



Throughout the past year over 9,000 people experienced the hospitality, community, nature, and peace of Camp Friedenswald. To do this we **relied on the connection and support of Central District Conference congregations**. The following highlights provide a glimpse into the year and illustrate the interactions between Camp Friedenswald, Central District Conference, and its congregations.

- **2019 Winter Retreats** brought together Junior and Senior High youth and sponsors for weekends of worship, play and fellowship. Over 250 youth and sponsors attended representing eleven CDC congregations including Assembly, FMC Bluffton, Cincinnati, Columbus, Eighth Street, Grace, Hively Avenue, Maplewood, Milwaukee, Paoli, and Silverwood
- **Summer 2019** brought 490 youth and family campers (40% of youth campers came from CDC congregations) to explore the theme *Making Peace*. Summer staff came from five CDC congregations including Assembly, Columbus, Eighth Street, FMC Bluffton, FMC Champaign-Urbana, and Silverwood.
- We drew upon the rich resources from within CDC for **summer camp pastors** including Carrie Mast, FMC Bluffton; Matthew Yoder, Grace; Melissa Florer-Bixler, Raleigh; Michael Crosby, FMC Champaign-Urbana.
- September's annual **Women's Retreat** brought women together from across the conference. The weekend, planned by women from Illinois congregations, focused on *Bridging Barriers: Following the spirit*, with guest speaker Shannon Dycus, Eastern Mennonite University.
- Hospitality was extended to eight CDC congregations for their **annual church retreat** including Assembly, Emmaus Road, Faith, Hively Avenue, Open Table, Mennonite Church of Normal, Southside, and Silverwood.
- CDC congregations and their members help with tasks that are **vital to the running of camp**. Mentor/mentee pairs from Assembly spent a weekend volunteering at Friedenswald, and Bluffton University SERVE students spent their spring break completing a variety of tasks. A total of 740 days of time were given by individuals throughout the year, many from CDC congregations.
- Camp Friedenswald hosted the **CDC Leadership Council** and committee meetings in the spring and fall, as well as a pastor peer gathering for area CDC pastors.
- Nearly \$38,000 of **financial support** was given from congregations towards Camp's programs. Thank you for continuing to partner with Camp in our shared ministry and for giving generously!
- In September, **180 solar panels** were installed on the Dining Hall roof which will provide approximately 20% of Camp's electricity. Throughout the project connections with CDC congregations (especially those who have pursued solar for their church) provided encouragement in way of expertise, volunteer hours, and financial support. Thank you!

We need "thin places" where we can go to listen. Places where the people and the butterflies and the beeches [trees] collaborate to teach us about God's enduring love, which goes on breathing like the eternal lifecycle of a forest perpetually resurrected through death and new growth.

Reflection from Michael Crosby, Pastor, First Mennonite Church Champaign-Urbana, after serving a week as family camp pastor.