



Central
District
Conference

A conference of
Mennonite Church USA

focus

KNOWING CHRIST'S LOVE
ANSWERING GOD'S CALL

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CDC men's retreat centers on prayer

By Kevin Leary,
Program Coordinator at Camp Friedenswald

It was another great year for men's retreat at Camp Friedenswald, held from October 16-18. Over 40 men gathered to relax, work, and play, all while thinking deeply about prayer in the Christian life. Our speaker was Alan Kreider, who got us thinking about different kinds of prayer and the importance of praying to transform our world.

Over the course of the weekend, the men who came got the chance to explore different kinds of prayer. On Saturday morning, we heard about the history of Take Our Moments and Our Days, the Anabaptist Prayer Book. We prayed from this book together in the same way that Anabaptists and other Christians have prayed before us.



Later, some of us worked on updating the landscaping around the Dining Hall. Friedenswald has plans for a new seating area outside the Dining Hall and the first step of the process was ripping out the old bushes and retaining walls. Some of the men were only too eager to

Continued on back page

“Women Rise” at CDC women's retreat

By Naomi Leary

For over fifty years, the women's retreat at Camp Friedenswald has been planned by women from different regions across Central District Conference. And each year the spirit of those women – the work, energy, and passion that they have poured into planning the retreat – touches all who attend, providing opportunities for renewing and reconnecting.

This year's retreat was no different, as women from Central Illinois (First Mennonite Church of Champaign-Urbana and Mennonite Church



of Normal) planned the weekend's worship and play, using imagery of a tree as their inspiration.

Throughout the weekend, participants explored the theme “Women Rising: naming, claiming and transforming” through worship, workshops, camp activities, and relaxing together. Laura Brenneman, Biblical scholar, chaplain, and restorative justice

Continued on back page

Men's retreat focused on prayer, continued

oblige. Others worked on removing non-native invasive plants, a constant battle here at Camp.

Throughout the weekend, Alan encouraged us to pose questions we had about prayer. Alan helped us walk through some of these tough questions and think about them in new ways. For his final talk, Alan suggested a bare-bones daily prayer regimen that hits most of the different types of prayer throughout the day. Thanks Alan for your contribution! In addition, Hal Hess helped lead the music for the retreat. Thank you, Hal, for your thoughtful contribution to the worship sessions!

Finally, thanks to all who contributed in other ways to the men's retreat, including all who attended. We look forward to seeing you next year at the 2016 men's retreat!



Women's retreat explores transformation, continued

practitioner, gave input for three worship sessions. She reflected on several Biblical texts as they related to the theme and challenged women to name their power, to claim themselves and their power as gifts from God, and to use their power for personal and structural transformation. Sunday morning's service included sharing communion and the invitation for each person to place their 'leaf' containing their gifts and power on a tree.

The weekend also included the opportunity to dance in the chapel, ride through the Peaceful Woods on a wagon, enjoy pontoon rides on Shavehead Lake, practice yoga in Lakeview, and sing together.

During lunch on Saturday participants engaged in lively conversation about the future of women's retreat. With changes in the church, the conference, and the amount of time individuals have to help plan the retreats, CDC women are invited to help evaluate the role women's retreat currently plays, and their hopes for women's retreat in the future. Conversation continues on Facebook in the group "Women's Retreat at Camp Friedenswald." If you missed this year's retreat but want to be a part of ongoing conversation, please join us online or email program@friedenswald.org. We hope to see you at next year's retreat being planned by women from Ohio.