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GENEROUS GIFTS HELP RENOVATE PRESSER HALL AT BETHANY COLLEGE

LINDSBORG, Kan.—Bethany College has begun installation of a new elevator system in Presser Hall.

The existing open-sided freight elevator will be replaced with an Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990-compliant passenger unit accommodating employees, students and guests using wheelchairs or other mobility-assisting devices. The elevator, original to Presser Hall and completed in the fall of 1928, requires maintenance upgrades for safety and efficiency purposes. While the motors in the fourth floor attic will remain intact, a new hydraulic system will be added. The fire alarm system for Presser Hall will also be updated.



“The size will be that of a standard passenger elevator you would find in a hotel. All instruments will be able to fit in this elevator, with the exception of a grand piano,” said Randy Jirak, campus facilities supervisor.

On the final day of its operation, Jirak and DeVere Blomberg '51 took one last ride on the original elevator. Blomberg has been instrumental in all Presser Hall renovations through voluntary and financial contributions.

In 2007, Presser Hall renovations began when a group of students organized and physically removed the carpet in the lobby, exposing and then polishing the original terrazzo floor. Additional updates include a new digital keyboard laboratory for all students and repairs to the organ such as replaced pipes, pedal grates and positiv.

Other contributors to the Presser Hall improvement projects include: The K.T. Wiedemann Foundation, The Presser Foundation; The Glenn Lindstrom Estate; The Verla Nesbitt Joscelyn Foundation; The Rouback Family Foundation; and The Mauney Family;

Presser Hall was named after The Presser Foundation, which through a large benefaction by Theodore Presser, made available extensive grants for music buildings at colleges and universities.

Bethany College, established by Swedish Lutheran immigrants in 1881, is a college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The mission of Bethany College is to educate, develop and challenge individuals to reach for truth and excellence as they lead lives of faith, learning and service. Bethany College is on the Web at www.bethanylb.edu.

Caption: DeVere Blomberg '51, Randy Jirak.