Experiencing Hospitality

One of ECM’s core values involves the “kingdom practice” of extending hospitality to others. Over the years our expression of that value has taken many forms, ranging from welcoming the stranger by hosting International Friendship dinners and other multicultural events, to providing meeting space for religious groups opposed to our “big tent” approach to participating in the gathering of God’s kingdom, to giving those “on the margins” a seat at the family table alongside everyone else. But all that happened back when we had a building to use to welcome others, before we sold our campus center at 1021 Denison Avenue to the KSU Foundation after fifty-two years of ministry at that location.

This year, however, we find ourselves “wandering in the wilderness,” as we await the construction of our new campus ministry facility at 904 Sunset Avenue. And now, during this year of the Great Disruption, the proverbial shoe is on the other foot. It is now we—students, staff and even our directors—who find ourselves at the mercy of the willingness of others to extend hospitality to us, that we might even have a place to gather this year. All four of our local supporting congregations—First Christian, First Congregational, First Presbyterian and Trinity Presbyterian—have graciously, and repeatedly, opened their doors to our campus ministry this fall. Being closest to campus, and thus, most accessible to students, Trinity has been especially helpful in hosting numerous student gatherings. We have also been blessed by the welcome we have received from the folks at Wildcat Ministries, also known as the Baptist Student Center, who have allowed us to gather there weekly for our Real Food Lunches.

While it can be frustrating, at times, not having a “home” to call our own this year, it has been a tremendous spiritual discipline to practice being on the receiving end of the hospitality of others. It has reaffirmed that we are not alone on this journey and that others stand ready to help. It is teaching us that hospitality is dependent, not so much on having a building from which to welcome others, but having a welcoming heart. It is also awakening in us the realization that God, from whom all blessings flow, is walking with us every step of the way. And for these things, we are thankful!

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ECM: stands for “Ecumenical Campus Ministry,” a cooperative campus ministry supported by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), The United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
**Ecuador Mission Trip**

Twenty students and two older adults will be traveling to Ecuador this coming January for a two-week-long service-learning trip to the coastal town of Engabao. This will be ECM’s third trip to Ecuador in as many years. Like last year’s projects in nearby Puerto El Morro, we expect to help with building school classrooms, work with the children in the day care center and school, assist in the community health center, engage in nature conservation projects at the nearby beach, evaluate and improve their water quality and, last but not least, address their “roving pigs” problem and help the community develop a business plan for their “pig operation.” Participants are now in the midst of fundraising for the trip, building relationships with one another and brushing up on their Spanish skills. This experience affords students the opportunity to broaden their horizons, live in Christian community and put some of their classroom knowledge to work in challenging, developing world conditions as they discern their calling in life. Thanks to one of ECM’s student leaders, Mary Gordon, and the new pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Helen Hutchison, a worship experience in the tradition of the Taizé community is now being offered to the campus and community on Sunday afternoons, from 5:15 -5:45 p.m. at Trinity. Taizé is an ecumenical monastery in southwest France founded during World War II to pray for reconciliation. It is a simple, peaceful service filled with scripture, song, silence and prayer, and is intended to give students a brief respite from their busy lives to reconnect with God and renew their spirits for the week ahead.

**New Worship Experience**

ECM would like to do as much communication via e-mail as possible. Please send us an e-mail at ecm@ksu.edu to stay updated and informed as we move forward!

**Meet Kristina Miller**

ECM’s new administrative assistant is Kristina Miller, a first-year master’s student at K-State in Security Studies, originally from Wichita. Working remotely because of the transition between buildings this year, Kristina is handling all of ECM’s financial and bookkeeping chores, keeping our social media and website updated, handling our correspondence, creating promotional materials, developing newsletters and processing bulk mailings, and assisting the campus pastor, student leaders and directors, as needed—all in less than ten hours per week! Not surprisingly, the ECM Board is considering hiring a second student to help share the work load!

**New Building Progress Report**

Plans for the transformation of 904 Sunset Avenue are progressing according to schedule. Thanks to the good work of our architects, Bruce McMillan and Cameron Tross, the initial feasibility study has been completed, the application for a conditional use permit with the city has been submitted and a hearing before the Board of Zoning Appeals has been scheduled for Nov. 13. Thanks to the cooperation of Emily Wagner and the staff of the Manhattan Emergency Shelter, alternative housing has been secured for MES clients living in the apartment building at 904 Sunset at the time of its purchase this summer. We are currently soliciting bids for the demolition of that building, which will hopefully begin later this fall, once the plans for our new building are approved by the city. Once that approval is granted, the architects will develop the design plans. In January, bids for contractors will be received and evaluated, and a general contractor selected for the project. Construction will begin thereafter, as soon as the weather allows, with the hope of occupying the building by the beginning of the fall semester next year. Costs for the new building have not yet been finalized, but the hope is that a combination of gifts from ECM supporters over the next few months and the proceeds from the sale of the former building will cover entirely the costs of constructing and furnishing the new ECM campus center.