

WHO'S A FRIEND OF KOINONIA?  
By Jeff Smith

*Do you know how Koinonia got its name?* After more than 20 years of memorable experiences there, I didn't – until, along with Tom Sopoci, chair of the Koinonia Board, I visited with the Hennepin Senior Council during its recent annual retreat at Koinonia. After we relived our memories of what the place means to us, and reported on the status of Koinonia operations and finances, Tom administered a quick quiz that everybody really enjoyed.

Here were the multiple choices for the question above:

- a. Dr. Chester Pennington (HAUMC senior minister 1955 – 1972)
- b. A bunch of kids
- c. United Methodist women at a retreat
- d. A visiting Catholic priest

The correct answer is b. – a bunch of kids. As the story goes, young people attending a Koinonia function back in the '60s commented on how hospitable the place felt to them. All that remained was to determine the Greek word for "hospitality" and "Koinonia" had its name.

Have you experienced hospitality at Koinonia? If so, you'll want to join us as we reconstitute a good idea that was developed about ten years ago, the Friends of Koinonia. It's an affinity group of people who appreciate this unique asset of our church and agree to pledge their time, and a few dollars, to make sure it's well maintained into the future.

Members of the Koinonia Board will be making contact with the original Friends of Koinonia to invite them back into the fold. Our first need is to bridge a modest budget gap that will likely exist by the end of this year. That's not unusual for retreat centers these days, but it is something that we must address if Koinonia is to be on firm financial footing.

Like any healthy relationship, if you don't know about Koinonia, it will be hard to call yourself a "Friend." Too many Hennepin members don't know about our jewel on Lake Sylvia, about an hour's drive west of Wayzata. I hope you'll ask anybody on the Senior Council what Koinonia means to them. It was their generation that donated the funds needed to build the buildings and establish one of the most wonderful resources our church could have.

Now it's up to all of us to make sure the next generation also benefits from this unique and natural place. If you'd like to be a Friend of Koinonia, please email me at [jeffsmith24@comcast.net](mailto:jeffsmith24@comcast.net) and I'll tell you all about it.

We'll add more to the Friends tab in the future so please check back!