

“Koinonia’s Early Beginnings”
By, David J Selleck

Three men met together at the old Clarion Clipper and formed the “Konoinia Christian Fellowship” in 1967. I was one of those three men. Dr. Nyle Ziegler and Mel Stewart were the other two. We had been meeting together from time to time to share over breakfast our experiences of serving the Lord and our interest in the ministry of our Lord at Clarion University.

I had moved my family to Clarion in 1964, for the express purpose of working for my Lord and the building of His Kingdom. Very early in my ministry here, I considered Clarion University as a needy mission field and sought for opportunities to minister there. My wife and I attended events that were open to the public where we got acquainted with some students and faculty members, such as Dr. Penny and Dr. Kochno. They each had me come in and share in one of their classes. We welcomed the students to our home for a time of Bible Study and personal sharing with several of them attending and participating at that time.

Dr. Ziegler had recently moved his practice to the Clarion area. He had a college age son and daughter and was interested in seeing a greater interest for our Lord on campus.

Mel Stewart had recently moved his “Finance & Loan” business to Clarion. He had a large family including some who were attending Clarion University. Mel also was having College students attending his home for Bible Study and times of sharing.

As you can see all three of us were not life-time residents. We were newcomers interested in what we could do to contribute for the good of this community and for the glory of our Lord.

Like my newly adopted brothers I considered that a “live and strong witness” for our Lord would be a great contribution for the good of this community.

In my search for a strong witness for our Lord on campus, I came to realize that it was very weak and in great need for improvement. The Catholic “Newman Club” appeared to be the strongest witness for Christ on campus. However, when attending those meetings I heard very little about our Lord.

As the three of us shared our burden for the campus ministry we concluded that we needed to form a well organized and structured group that could be recognized by the college and operate on campus.

I shared with these men, that I had recently tried to form such a group with the students meeting at our home. I had tried to form the Assemblies of God campus ministry called “Chi Alpha”, for it had proven to be very effective on other campuses. However, at that time it was

required that the officers of a "Chi Alpha" group, be members of the Assemblies of God and the A/G students were not ready to serve.

At that point it was decided to create a non-denominational campus ministry. We gave it the name "Koinonia Christian Fellowship." meaning simply a fellowship of those following Christ. A "Constitution and By-Laws" was drawn up and adopted, with an application submitted to the Commonwealth of PA. for the recognition as a "Non-Profit Organization". The "Non-Profit Organization" status was officially recognized and granted to us on Jan 11, 1978.

Application was then made to Clarion University for the recognition of "Koinonia Christian Fellowship" as a viable Student organization on campus with Dr. George Shirey as College advisor. This took some time but in May of 1980, official recognition was granted to "Koinonia Christian Fellowship" by the college.

I have served with this ministry in various positions and at various times, through the years as a Treasurer, as a Vice President and President until I resigned from the presidency in April 2005.

By, David J Selleck 4/18/15