



For Immediate Release:

**Fairbrook United Methodist Church receives
\$69,500 from West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund**

*Monies will be used for the installation of 88 ground-mounted solar panels
to offset local church's energy needs*

July 7, 2023 -- The Fairbrook United Methodist Church (Fairbrook UMC) has been awarded a \$39,500 grant from West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund (WPPSEF) and a \$30,00 micro loan to support the installation of a ground-mounted solar array that will provide 100% of the Church's electricity needs. Fairbrook UMC is located at 4201 W. Whitehall Rd, Penn Furnace, PA and all of its heating and cooling needs are currently met by electric power.

Like many organizations, Fairbrook UMC, has faced rapidly rising energy costs. In addition to significant cost savings, the Fairbrook UMC solar array has the added benefits of replacing fossil fuel energy with clean, renewable energy while creating well-paying local jobs and supporting widespread education about and adoption of renewable energy. To accomplish this, The Fairbrook UMC Trustees investigated the feasibility of installing solar panels to provide clean, renewable energy to support our mission and community outreach activities. The ground-mounted solar array located on the grounds of the Fairbrook UMC property would produce enough energy on an annual basis to allow us to produce the equivalent of our annual energy usage.

The Fairbrook UMC Solar Array will increase energy supply with an estimated 42.68 kW capacity that will generate an estimated 58,185 kWh/yr. Overall, the system will supply additional electricity to the grid, reducing generation pressure on the utility during peak hours, and financially benefiting the utility and the ratepayers.

The Fairbrook UMC Solar Array will provide educational opportunities for the community. Visitors will be able to get a more comprehensive understanding of how adding renewable energy to houses of worship can be financially beneficial while having a positive impact on the community. We hope that this project will provide a "ripple effect" of sustainability practices in residential, commercial, and agricultural settings.

Joel Morrison, Fund Administrator for the West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund, said "We hope this project can serve as a statement that solar innovation and enabling financing can serve as a model for others who are interested in supporting renewable solar energy, while making a significant impact on their bills and overall energy usage."

About

Fairbrook United Methodist Church has been a part the community for over 140 years. The original Meek's Church site is still in use at the corner of Tadpole Rd and Whitehall Rd. The name was changed to Fairbrook United Methodist Church during its tenure there. We moved to a new building in 1993 to accommodate a growing congregation and to better serve the needs of our community. Located at 4201 W. Whitehall Rd, Fairbrook UMC offers special community events in addition to worship services, Sunday school and special services. Events held at the Church include Easter egg hunt; rabies clinic; voter polling place, blood drives, Vacation Bible School, 4-H club meetings, community exercise sessions, food bank and Out of the Cold collections.

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. [YouTube](#) – Listen to what our project partners have to say about us.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Patti Hartle, Fairbrook United Methodist Church, 814-571-8289; treasurer@fairbrookumc.org

Barbara Robuck, West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund, 814-865-7380, WPPSEF@ems.psu.edu

###