

Solar Panels for Yorkville Congregational UCC

Fighting Climate Change - One Project at a Time

In the midst of the second year of the pandemic, Green Group resumed meeting - virtually - nearly a year ago, to revitalize our commitment to one of core beliefs YCUCC: **Our responsibility to be good stewards of the earth and environment.**

A project was suggested to the group by one of our newer members: [Could solar panels be put on the church roof to generate energy?](#) [How much fossil-fuel produced energy could be reduced by the use of solar panels?](#) [Would solar panels help to bring down the cost of electricity?](#)

We were ENERGIZED Into looking into this idea and formed a Solar Panel Research Team, which met regularly and often through 2021. Research included: what other churches in northern Illinois used solar panels, and how did they accomplish that? What type of design would work on our building? What would be needed structurally - best location? placement? What is the annual cost of electric at YCUCC? How many panels would be needed to produce enough electricity to offset part or all of that cost? What would be the cost of solar panels? How will it be funded? Could we get a grant to cover some of the cost? What company will work with churches?

Without going into notebooks full of the details, we want to announce the result of our extensive research and decisions reached with Green Group and support of SLT.

YCUCC WILL GET 30 SOLAR PANELS IN SPRING OF 2022!

Panels will be an “awning” adjacent and parallel to the south roof of the church. The panels will not be on the roof itself as to not affect the warranty of our new, specially-designed roof and shingles.

Communication: The Solar Panel Research Team stayed in communication with our Shepherds Leadership Team through the past year. On September 9th we virtually presented a detailed power point and had another follow-up discussion with SLT. There was much interest and enthusiasm for this environmental project. But the biggest concern and challenge was to find a way to fund this project without touching the church’s budget and operating funds. The funding was accomplished to meet this goal.

Funding: The cost of the project will be fully covered without affecting the church operating funds. Costs will be covered by (a) ComEd’s rebate energy credits to be \$3,045 after the system starts working, (b) State of Illinois’s SREC’s projected to be \$12,586 and distributed during the first year, (c) private donations from climate-concerned members of the church, and (d) a very generous grant!

A grant: The grant has been awarded from Faith in Place, an affiliate of Interfaith Power and Light.* YCUCC applied for and received the second (of only two) available grants offered in 2021! The amount of the grant is \$10,000. The church has already received the first installment.

Construction: The project will be done by Independent Renewable Energy (IRE) from Sandwich Illinois. When the very cold winter subsides, materials and the construction team from IRE will be ready to install solar panels. Watch for the action!

Savings: Using some solar powered energy with the awnings, the projected amount of savings is expected to be 16,890 kWh production and \$1337 (approximately 1/3 of YCUCC's average yearly cost). Over the next ten years, the projected amount of financial savings is \$15,064. Think about how that amount of money can be directed to other mission work of the church!

Caring for our earth - one project at a time!

*

(Faith in Place) Our Mission

Faith in Place empowers people of all faiths to be leaders in caring for the Earth, providing resources to educate, connect, and advocate for healthier communities.

We believe that when people of faith lead the environmental movement, it is a movement focused on justice and care for our common environment. We operate from local offices serving Chicago, the North and West Suburbs of Chicago, Northern Illinois, Central Illinois, and Southern Illinois.

We implement our five program areas – Energy & Climate, Sustainable Food & Land Use, Water Preservation, Advocacy, and Youth Empowerment – in close collaboration with our 358 faith partners and over 180 Green Teams.

Our faith partners and Green Teams located throughout Illinois represent diverse religious traditions, including Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant Christian churches; Conservative, Reform, and Reconstructionist denomination Jewish synagogues; Muslim mosques; and Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Native American, and Baha'i houses of worship.

Web site: <https://www.faithinplace.org>

You are invited to join the Green Group - for discussion and idea-sharing for our new Year of Action in 2022! Next meeting will be for the entire church on **Sunday, February 20th**, immediately after service in Fellowship Hall. Listen and watch for details for a fun and inspirational "Energy Efficiency Workshop!"