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New building will unite Cornerstone students

By Rebecca Loda
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BLOOMINGTON – The 350 students of Cornerstone Christian Academy started the school year spread among three churches.

That will change in the coming months, as the school prepares to move into a \$5 million, 52,000-square-foot building.

"Everyone will be under one roof," said Director of Development April Kinzinger, who also helped found the school. "We hope to move in shortly after Thanksgiving."

The building is located on 78 acres at East 1200 North Road, three miles east of Towanda-Barnes Road.

As the road approaches Bloomington, it becomes Ireland Grove Road.

The building will include 27 classrooms, a library, computer lab, art and music rooms, gymnasium and office space.

"It's already enclosed," said Kinzinger.

"We're starting to put the finishing touches on the interior."

Construction began in November 2002 and \$2 million in pledges and donations has been raised. The academy has issued a tax-exempt bond through the Illinois Development Finance Authority for the remainder of the cost. Fund-raising continues.

The academy also received a \$100,000 grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation. It will be used toward the school's geothermal system.

Cornerstone, which began with 45 preschool students in 1997, now serves students in preschool through ninth grade. Students meet at Faith United Methodist Church, Grace United Methodist Church and Second Presbyterian Church.

"It's very difficult to keep track of," said Kinzinger. "We spend a lot of time going between buildings."

Students come from "north, south, east and west" and represent 60 churches, she said. Religious and secular curriculums are blended, using the Bible as a basis that is integrated into all subjects.

Additional wings are expected as enrollment grows. When finished, the school building is expected to include more than 120,000 square feet to serve students in preschool through the 12th grade.

"We need a wing almost immediately," said Kinzinger. "When we move in, we'll have just one small empty classroom." The next building project, however, will have to wait "until God provides the funds we need," she said. A wing likely would cost about \$1.5 million.

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