

General meeting:

January 4, 2023

Attendance: Allison Palm, Mick Grzonka, Carla Tolomeo, John Rowntree, Meta Vornehm, Bobbie Knickerbocker, Donna Mead (St. Gianna's Place), Tom Woodward, Matt Hodgkiss, Kristy Besada, Meg Hamm, Mike Apfelberg, Jocelyn Sharp-Henning, Doug Smithwood (presenter), Tanya Stormo-Rasmussen, Joseph Glajch, Cheryl Massie, Jon Spira-Savett, Kathy Boss, Nancy Meyer, D Parker

Introductions

Small group question: What have you personally done to reduce your carbon emissions?

Presentation: Doug Smithwood from "Solar Saints Initiative" Episcopal Church of NH working to reduce carbon emissions, churchwide. Revision Energy is the supplier of the NSKS, Temple Beth Abraham, and Church of the Good Shepherd.

A handout was shared with the presentation. (see attached)

There is a direct federal tax payment in 2023 for the first time that puts non-profits on par with commercial enterprises for 30% of solar cost.

Steps to reduce carbon emissions.

1. Reduce usage
2. Produce energy through renewables

Solar Saints look at energy and food sustainability.

Food ideas: composting to reduce methane from landfills. growing your own food or buying locally. Using composters.

Lowering usage in your congregations and communities: Changing to LED bulbs alone can save thousands of dollars per year.

Cold food storage facilities: electric usage from refrigeration—what items are running and using high amounts of power but is perhaps under utilized and can be replaced.

Church of the Good Shepherd will be the second Episcopal church in NH to go solar in 2023-4. St. George in Durham has a committee, and Union, Claremont is soliciting bids. The new incentives from the Inflation Reduction Act are very powerful in making this possible.

Gave overview of Inflation Reduction Act. Final rulemaking for implementation of the act must be completed by the Treasury Department by Feb 16, 2023. Base direct payment is 30% of the entire installation cost including any needed electric updates. In order to make this possible,

congregations may need bridge-loans to get the money to implement the solar arrays before the direct payment from the government. There's potential to get more than 30% for reasons such as domestic content (10%), placement on brownfield site (10%), placement in low income area (10%), placement in affordable housing (20%). This law is a 10 year law.

Look into whether denominational bodies have money available for assistance with this kind of project.

In NH, churches are rated as commercial and pay the highest electrical rates.

See announcement on May 20, 2023 seminar by Rachel Eades, a commercial solar consultant for ReVision Energy, exploring options for solar at All Saints Episcopal Church, Wolfboro from 9:30-2:30. Cost is \$22, including breakfast and lasagna/salad lunch.

John Rowntree has a website for lowering power cost with renewable energy. Recommendations for electrical contracts are for 12 months only and not longer, as the cost of energy is at an all time high. When the Ukraine war ends, rates will come down on the market, but a long-term contract might lock you into a higher rate.

No announcements were made.

Donna Mead: St Gianna's Place: Maternity home for women who choose to go through with pregnancies and need a place to stay. Not a shelter. Rent free through pregnancy and up to a year. Scholarship opportunities and employment opportunities. Helping women get back on track for the lives they want to have with their babies. Roman Catholic by tradition but not part of the Roman Catholic Church. Promote spirituality so that women have confidence to go forward in their lives. Can house up to 7 women at a time. Provide referrals to pregnant women for whom this home is not a good fit.