



Laurelville Mennonite Church Center

Blessed to partner with Allegheny Mennonite Conference

IN 2011, LAURELVILLE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOHN DENLINGER introduced a staff theme—*Together We Can*—that focused on the power of working collaboratively. This theme has also manifested itself externally as Laurelville continues to develop stronger ties with its local community as well as the broader Church.

Consider these examples of collaboration and outreach taking place at Laurelville in the past year:

- We hosted 166 youth during six excellent weeks of summer camp. Derek and Becky King served as co-directors for what will likely be their final summer as Derek completes his seminary requirements.

Anna Weaver and Joseph Spory will assume their responsibilities as co-directors for *Climbing the Mountain: A Lifelong Journey*, the last in our four-part summer camp series exploring Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.

- The Mennonite Church USA convention, held in nearby Pittsburgh, created significant points of interaction with the broader church, perhaps highlighted best by the [Great White-water Connection](#). Nearly 200 Mennonite youth and sponsors came to Laurelville for one of these two Sr. High retreats

geared toward relationship-building and faith development, prompting us to schedule the program's return in summer 2012.

Another event associated with Pittsburgh 2011 was the Anabaptist Missional Project (AMP) gathering held at Laurelville prior to the convention. An emerging group of Mennonites came together to reimagine Anabaptist principles such as discipleship, peacemaking and community. It was exciting to witness the dialogue and energy the AMP participants brought here.

- In the fall, Laurelville welcomed forty-five individuals from across the country to the 10th class of the [Values-based Leadership Program](#). The six-day course—a collaboration

between several Mennonite agencies and organizations—continues to grow in its sphere of influence: since its inception, it has equipped more than 250 individuals to better serve as pastors, denominational agency staff, academic administrators, non-profit executives, business leaders and the like. Session I of the 2012-13 class will begin September 18-20, 2012.

- As part of an ongoing effort to strengthen community ties, Laurelville invited its neighbors in nearby Mt. Pleasant and Scottdale to a variety of special events, including a summer kick-off, a special concert with Reunion Vocal Band and a Christmas luncheon. As the year closed, we also announced plans for a Thursday morning coffee hour open to our neighbors.

2011 was indeed a year marked by working together. As 2012 gets underway, we hope to continue strengthening some of these relationships and seeking new ways we can serve our community and the broader church. Stay up to date on many of these efforts at Laurelville.org/breezes. 