

# The Iowa Friend

*Iowa Yearly Meeting: Spreading Like Prairie Grass to Make the Love of Jesus Christ Known in the Heartland and Beyond*

June 2003

A Publication of Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends Churches

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## Q 350 Years of Quakerism Now What?

*By Tom Palmer, Pastor -  
Salem Friends Church*

It is good for us to look where we have been and seek God's face for the future. The early Friends movement was so mightily powered by God that we grew to 100,000 in our first fifty years! In my fifty plus years, we have a seen a steady decline. Iowa Yearly Meeting has gone from a high point of over 12,000 members in 1892 to less than 3,600 in 2003. What is the difference? What should we do about it?

I have just finished teaching another Friends History & Beliefs/Membership class in our church. Every time I do this I am amazed at how many people respond to our history. There is a recurring question in that class: "If the Friends of the 1600's could grow so much and impact their world for such great good, why can't we?" I believe we can. But we must get rid of our excuses and seek God first. Matt. 6:33.

I conducted a survey for my doctoral degree in 1996 about our yearly meeting church growth ideas. The results have been interesting. The number one reason for not starting new churches as gleaned from 132 surveys was a lack of financial resources. Now, I am convinced that God wants existing churches to grow, but as Iowa becomes more urban and culturally diverse, I am as equally convinced He wants us to plant new churches. We have an opportunity with the blessings of finances from the sale of the Cedar Rapids property to partially meet this challenge.

But money is not the key to the "Now what?" question. We would be foolish to assume that it is. We must get back to the basic question of "Do we want to grow?" Do we have the same (or even greater) passion for the lost that the early Friends had? Can we make outreach the number one focus of our planning, praying and paying?

When we were in Cedar Rapids, our hearts were often so discouraged by some who lacked the desire to be a part of a new Friends Church. Yes, it meant being in a smaller church for awhile where there weren't programs for the whole family. And it meant having to work hard

and not just attend. But a large movement of committed Friends (like those who moved from North Carolina in the 1800's due to the slavery question, or those who moved from Salem Friends northwestward to Pleasant Plain and beyond) would provide a mighty force for new outreach! We have not communicated this vision to recent generations, let alone to the young people today. Our brightest and best youth are not feeling called to locate in areas where they can be a part of starting anew Friends Church. Our pastors don't have a vision for church planting. Money in the Church Extension coffers will help but it will not solve the vision problem.



No simple answer can be given for the decline in numbers but we must seek God, ask His forgiveness and reclaim our mandate to share the Gospel in every way possible. I would love to discuss this issue further with you on line ([tapalmer203@hotmail.com](mailto:tapalmer203@hotmail.com)) or in person.

### MINISTRY CONFERENCE

August 6-9, 2003

THEME: "Committed & Unashamed"

Guest Speaker: Randy Quate

Children's Yearly Meeting Theme:

**C**ommitted

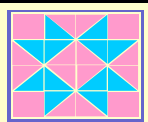
**U**nashamed &

**R**eally

**E**xcited

Wednesday Night: Bar-B-Q in the Park

Thursday Night: Youth Coffee-House



## Friendly Flashes

*"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of gold." 1 Peter 4: 9-10*

George Fox's message of "Christ alive, teaching each one, speaking in the stillness of our hearts – both individually and corporately. Every individual has worth; there is that of God in each, which imbues them with dignity, freedom, and responsibility before God."

The delivery of that message was sometimes called "publishing truth." This phrase brings to mind the use of words, spoken or written. While words are indeed one way we as Quakers express truth, our actions must reinforce a message that goes deeper than words.

Our actions must testify to the truth of our responsibility before God. At Middle River Friends in April, Dean and Freeda Johnson delivered a trailer for Iowa Friends Disaster Service. We are beginning the process of equipping this trailer with tools (new, professional quality), necessary to rebuild homes.

As warmer weather arrives, so too does the advent of tornadoes and flooding, leaving their wake of destruction. These forces of nature can wipe out a family or community, and leave behind despair and hopelessness.

Dean and Freeda of Friends Disaster Services enter into the darkness and sorrow of these times bringing with them the light of Christ that shines within. As that light begins to bring order out of chaos, the flame of hope begins to flicker in the lives of those experiencing darkness. As we equip our own Iowa trailer, we too can share the *truth* of Friends beliefs and practices as we rebuild homes and strengthen souls caught in the grip of shock and hopelessness. We restore dignity and freedom as we live up to our responsibility before God.

In *Imagination and Spirit* is a quote from an English Friend, William Littleboy: "God is above all the God of the normal. In the common facts and circumstances of life, He draws near to us, quietly, He teaches us in the routine of life's trifles."

Join with Iowa Friends Disaster Service and Friends Disaster Service as they restore broken lives to normal. Let us *publish truth* in deeds as well as words.

Our USFW women had an offering of \$872.80 to help with tools for the trailer. Dean and Freeda donated the \$300 honorarium to Iowa FDS. This is a great start!

I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at our Ministry Conference in August. Ann Davidson, the USFWI President will be our speaker for this year's celebration service on Saturday morning, and the Mission Banquet at noon. Please make plans to join us on Aug. 9.

REMINDER – Please send your Eliza Armstrong Cox biographies to Linda Burnett and your money to Irene Ritchie.

See you in August  
Peace & Grace, Linda Burnett



## Associated Committee of Friends on Indian Affairs

Connie Miner of LeGrand Friends Meeting, Victor and Brenda White, and Maurice Waubanasee of Mesquakie Friends Center were among those attending the 134<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Associated Committee of Friends on Indian Affairs (ACFIA) April 3-5 in Kokomo, Indiana. Sycamore Friends Meeting near Kokomo hosted the event.

During the meeting, missionaries from Oklahoma, Alabama and Iowa shared about their work with Native Americans. Pastor Chuck Townsend of Russiaville, Indiana, led the Friday evening worship service, encouraging conference attendees to keep the vision of the early Friends who began working with Native Americans as far back as the 1600s.

The ACFIA was established in 1869 by the Society of Friends out of its concern for the just treatment of Native Americans. Today, the organization is associated with six centers in the United States – Kickapoo Friends Center, Hominy Friends Meeting, Wyandotte Friends Meeting and Council House Friends Meeting in Oklahoma; MOWA Choctaw Friends Academy in Alabama; and Mesquakie Friends Center in Iowa.



## MEETING MOMENTS

**GRINNELL FRIENDS** - God has been with our church family and working in our midst at Grinnell First Friends. Recently three from our church family have gone home to be with the Lord: Nellie Van Almkerk, Denita Follette and Ervin Meredith. Also, Carol Ebert's mother, Francene Sears, passed away.

We have been blessed in having Dr. James Campau and wife, Shelby, from Vennard College, fill the pulpit for three Sundays in April to relieve our pastor, Todd Follette, since the death of Denita. Anthony Nieuwsma, our youth pastor, has been of much help during this time.

Easter early morning service was led by our pastor, followed by a breakfast served by our youth. Regular Sunday school and worship services followed.



## TRUSTEES SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

The Iowa Yearly Meeting Trustees have awarded the annual \$500 scholarship to Rachel Martin. In announcing the award, Les Clampitt, Trustees president, described Rachel as "an outstanding young woman with Christian maturity."

Rachel, in her second year as a student at Northwestern College, has a vision to be in ministry as a social worker. She is the daughter of Paul and Diane Martin of Riverside Friends meeting in Mason City, Iowa.

CONGRATULATIONS RACHEL!

friends from all across the yearly meeting in singing the great hymns of the church, to worship 'in one accord,' and to fellowship with old friends and new. Steve Pedigo's messages were truly a blessing." —Wilma Kaldenberg

"The services with Steve Pedigo were attended by the Holy Spirit and we were blessed. This weekend will be remembered as a landmark event in the lives of most, if not all, of those who were there." —Bill McCracken

"As a first timer to this event I was very impressed with the services, and the ease with which we went through the business meeting. The hospitality, the music—what a relaxing, fulfilling weekend! Many thanks to many new Friends." —Bill Bowers

"God was with us mightily! Steve's boldness brought new truth and conviction. What an amazing weekend! Thanks to Sturgeon Bay Friends for graciously hosting us." —Charlie Sander



"Hospitality provided by Winneshiek Quarterly Meeting folks was most gracious, wonderful reports during business session, inspirational music and messages, and fun bus ride made the trip to Sturgeon Bay a memorable blessing." —Ray and Clara Millett

"What a great experience! We have returned home with renewed vigor and enthusiasm. The hosts made us feel so welcome. Steve Pedigo's messages were an inspiration. The weather was perfect and the area so beautiful we'd like to return. Surely the Lord was in that place." —Frank and Addi Miller

"From past experience we knew that being a part of Winneshiek Quarterly Meeting would be a special blessing. The fellowship of the bus ride, the enthusiasm of the business sessions, the challenges of Steve Pedigo's messages, the great special music and congregational singing, and hospitality of Sturgeon Bay Friends made for a refreshing experience." —Del and Mary Ann Coppinger

"This has been the most spirit-filled, loving weekend, and in my years with Friends I consider it to be my best. The music was wonderful and exciting. The brass ensemble, special music and congregational voices blending. Steve Pedigo always speaks such a down-to-earth but powerful message." —Connie Miner

"The Lord blessed me in so many ways—the fellowship, the group singing in that beautiful old church (100 years). What a thrill to see us Quakers so fulfilled with Steve Pedigo's messages and time together. Door County trip was special." —Shirley Settle

"The first long trip taken with a spirited and spirit-filled group. Steve challenged us, the music uplifted us, and the food, fish boil and all, was great. Thank you, Lord, for letting us praise you and learn about you with such a group." —Barbara Rupe

"This was a spirit-filled weekend I will never forget. My first quarterly meeting. The fish boil was great and the tour. All of the services were wonderful. I will not forget the church or friendship. Thank God for this weekend."

—Kay Huffman



"We've been very blessed by this weekend. The blessing of new friendships, new understandings, new challenges, new strength in the faith. So much is new because we are new to the Friends. It was a joy."

—Dallas and Eleanor Gilreath



## A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

A momentous decision that will impact Iowa Yearly Meeting for years to come was made at the meeting of the Spring Body of Representatives in Sturgeon Bay, Wis., on April 26, 2003. The representatives approved the framework of a 5-year campaign to raise \$2,250,000 (endowed and limited) to carry out the ministry priorities of Iowa Yearly Meeting which are 1) Outreach, Missions, and Church Extension, 2) Pastoral Leadership, and 3) Camp Quaker Heights.

For everyone, questions surface about how to proceed and who will take charge of this huge project. However, as we remain connected to the Vine as branches in his vineyard we can be assured that his power and grace will free us to move forward to extend the Kingdom in our part of the world. May we unite in prayer for the entire project, that persons with energy and skill will come forward to provide leadership, and that all of us together will know the strength and joy that come from knowing we are being held in God's bountiful hands.

—Margaret Stoltzfus, IAYM Presiding Clerk



# SPRING BODY HI-LIGHTS - STURGEON BAY, WISCONSIN

Comments of those who rode the bus to Sturgeon Bay—

"I am thankful for those who heard and listened to God's voice that we should have Spring Body at Sturgeon Bay. We were brothers and sisters in Christ encouraging one another. Those of us from Iowa were treated as honored guests and those from Winneshiek quarter were honored that a long-time invitation had finally been accepted. God's children were



somewhat amazed at the glad reunion, the celebration of family. And God watched as the loving Father and said, 'I knew you loved each other; now you all have realized that to be a loving family takes prayer and time together.'" —Arlen Daleske

"The Quarterly Meeting and Sturgeon Bay's 100th anniversary of meetinghouse was a wonderfully spirit-filled event. The fellowship was great and the bus trip something that we need to do again. Thanks to all who made the bus trip a beautiful serendipitous one!" —Phil King

"It was great to fellowship with my brother and sisters in Christ. Their love and support brought much encouragement to me. God personally made himself known through Steve's messages, and I feel revived to continue my call to ministry." —Cindy Norman

"What a great experience this weekend has been. It has truly been a mountaintop experience. The fellowship with the people of Sturgeon Bay and our yearly meeting friends has been uplifting. Thanks to our great bus driver—we have had a safe ride. May God bless you everyone." —Howard and Delores Jones

"Comfortable bus, good driver, happy people, and beautiful countryside. What more could I ask for?" —Gladys Nicholls

"I enjoyed my trip very well. I saw the spirit of God moving in the church the two days I was there. Very nice people to go with, plenty to eat, and nice motel. I feel the hand of Jesus moving and shaking the church." —David Leach

"It was a great time of fellowship and spiritual nurture." —Karen Mendenhall

"This was a wonderful trip and the fellowship was uplifting. Great singing!" —Millie Jones

"This trip may be the beginning of a renewed Iowa Yearly Meeting. Winneshiek Quarter outdid themselves and the music, fellowship, and preaching have surely planted many seeds. The bus trip added to the pleasure." —Lyle and Edna Smith

"A very pleasant 3-day excursion into the history of the Winneshiek Quarter and Sturgeon Bay! This was our first trip with a yearly meeting group and we enjoyed it so very much. What a pleasant trip. Just one more wonderful memory!" —Hazel and Edwin Hadley

"We enjoyed wonderful Christian fellowship with others and our Savior." —Joyce Haller

"I wouldn't have missed this trip for anything." —Addie Bellenger

"This has been a good experience in spite of too much sitting and a little more listening than I normally enjoy. The singing has been the best." —Allen Bowman

"Thanks to the Friends of Winneshiek Quarter for their



gracious hospitality, the delicious food, wonderful music, and fellowship. The brass chorus was a special treat." —Evelyn Cook

"The trip was great - fun and fellowship. The challenge to all of us from Steve Pedigo during his 3 messages was to walk in the reality of the presence of God. The calling of God is to be His people that we may do His work." —Bill and Esther Griggs

"A wonderful weekend! The fellowship in the bus was terrific. God moved among us. The business meetings showed the love of God unite us in some of the most challenging plans and decisions we have made in some time. The times of worship touched our hearts with great music and messages. God has called us to walk close with Him and let Him shine through us." —Dave and Lori Elmore

"Just as the solid stone church of Sturgeon Bay Friends will hold up for another century, at least, the Rock of our Faith will sustain us, as we as a body move forward." —Wes Blanchard

"I wish all the people in Iowa Yearly Meeting could have been present. It was a wonderful experience to join with Quaker

# REKINDLE THE FLAME

by Paul Willis, Pastor - Valton Friends



The last weekend of April 2003, the Winneshiek Quarterly Meeting met in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Sturgeon Bay Friends Meeting. To celebrate this occasion, the Spring Body of Representatives chartered a bus and traveled to beautiful Door County Wisconsin to conduct its business in the church where the hymn "The Old Rugged Cross" was first sung in public.

The meetinghouse was blessed by the many voices singing praise to our Lord and the fellowship that followed around the meals. We were treated to a Door County traditional "Fish Boil" and a bus tour that took attendees on a most memorable trip around the area and down to the very edge of Lake Michigan.



Our speaker for the weekend was Steve Pedigo from the Chicago Fellowship of Friends. He challenged us in three messages to walk, knowing that God is already with us. Steve talked about doubt being the greatest enemy of faith and that doubt keeps us timid and fear can be traced to doubt.



He also challenged us to rekindle the flame that is within each of us and to know that the Kingdom of God is greater than we are. Steve's messages, and the prompting of the Holy Spirit, led to a time of praise and renewal as many went to the altar seeking cleansing and a desire for revival to sweep across the land.

Pastor Shepherd of the Sturgeon Bay meeting led the Friday night service, Keith Mardock of Hesper Friends led the Saturday service and Paul Willis of Valton Friends led the Sunday service.



We were treated to wonderful singing over the weekend by duets, quartets, and the "Bone Boys," a local group of trombone players. On behalf of the Winneshiek Quarterly Meeting, I would like to thank the Spring Body for holding its meeting in Sturgeon Bay and the way that business was conducted in a timely manner to allow attendees to enjoy the Door County area.

The Winneshiek Quarterly Meeting looks forward to our next meeting in Valton on the first weekend of October, and we invite everyone to come see the hillsides that the Lord will have all painted up for your enjoyment.



## STURGEON BAY VIDEO

The video of Spring Body Meeting, and Quarterly Meeting in Sturgeon Bay will be available in a couple of months. David Shepherd, from Sturgeon Bay Friends, will be finishing it as soon as he can, in between all his other commitments.

The video will include highlights of our time together ie: worship services and the great times of fellowship. The cost of the video is \$10.00. If you missed a chance to order a copy, you may do so by contacting Sturgeon Bay Friends. Please send the cost of the video and name and address to:

**Friends Community Church  
204 W. Maple St.  
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235.**

## The Iowa Friend (USPS 582-120)

P.O. Box 657

Oskaloosa, IA 52577

Email: [iaym@kdsi.net](mailto:iaym@kdsi.net)

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## VITAL SIGNS

**Nellie Van Almkerk, 91**, died March 19, 2003. She is survived by a son, Roger, a daughter, Doris, and many friends and relatives.

**Ervin Meredith, 73**, died April 5, 2003, at St. Francis Manor in Grinnell, Iowa. He was active at Grinnell Friends Church and the Yearly Meeting. He held a strong faith in God and a great love and devotion for his family. He is survived by his wife, Marilyn; his mother, Velva Meredith; four daughters, Shirley Milburn, Deborah Fath, Teresa Meredith and Christy Berkenbosh; 11 grandchildren; one great grandson; two sisters, Irma Jansen, and Lois Witsky; and one brother, Bruce Meredith. Pete Schuler of Lynnville officiated at the service.

**Francene Sears, 79**, mother of Carol Ebert, died March 19, 2003.

**Shirley Hoover, age 85**, died suddenly Wednesday morning, May 7, 2003—just four months and one day following the death of her beloved husband, Kenneth, Sr. Funeral services were held at LeGrand Friends Church with Pastor Ron Bryan officiating. Shirley is survived by two sons, many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and a sister-in-law, Esther Stoner of LeGrand. Shirley was an active member of LeGrand meeting all her married life and was responsible for bringing beautiful flowers from her garden to decorate the sanctuary.



**2003 IAYM Budget - \$144,000**  
**Received as of April 30, 2003 - \$45,616.00**  
**Total donations still needed to**  
**meet goal - \$ 98,384.00**



## HELP WANTED!



Do you like to visit with people you know and haven't seen for awhile? Do you like to eating a free lunch? Do you like to receive presents even when you are not expecting one? If you answered yes to these questions - then you are the person I am looking for. I need about 3-4 people to help me at the registration table on Wednesday and Thursday of this year's Ministry Conference. It's fun, it's easy, and lunch is free!

**Please call Daneta at the yearly meeting office if you would like the job! Telephone: (641) 673-9717 or Email: [iaym@kdsi.net](mailto:iaym@kdsi.net)**  
**LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU!!**



## USFW FALL RETREAT

The USFW Fall Retreat will be **October 11th** at Camp Quaker Heights. It was stated as being October 4th in the last newsletter. Please mark your calendars with this change.

Periodical Postage Paid at Oskaloosa, Iowa