

#1 – Leadership Council approves membership for Community Mennonite Church (Harrisonburg, VA)

Following a deliberative discernment process with Virginia Mennonite Conference (VMC), Community Mennonite Church (CMC) voted on November 24, 2019 to join Allegheny Mennonite Conference as a member congregation. CMC was released from VMC by a delegate vote which took place on February 1, 2020. The Allegheny Leadership Council, during their retreat on January 25, 2020, approved a recommendation from the Conference Minister to receive CMC as a member congregation, pending the delegate decision by Virginia Conference delegates. We recognize the pain and the opportunity when changing affiliation occurs, and we pray for the releasing conference, for the journey of the congregation, and for new relationships, as Allegheny seeks to encourage Jesus-centered, place-based ministry in the life of our member congregations. A memo to all delegates documenting the decision of the Leadership Council has been released. Plans are for CMC to be affirmed as a member congregation at Allegheny's Spring "Faith & Life Gathering" – March 7 at Hyattsville (Md) Mennonite Church.

**#2 – Allegheny delegates to meet for Spring Faith & Life Gathering – March 7, 2020**

Conference delegates are required to meet a minimum of twice each year for "relational accountability" according to Allegheny's organizational covenant. At this year's Spring assembly, two congregations will be affirmed as member congregations, which is the outcome of decisions and processes to transfer conference affiliation within Mennonite Church USA. The Leadership Council took action to approve both requests for membership at its annual retreat in January, pending the completion of processes within each congregation's conference of origin. Allegheny is committed to a centered-set model of faith, life and witness - where Jesus is the center, collaboration is the approach, and place-based ministry is the strategy. We value relationships. We value diversity. We value staying at the table. We are committed to an Anabaptist-Mennonite view of the scriptures. We are humbled by the decision of two congregations to join with us as a conference of Mennonite Church USA. Other agenda for the day include reports from staff, financial update and approval of next fiscal year's budget, update from International Guest House, and bylaw changes.

#3 – Registration is open for Spring Study

Applications are coming in for the May 4-7 Spring Bible Study for pastors and leaders at Laurelville. "Embodiment and Holism: Reading the Poetry of the Song of Songs" will focus on a reading of this book which leads to creation care, healthy views of body and sexuality, and an agrarian approach to life. Sign up today! See the website for registration materials.

**#4 – New Jr. Youth Retreat**

March 20-22, a new retreat is coming to Allegheny Conference; it's a Jr. Youth Retreat for ages 9-13. Youth and sponsors will gather together for fun, fellowship, service and spiritual growth at Laurelville. Check out the details on the Allegheny website.

#5 – Healthy Boundaries Training Scheduled

Every three years, persons actively serving as credentialed ministers of Allegheny Conference are required by Allegheny and Mennonite Church USA to receive "healthy boundaries" training. Michael Danner, Associate Executive Director of Church Vitality and Engagement, will be offering the training on Friday, July 31, prior to the conference annual assembly at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center. To register, call the conference office. There is a \$25 fee which includes the training booklet.