Visible results are on the horizon after a season of behind-the-scenes work! David Woodmansee developed an outstanding set of conceptual drawings in January that formed the basis of our application to the City’s Board of Zoning Appeals, which was approved on March 12. Architects, structural and project engineers, and a general contractor have been hired an are laying the groundwork for the launch of the renovation, hopefully in late April, after city zoning officials signed off on the project and construction permits have been issued. Demolition work on the interior of the current structure began in late February. The exterior "skin" of the building will remain in place for protection and security until the contractors are ready to go to work. Current plans call for the 4,700 square-foot building to house two one-bedroom apartments, a large storage/storm shelter area, and a 2,150 s.f. suite of offices, bathrooms, kitchen and meeting space for campus ministry. In addition, we anticipate a covered porch with space sufficient for gardens and landscaping. Although the timeline is very tight, hope remains that the structure will be completed in time for the beginning of the Fall 2014 semester. For more information, please visit our website!

PNK “Saturday Mission” Crew Visits ECM

On Saturday, March 23, a group of fifteen volunteers from the Presbytery of Northern Kansas rendezvoused at 904 Sunset Avenue, the future home of the Ecumenical Campus Ministry at Kansas State University for a "demolition party." ECM bought an old home one block from campus last summer to replace its former home on Denison Avenue, and has been taking it down to the foundation and framing this past month in anticipation of beginning a complete renovation of the property in April. The goal is to have the renovated structure ready to serve as a home base for the campus ministry by the start of the Fall 2014 semester.

Help came from a group of volunteers that arrived from as far as 75 miles away and included PNK General Presbytery and Stated Clerk, Ed Thompson, Bob and Rhoda Frasier (Abilene), Ted Collins (Concordia), Sherri Jacobson (Eskridge), Wanda Young (Junction City), Bob and Daisy Schalles, Zac Morton and Helen Hutchison (Manhattan), Kim and Von Kramer, Nancy McIntosh and George Sanneman (Oak Hill) and Beverly Leonard, HR, Topeka. A delicious lunch was provided nearby, at Trinity Presbyterian Church, by Daisy Schalles.

When everything was said and done, more was done than said. In less than five hours PNK volunteers, along with some ECM volunteers, filled an entire 30-cubic-yard trash container with debris from the old house. All told, PNK volunteers contributed nearly 70 hours of labor to ECM and had great fun working together at the same time. At the end of the day, the demolition work on the interior of the building begun in late February was nearly completed, and all that was left were some tired, sweaty volunteers with some sore muscles, and one beaming campus pastor, very thankful for their hard work and help!
Groundbreaking ceremonies for the new ECM Campus Center are set to be held on Sunday, April 27, at 2:00 p.m. at the site of the new ECM Campus Center at 904 Sunset Avenue. ECM director, Jan Lange, and ECM chairperson, Waide Purvis, are organizing the event. All associated activities, including tours, as safety allows, of the building under renovation are free and open to the public.

First Mission Gathering

ECM hosted its first-ever Mission Gathering in the Cottonwood Room of the K-State Student Union on Feb. 27. Approximately twenty persons attended this inaugural event. The purpose of the Mission Gatherings is to create an opportunity for a relatively small group of ECM supporters to “hear the latest” on the campus ministry directly from our students, staff and directors, ask questions about all that has been happening with ECM and, develop stronger connections to the ministry and one another. The plan is to establish these gatherings on a quarterly basis, involving new supporters each time. The next Mission Gathering is slated for early June.

Vocational Discernment Initiative

ECM was recently awarded a $100,000 grant from the Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment Inc. to develop program initiatives over the next five years that will help students reflect theologically upon their vocation. The intent is to assist not only those considering a call to some form of “the ministry,” but also to encourage everyone to “think theologically” about their calling in life. ECM’s proposed initiatives include the development of worship outreach teams, student internships in area congregations, an annual Disciples of Christ lectureship in theology, a mutual mentoring program between students and members of local congregations, a contemplative worship service and the implementation of intentional practices in the ministry’s current programs to assist students with the theological discernment of their vocation. ECM is one of only 21 campus ministry organizations selected by the Endowment this year as part of this effort to enable hundreds of students at public universities across the United States to participate in these kinds of life-shaping experiences. To build ECM’s capacity for this outreach ministry, we anticipate hiring a program director and hope to have that person in place by early June.

Real Food Lunch!

Thanks to the hospitality of the folks at the Baptist Student Center/Wildcat Ministries, 1801 Anderson Ave, ECM’s Real Food Lunch has continued throughout this year of “homelessness” to attract 30-40 participants to a shared meal every Friday while classes are in session. Lead by student coordinators, Jill Emerson, Caroline Fulton, Lauren Garrott and Mary Gordon, and assisted by a host of volunteer helpers, this ministry continues to attract both new and returning students to gather for a meal composed mainly of organic, locally-grown real (not processed!) food in an effort to celebrate and educate one another about healthy and sustainable relationships.

2014 Ecuador Mission Trip

This past January 3-16, twenty-one K-State students joined faculty member, Gerry Snyder, and ECM campus pastor, David Jones, in traveling to the coastal Ecuadorian fishing communities of Engabao and Puerto Engabao, where we worked under the auspices of the Quito-based NGO, Nuevos Horizontes. The communities identified water as their top priority, so we spent eight days digging one-meter-deep trenches, mostly by hand, and laying pipes to two elementary schools and one entire neighborhood so they could have, for the first time, running water. We also painted several murals at one of the schools and cleared trash from a large area of the beach along the Pacific Ocean. The best part of the experience, however, was developing friendships with the local people, and especially the children. Since early February trip participants have been visiting area congregations to share about the transformational effect of this trip upon their outlook in life, and to thank the congregations for their financial support of the venture.

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