



# New Beginnings

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## Greenville City Council hears neighbors' fears of Koinonia House®

On February 19 a group of people presented the city council with a petition stating they were worried if ex-prisoners were allowed to live in their neighborhood.

"It's not a bad program," one neighbor told the council, "but I don't think it belongs in a residential area." He added it will hurt property values.

However, Greenville Safety-Service Director John Schmidt said he had studied the zoning rules and Koinonia House® plan was legal. "From a zoning standpoint, he seems to be within zoning guidelines."

Although some of the people expressed concern for their safety if ex-felons were allowed to move into the neighborhood, statistics are clear that Koinonia House® would actually make the community safer. According to Darke County Common Pleas Court Judge Jon Hein, without some sort of support program following release from prison, about 75 percent will recommit crimes. However, national Koinonia House® statistics for the past decade show that only 17 percent of those who complete the program ever return to prison.

"I think it's a great idea," Hein said. "You have to be willing to take a risk to have an impact on the community."

## Koinonia House® is about being the Church

Koinonia House® is not just about changing the lives of a few Christian men getting out of prison. It's also about changing the lives of Christians who want their faith to be more than just sitting in church on Sunday.

Steve Uhrig is a good example. He has been volunteering one day nearly every week getting Koinonia House® ready for our first resident. "The Lord told me to get



Hollis Flora has not only been donating wood for our stove, but he has been teaching us what trees produce the best heat.

up there and help that guy," he said when he arrived at our door one day in January. He has helped wire lighting in the dining room, upstairs hall and backyard.

Hollis Flora is another example. When he heard we were heating our house with a wood stove, he not only has donated several cords of wood, but more important, we have gotten to know one another during our trips to the woods together.

Don Nease has also been a real godsend for us. The woodstove has been heating the living room fine, but the rest of the house is about 52 degrees on a good day. Don is a retired heating contractor and he has helped us engineer a way to run free heat from the stove through the furnace and into the rest of the house. "We've got to get the people in our churches in-



Don Nease may be retired from the heating business, but he is not retired from ministry. He has spent many days engineering a duct system that will draw free heat from the wood stove and run it through the furnace and into the rest of the house.

involved in this sort of ministry," he said.

### Common goal

Steve is Methodist. Hollis is German Baptist and Don is Presbyterian. But all of us share a common desire to see Christ change lives. That's what it means to be the Church. Through Koinonia House® we are learning that.



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*Building a bridge to the future*

**We're on the web!  
Koinoniahouse.org**



# Phase one nearly done , but your help is needed

Although the renovation work on Koinonia House® has taken a lot of our time, it's not really the focus of our ministry. Helping Christian men make the transition from prison to life on the outside is what we have been called to do.

And we are moving fast toward having our first resident arrive here. We've had three men apply and the board hopes to have one man living here by June.

## **Problem**

But here's the problem. You have been very generous with your support for this ministry - donating more than \$8,000 thus far. But it will take another \$10,000 before we are ready to welcome our first resident.

## **Matching grant available**

Fortunately, the Koinonia House® National Ministry has promised us a matching

\$10,000 grant. All we need to qualify is another \$2,000. Not everyone can help us strip paint and run heating ducts in the basement. But if you will help us reach our goal for phase one , the national ministry will do the rest. Then we can bring our first resident to his new home and start doing the real work we have been called to do - help reduce crime by changing broken lives.

Will you help?