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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UNIVERSITY MENNONITE CHURCH RECEIVES GRANT FOR SOLAR PANEL INSTALLATION

State College, PA – The University Mennonite Church (UMC) has received a grant from the West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund (WPPSEF) to help cover the cost of solar panel installation on their meetinghouse located at 1606 Norma Street in State College. The solar power system will consist of 75 roof-mounted panels which will produce approximately 27,000 KWh annually. The solar installation project is a major component of the church’s initiative to make their facility a Net-Zero Energy building. Other components of the UMC Net-Zero Energy plan include reducing annual electric consumption to about 24,000 KWh by supplementing existing resistant heating units with high efficiency heat pumps, using programable thermostats, and converting to more energy-efficient LED lighting.

The UMC Net- Zero Energy planning process grew out of the congregation’s theological calling to care for God’s creation. After a comprehensive energy audit completed in 2020, the components of the plan were discerned through the congregation’s study and consideration of practical alternatives.

“We are extremely grateful and humbled by the support of WPPSEF in our endeavor to become better stewards of our resources and the environment. We hope that we will be able to encourage and provide information to other churches that are contemplating moving towards ‘net-zero’ energy” says Kate Heinzl, pastor of UMC. Joel Morrison, WPPSEF Fund Administrator, stated: “UMC’s Net-Zero Energy plan can serve as a model for others in the Centre County region. Coupling energy efficiency improvements first to reduce their electric use followed by installing on-site electric production from a renewable energy technology is an approach often advocated by WPPSEF. This approach leads to a deeper energy reduction and less reliance on the electric grid”.

ABOUT UNIVERSITY MENNONITE CHURCH

[University Mennonite Church](#), is a welcoming community of Christians who identify with the Anabaptist faith tradition. We understand that caring for the earth is a key part of our Christian calling. We affirm the [Creation Care Resolution of the Mennonite Church USA](#) calling on congregations to “commit to growing in their dedication to care for God’s Creation as an essential part of the good news of Jesus Christ”. We are working within our congregation and community to identify and take actions promoting Environmental Stewardship and Environmental Justice. Visit <https://universitymennonite.org> for additional information about University Mennonite Church.

ABOUT WPPSEF

The **West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund (WPPSEF)** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that invests in the deployment of sustainable energy technologies that benefit West Penn Power ratepayers in Pennsylvania. WPPSEF investments are focused in three broad categories:

- Deployment of sustainable and clean energy technologies;
- Deployment of energy efficiency and conservation technologies; and
- Facilitating economic development, environmental betterment, and public education as they relate to sustainable energy deployment in the WPP service region.

Visit <http://www.wppsef.org> for further information or [YouTube](#) – Listen to what our project partners have to say about us.

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