



## Welcome to the delegates from the CDC Board President

Welcome to Bluffton, Ohio for our 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. I want, first, to thank CDC staff, board and committee members who have given their time to shape the work of the Conference and this Annual Meeting.

Over the past two years, we've been guided by the theme Listen! Wisdom is Calling. I hope that, like me, you've continued to sink into that theme and have found that it deepened and enriched your faith journey.

I keep hearing the word "unprecedented" used to define the times we live in. During these times I've felt a call to be with people who care about being faithful followers of Jesus, people who know that Wisdom can most often be found as we gather with others also seeking a way forward.

Central District Conference is, I believe, a place that offers sustenance and comfort. Over the past year, I've been blessed to be part of conversations and meetings where Board members and Committee members worked alongside our amazing staff to discern how CDC can best resource congregations, pastors, individuals. A few of the places that discernment has led us are:

- Holding a Zoom Mid-Year Gathering so congregations could share their concrete experiences as they strive to become communities of refuge and hope
- Drawing on the experiences of our congregations to compile a list of resources on immigration that have been widely shared throughout MC USA
- Providing resources for pastors and other leaders through Healthy Boundary Training and preparation to use the Our Whole Lives curriculum
- Exploring ways to continue to enlarge our welcome and our commitment to Diversity, Equality and Inclusion at Camp Friedenswald and on our Board and Committees

I've heard more than one person talk about how much they appreciate Sarah's work in helping us tell and share our stories in the Conference and more broadly. Emma's deep understanding of CDC, our congregations and people, coupled with her wisdom and care for what we do and how we do it, steady us and keep us moving.

Matt's infectious enthusiasm brings new ideas, new ways to think about worship, new energy to our meetings and our life together. Doug continues to call us to express our care for each other and to provide vision and hope for the future we're crafting.

During these times where so much would seek to tear us apart, I am grateful to be church with all of you as we continue to seek to hear and follow Wisdom's leading.

Jan Lugibihl