

## To Pastor and Mission Committee

### S.O.W.E.R.

#### Sharing Our Witness – Enriching Relationships Sowing the Seeds of Christian Love in Southeast Kentucky

The SOWER VIM construction project has completed its 15<sup>th</sup> home in the vicinity of Henderson Settlement, Frakes, KY.

The SOWER VIM Team is in the planning stages for constructing the 16<sup>th</sup> home for a family in 2017. The cost of materials to build one of the 28' x 28' or 28' x 32' houses from the ground up is approximately \$43,000 to \$47,000. The SOWER VIM Project is in need of both funding to cover material costs and volunteers for the build, please see registration form attached. The SOWER VIM Leadership Team is requesting that the churches of West Ohio prayerfully consider supporting this worthwhile project in Southeastern Kentucky financially with a pledge of support as well as providing volunteers to do the actual construction. Those that have served on SOWER work teams comment that, while they have helped a family by serving, they gained much more from the interaction and relationships with the family and fellow team members. West Ohio Conference churches are invited to participate in this rewarding project with your prayers, your volunteer labor, and your financial support.

Work weeks for the house construction have been scheduled for May 7-13, May 14-20, July 9-15, July 16-22, August 13-19, and August 20-26 of 2017. Volunteers should plan to arrive at Henderson Settlement by 5:00 PM on Sunday starting the work week and plan to depart Saturday morning. The attached Build Schedule outlines the anticipated work to be done each week. The registration fee is \$250/person and covers food, and lodging at Henderson Settlement. While there is no requirement for volunteers to contribute to the cost of materials, it is suggested that each volunteer or their church contribute \$400 to \$500 toward the cost of materials. Volunteers without materials to work with are not very effective and I have yet to see a stack of lumber self-assemble into a house!

SOWER is a West Ohio Conference VIM project that constructs new housing as part of the Henderson Settlement work camp program. Henderson Settlement, Frakes, Kentucky, is a component of the Red Bird Missionary Conference providing a multitude of services to southern Bell and Whitley counties in Kentucky and northern Campbell and Claiborne counties in Tennessee. The Work Camp Program, which has approximately 3,000 volunteers each year, is one of the services provided. Work Camp volunteers repair 130 to 150 existing homes each year and have built new houses (33 to date) to raise the quality of life for the owner families in the local area.

Please send all pledges and registrations [checks should be made out to the West Ohio Conference UMC], or questions to:

Ralph & Carolyn Brandon  
SOWER VIM Team Leaders  
231 McMillen Dr.  
Newark, Oh 43055  
740-344-5581  
[sowervimproject@gmail.com](mailto:sowervimproject@gmail.com)

In Christ's Service,

*Ralph & Carolyn Brandon*  
SOWER VIM Team Leaders

## Build Schedule for S.O.W.E.R. 2017

### Week 1

**May 7 – 13 -- Frame shell** => install beam(s) & engineered joist, install 3/4" OSB sub-floor, construct and help lift walls into place, help lift and install roof trusses, install OSB decking on roof (4/12 pitch).

### Week 2

**May 14 – 20 -- Dry in Exterior** => Install roofing materials (4/12 pitch), install windows, exterior doors, and siding (ladder work), install front porch ceiling, construct and lift interior walls into place.

### Week 3

**July 9 – 15 -- Insulate and drywall, finish siding & soffit** => Install insulation (wall and ceiling), hang dry wall (mostly 4x12 by 1/2" sheets; ceiling with the use of a lift; walls lifted manually), apply first and hopefully second coats of joint compound (mud), work on exterior as time permits (install stairs & complete siding, soffits and fascia). Note: insulating and hanging/mudding/sanding wall board generates some dust. The outside work will require working off of ladders.

### Week 4

**July 16 – 22 -- Finish drywall & paint, install porch railing** => sand all joints & apply third and possibly 4th coat of mud and sand some more. The prep stage is the most important and generally takes three dusty days. Paint entire inside of house with two coats of primer and 2 coats of finish color. Work on outside as time permits (see week 3). If you have problems with dust please sign up for a different week -- there is just no way to completely eliminate the dust even with masks.

### Week 5

**August 13 – 19-- Finish interior trim, install underlayment, and flooring** => Paint interior trim and doors (about 2 days), install underlayment, install peel 'n stick tile, complete work on exterior. Most of the team will need to be able to work on their knees during the underlay and tile installation.

### Week 6

**August 20 – 26 -- Complete interior** => Install interior doors, install kitchen cabinets, install base board and window trim, caulk and touch up painting as required, complete anything not done! Much of the installation work requires using a two step, step ladder or getting down on the floor.

## Frequently Ask Questions

- **What is SOWER** - SOWER is a West Ohio Conference VIM project that operates in conjunction with Henderson Settlement, Frakes, Kentucky, a component of the Red Bird Missionary Conference. The SOWER project works in conjunction with Henderson Settlement's Work Camp Program to enhance the lives of the people of Southeast Kentucky by improving their housing situation. The Work Camp Program has traditionally repaired existing housing to raise the quality of life for the owner families but a number of years ago it was realized that new housing was also needed because 1) in some cases the existing housing had deteriorated to the point that replacement would be more cost effective than repair, 2) the family had lost their home, or 3) lived in substandard rental housing which could not be worked on.
- **Where is Henderson Settlement** - Frakes is on KY 190 in southeastern KY about 25 miles east of Interstate 75 and 4 miles north of the Tennessee state line. The nearest towns of any consequence are Williamsburg, KY (just off of I-75 at exit 11- about 40 minutes), and Middlesboro, KY (on US 25E – about 40 minutes).
- **Housing** – Henderson has a very nice air-conditioned dorm. Restroom/shower facilities are provided for each sleeping room. There are two men's and two women's sleeping rooms each of which will house up to 32 persons. Two gathering areas plus a large deck are available for "lounging". There are also 3 houses available to house work campers. Henderson Settlement tries to hire local people as much as possible so there is a dorm "housekeeper/maintenance" person who cleans the public/common areas.
- **Meals** – All meals are provided during the work camp at the dining facility. The kitchen staff cooks and cleans up. Work campers need only show up at the appointed times, pick up their meal cafeteria style and when done carry their dirty dishes to the clean up window. The food is good "down home cook'n."
- **After work hour's activities** – Programs are provided most nights to acquaint work campers with the work of The Red Bird Missionary Conference of the United Methodist Church, particularly Henderson Settlement, as well as the Appalachian Mountain culture.
- **Cost** – The registration fee of \$250/person covers the cost of room and board at Henderson Settlement. The registration fee does not cover any of the construction costs. An additional \$400 to \$500 contribution is requested (but not required) per volunteer to help defray the cost construction materials.
- **How many volunteers are need each week** – Due to housing constraints the number of volunteers is limited to 12/week.
- **Tools** – The SOWER project as well as Henderson Settlement has a limited tool set available for those without tools. It is better if each work team brings their own (labeled) tools as this insures the tools will be available when they are needed.
- **How are recipients of the house selected** – A committee composed of community people, Henderson Settlement Board members and some Henderson Settlement Staff review the applications submitted and select the most deserving applicants for a ranked list of approved applicants. The people at the top of the list get houses as churches/groups sign up as sponsors.
- **What does the family provide** – The family must own the land and provide safe water (well or "city") and septic system. They must also see that the foundation is built and the plumbing and electric service is installed and inspected.
- **What size house is constructed** – The houses are either 28x28 ft. (784 sq. ft.) with two bedrooms or 28' x 32' (896 sq. ft.) with 3 bedrooms, a bath room with laundry closet, galley style kitchen, and living area. There is a 8'x 28' or 8'x 32' front porch and 8'x' 8' back porch. The house is provided with a heat pump for heating and cooling.

**S.O.W.E.R. 2017 Registration**  
**Sharing Our Witness – Enriching Relationships**  
Sowing the Seeds of Christian Love in Southeastern Kentucky

You are invited to participate in S.O.W.E.R. 2017 by volunteering for one of the work weeks. The work week dates and approximate construction phase are shown below. The registration cost for the week, which covers board and room at Henderson Settlement, is \$250 with \$125 due as a deposit at registration. The remainder of the registration fee will be due three weeks prior to the departure date.

Each of the 6 work weeks can accommodate no more than 12 volunteers with the work teams filled on an individual “first come basis”. Please use the “second choice” option on the registration form to facilitate filling all openings in all weeks.

**Dates for the work teams to serve at Henderson Settlement**

Week	Date	Construction Goals
1	May 7 - 13	Framing/roof truss/roof deck
2	May 14-20	Roofing/siding/interior walls
3	July 9 - 15	Siding/Insulation/wall board/spackle
4	July 16 - 22	Spackling/paint/exterior trim
5	Aug 13 - 19	Flooring/paint/complete exterior
6	Aug 20 - 26	Interior doors/trim/kitchen

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**S.O.W.E.R. 2017 Registration/Materials Donation**

WOCUMC account # 10-41230-020-0510

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Work Week Desired \_\_\_\_\_

Second Choice \_\_\_\_\_

- \$125 Registration Deposit \_\_\_\_\_
- Materials Donation of \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to:

**Ralph Brandon**  
**231 McMillen Dr.**  
**Newark, OH 43055**

Please make check(s) payable to: **West Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church - note on memo line the acct # 10-41230-020-0510 and that payment is for Registration Deposit or Materials Donation.**