

APRIL 2014

Leadership Council, Board of Directors' April meetings cover finances, exploring CDC theme and growing God's community

Warm and sunny spring weather greeted Central District Conference leaders during meetings at Camp Friedenswald in April.

The CDC Board of Directors met Friday, April 11, and the Leadership Council met Saturday, April 12, at Camp Friedenswald in Cassopolis, Mich.

The Board of Directors meeting included the financial report in this *focus* and the proposed spending plan, explored how to help churches implement the CDC theme "Transformed Through Text and Table" and a bit about the Annual Meeting coming up in June.

The Leadership Council's meeting included hearing from council members about their churches' CDC Sunday events, a report from Conference Minister Lois Kaufmann, Board President Ron Guengerich of Silverwood Mennonite and Board President-elect Lisa Weaver of Madison Mennonite on the Constituency Leadership Council's most recent meeting, and a worshipful session on "growing communities of faith and peace" in today's world, led by André Gingrich Stoner and John Powell. A version of that interactive session will be held at the annual meeting's plenary presentation.

In this *focus*, you'll find snippets from the two days of activities that included both these leadership meetings.



Above: The Central District Conference Board of Directors and staff discuss what resources to offer congregations on the CDC theme of "Transformed Through Text and Table" at its meeting at Camp Friedenswald.

Below: The fresh tulips, candle and cross was center to both meetings.



Reviewing CDC Sunday

Members of the CDC Leadership Council shared stories from their churches' CDC-focused Sundays.

CDC provided a number of resources, including stories of some of CDC's founders and presentations of the member congregations. Some churches expanded on these, including Cincinnati Mennonite, which had former Executive Director Justin Weaver and Programs Director Jeff Boehr share about their work at Camp Friedenswald, and Hively Avenue Mennonite, which looked at the role of different CDC committees during Sunday school time.



John Powell and André Gingerich Stoner speak to the Leadership Council during the group's meeting Saturday, April 12.

Sharing from the CLC

CDC's three Mennonite Church USA Constituency Leadership Council representatives spoke to the CDC Leadership Council about their experience at the CLC meeting in early April.

As CDC's conference minister, board president and president-elect, accordingly, Lois Kaufmann, Ron Guengerich and Lisa Weaver attended the meeting.

The CLC is structured so that the 21 area conferences each send three reps, while the five constituency groups each send one or two people. The CLC is not a decision making body, Weaver explained, but meets twice a year for about two-and-a-half days to provide feedback and direction to the Mennonite Church USA executive board about pertinent issues, as well as to build relationships across Mennonite Church USA.

During the spring meeting, the CLC heard from Mountain States Mennonite Conference on its process of discerning and licensing Theda Good, a pastor at First Mennonite of Denver who is in a same-sex, covenanted relationship, and responded to the questions of what feedback to give to Mountain States Mennonite Conference and what God is saying to the CLC and MCUSA, Kaufmann said.

She noted that prayers were raised for the group across the country.

"There was a very kind spirit in the air," Kaufmann said. "People were very calm and sensitive to one another."

An appointed task force is to have compiled and synthesized CLC responses by May 1, then drafting a recommendation to the MCUSA executive board.

focus is published by the Central District Conference, Mennonite Church USA. To be added to the e-mail subscription list contact the editor, Marlys Weaver-Stoesz, at marlys.weaver@gmail.com

"Growing communities of faith and peace"

John Powell and André Gingerich Stoner led the CDC Leadership Council in a session on "growing communities of faith and peace."

Powell is a member of the missional church committee and worked 23 years at Mennonite Mission Network, while also continually working to build an anti-racist culture in the Mennonite Church. Gingerich Stoner is the director of interchurch relations for Mennonite Church USA.

The session largely focused on the question: "What is God's strategy for bringing *shalom*?" As Gingerich Stoner said, "God's project is *shalom*" or *amani*, a Swahili word for *shalom*, encompassing a peace among all things on earth.

Gingerich Stoner and Powell shared their own stories of significant congregations in their life, the effects of changing spiritual, social, political, cultural and racial climates in churches, and their visions for new expressions of church in the world. The session also included several small group table conversations about those same subjects. The presentation also included worshipping through singing and some large group sharing.

CDC Financial Update

Giving to Central District Conference from congregations has remained quite strong and, as of the end of March, was \$4,368 above the year-to-date amount targeted in our annual plan. Additional giving by individuals and families was \$5,380 less than the plan called for as of March 31 so overall, revenue is right in line with the plan. Staff has done well at controlling costs.

Expenses through March were \$13,577 less than the spending plan allows, so in summary, CDC is over \$12,000 "in the black" year-to-date.

We know that many congregations send their support on a quarterly basis, some after the end of the quarter so we expect congregational giving to be a bit lower in May and June. This highlights the need for some additional giving beyond the congregational giving if we are going to reach our goals by June 30.

We on your CDC Stewardship Committee are so very grateful for the strong financial support of our conference.

Roger A. Nafziger, treasurer