  
(south side of Penn Park, downtown York)

**Job type:** Part-Time, Job-Sharing Available  
Salary Negotiable

Interested individuals should contact Mrs. Barbara Neiman at can@gte.net or via phone at 717-792-1658.

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**Mt. Zion UCC,  
1054 Ridgewood Rd, York PA**

## **Oktoberfest**

Saturday, October 19, 2024

11 AM- 2 PM



Now accepting donations for the  
cash and carry sale!

Volunteers and donations needed!

Food and fun for the whole family!

Oktoberfest is back on Saturday, **October 19th from 11am—2pm!** There will be delicious food, a bake sale, family activities, a book sale, & a cash and carry sale. If you would like to pre-order quarts of chicken corn soup, please call Travis in the church office at 717-755-6117. We hope to see you there!

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### **Starview UCC's Gift Card Bingo**

Starview UCC is inviting you to enjoy an evening of fellowship and fun at their gift card BINGO held on **Saturday, November 17th** at the Union Fire Company, Manchester located at, 201 York Street, Manchester, PA 17345. Doors open at 12:00pm with food and drink available for purchase and the BINGO begins at 2:00pm. Door prizes and drawings will take place during this time.

Bingo tickets are \$25.00 per person at the door but can also be purchased in advance for a discounted cost of \$20.00 by contacting the church office at 717-266-4248 or by email at [starviewucc@comcast.net](mailto:starviewucc@comcast.net). Proceeds will benefit the Capital Campaign of Starview UCC.

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### **Attn: York Association UCC Clergy and MIDs**

York Association Clergy and MIDs will meet on **Wednesday, October 9, at 11 am** for brunch at Lion's Pride Restaurant in Red Lion, followed by Boundary Training with ACM Nora Foust at 12:30 pm at St. John's UCC in Red Lion.

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***The next newsletter, NOVEMBER, will  
be emailed October 20, 2024.***

***Please send articles to  
[news@yorkassociationucc.org](mailto:news@yorkassociationucc.org)  
by October 18. Thank You!***