



# The Iowa Friend

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

December 2003

A Publication of Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends Churches

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## GOD IS AWARE OF ALL THINGS

*By Ron Bryan, General Superintendent  
Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends*

As we consider the end of 2003 and beginning 2004 may I give to you all some of the motivation both that I am experiencing and looking forward to. First let us consider the words of Luke 1:37-38, "**For with God nothing will be impossible,**" then **Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."**.....From this account of the annunciation we see the promise that God truly is in control and never taken by surprise, then there is the remarkable willingness on the part of this young lady to be obedient.

I take comfort in knowing that God is aware of all things at all times, and I am challenged by the simple faith and obedient response of Mary. I also take counsel from this passage that in the work of the Church we can be sure that God is able to be aware of our needs and can be sure that if we listen correctly and respond in faith, there is an assurance that all things are possible.

Listen to words from Proverbs 8:32-35, "**Now therefore, listen to me, my children, for blessed are those who keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and do not disdain it. Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the post of my doors. For whoever finds me finds life, and obtains favor from the LORD**".

I look forward to being motivated by the ability of the Yearly Meeting to listen in faith and to be obedient in faith. We have made our plans after much listening and counsel. These plans include:

- Develop strong pastoral leadership
- New missions and outreach
- A fully utilized Camp Quaker Heights.

To that end we are planning a workshop for February 27, 28 to challenge, and inspire all of our churches. We are developing the plans of a new Capital Campaign that will strengthen our missions and outreach as well as our camp. I am confident that with faithful listening and obedience we shall accomplish that which God has laid before us.

Joyce and I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Blessed New Year!

- Be thankful in all things.
- Be in prayer at all times.
- Be ready and willing to respond.
- Be ready to serve.
- Be expectant.



## THE GIFT

*There was a gift for each of us  
Placed under the Tree of Life,  
By Him, whose birth we celebrate  
Amid the world's unrest and strife.  
This gift was withheld from no man,  
Some have left the package unclaimed.  
And some have carried this gift around,  
Accepted, but remaining unnamed.*

*The wrappings some have not removed,  
To discover the Treasure within,  
Others have failed to acknowledge Him  
Because of their bondage to sin.  
Each package is identical,  
In each is contained a scroll,  
"All that the Father hath is thine,"  
A thought that comforts the soul.*

*That Gift, born in a humble stall,  
Some two thousand years ago,  
Still walks and talks, as in the past,  
With us who live below.  
So take this precious treasured Gift,  
Accept it by faith today,  
Unwrap it, and celebrate with joy,  
At Christmas, and every day.*

*-Taken from Salem Friends Newsletter*





# Friendly Flashes

“And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. She gave birth to her first child, a son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the village inn.” Luke 2”6-7

For that moment in time, Mary and Joseph were homeless. Today it might read, “She wrapped him in rags and laid him in a cardboard box because there was no room for them in the shelters.” We have had our Thanksgiving dinners, where we over ate, surrounded by family and friends. Now we are decorating our homes, baking cookies and wrapping gifts for Christmas. We are truly blessed.

Now look around you with your eyes opened by Christ, see the great need in your country, your state, your hometown. The government has cut funding to welfare agencies, as the need for assistance increases. Jesus said, “Inasmuch as you do it unto the least of these, you do it unto me.” In the midst of all the holiday rush, might I suggest some alternatives to unneeded gifts and over rich desserts?

Check with your county DHS agency and adopt-a-family for Christmas. Locate your nearest food pantry and contribute what they are low on. Call the shelters; ask about needs, coats, hats, mittens and warm socks. Collect them around your church tree. It makes a great children’s message.

Our church is the site of the local food pantry. The shelves are about empty because of increased need. The scouting groups, elementary classes and the local churches are having food drives to replenish the shelves. Our Sunday school children chose to adopt-a- family for Thanksgiving; our USFW adopted a family for Christmas. My office is full of winter coats to be delivered to the agency in need of coats. Two bags of travel size soaps, shampoo and conditioner was delivered to a woman’s shelter in Des Moines.

None of these gifts created a burden for the giver, but they bless the receiver more than we can know. If none of these appeal to you, Lugulu and Choctaw need layettes; some times baby items are needed by local hospitals, to send home with new mothers too young and too poor to have the means to provide for their babies.

Our church secretary put this phrase in our November 9<sup>th</sup> bulletin. “It’s nice to know that when you help someone up a hill, you are a little nearer the top yourself.

I’ll see YOU at the top!  
Blessings of the season - Linda Burnett

## We Pray For Children

who sneak popsicles before supper  
who erase holes in math workbooks  
who can never find their shoes

### **We pray for children**

who stare at photographers from behind barbed wire  
who can't bound down the street in a new pair of sneakers  
who never "counted" potatoes  
who are born in places we wouldn't be caught dead  
who never go to the circus  
who live in an x-rated world

### **We pray for children**

who bring us sticky kisses and fists  
of dandelions  
who hug us in a hurry and forget their  
lunch money

### **We pray for children**

who never get dessert  
who have no safe blanket to drag behind them  
who watch their parents watch them die  
who can't find bread to steal  
who don't have any rooms to clean up  
whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser  
whose monsters are real

### **We pray for children**

who spend all their allowance before Tuesday  
who throw tantrums in the grocery store and pick at their food  
who like ghost stories  
who shove dirty clothes under the bed  
who get visits from the tooth fairy  
who don't like to be kissed in front of the carpool  
who squirm in church or temple and scream in the phone  
whose tears we sometimes laugh at and  
whose smiles can make us cry

### **And we pray for those**

whose nightmares come in the daytime  
who will eat anything  
who have never seen a dentist  
who aren't spoiled by anybody  
who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep  
who live and move but have no being

### **We pray for children**

who want to be carried  
and for those who must  
for those we never give up on  
and for those who don't get a second chance

For those we smother and for those who will grab the hand of anybody kind enough to offer it.



- Author Unknown



# MEETING MOMENTS

This has been an eventful summer at **Motor** church.

Dale Schwechel was our guest speaker on June 1 while our pastor, Keith Smith, spoke and assisted with Little Fry camp. Also assisting at Little Fry were the Motor Puppets, Randi McCormick, Cathy Miller, Jessica Putz and Chad Smith.

During the summer camping season, Motor had 25 campers at the various sessions and 12 individuals that volunteered at different times. Several of these individuals were there for more than one camp session. The campers who attended told of their experiences during a worship service in August.

VBS was held June 29<sup>th</sup> through July 2<sup>nd</sup>. The theme was "God's Kids", as the teachers shared stories about children from the Bible and how they served God. There were 26 children from the Motor community enrolled. Several volunteers helped with crafts, games, kitchen and music.

Eugene and Frances Wolfley spoke at the morning worship on July 6<sup>th</sup> telling of their missionary experiences in Jamaica.

The Motor ladies provided noon meals for a group of Habitat for Humanity workers for 3 days while they were building a home in Milo. Lyle Smith of our congregation has been a part of the Habitat for Humanity for several years. Lyle was also recognized at Iowa Yearly Meeting sessions for his participation and leadership in the various programs of the local churches of which he and Edna have been a part; as well as his leadership contributions to Iowa Yearly Meeting, Camp Quaker Heights, and Habitat for Humanity.

Thirty-five of our congregation attended a family camp at Camp Quaker Heights on September 5 & 6. Ron Bryan was the resource person for the group. On that Saturday, a number of the campers pooled their efforts in painting the former house of the camp director.



In October, the young people of the church and their parents enjoyed a hayride and wiener roast; Wes Blanchard gave the sermon at the October 19<sup>th</sup> worship service; and Linda Johns coordinated a hymn sing and various special numbers for our service on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

Stan and Karen Bauer showed slides and told of their experiences during their six months as interim administrators of Friends Theological University in Kenya.

**Helping to impart a congregational vision is not the same as working out a strategic plan or writing a mission statement. It is more a matter of "seeing" things the way they are intended to be, and can be, and will be, by God's grace. What can a pastor do to help clarify and empower this vision?**

--- Turn Around Strategies for the small church



# Ministry Conference February 27-28, 2004

**Mark Your Calendars Now!!!**

## TURN AROUND STRATEGIES for the SMALL CHURCH

**WHAT? A Ministry Conference for the Friends of Iowa Yearly Meeting, presented by the Pastors' Association in conjunction with the Board on Church Extension**

**WHERE? College Avenue Friends Church,  
Oskaloosa, Iowa**

**WHEN? February 27 & 28, 2004**

Look for your registration in the November (last month) Iowa Friend. Can't find it? - call the IAYM office and speak to Daneta (641-673-9717)

*Dear Friends,*

*Thank you for all your prayers, love and support over the past months. The flower arrangement you sent to honor our mom, Ethel Worthington, was beautiful.*



*Your thoughtfulness is so appreciated.  
Sincerely,  
The Worthington Family*

### General Secretary, New York Yearly Meeting

NYYM seeks an active, spiritually centered Friend to serve as General Secretary with overall care for a diverse yearly meeting. Qualifications include strong interpersonal and conflict-resolution skills, demonstrated written and oral skills, experience in personnel management, and familiarity with the uses of computer technology to enhance effectiveness and communications.

This is a full-time position with a flexible work schedule including much travel and frequent weekend work. Applicants can obtain additional information from:

Helen Garay Toppins, NYYM Administrative Secretary, 15 Rutherford Place, New York, NY 10003, office@nyym.org, 212-673-5750.

NYYM is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Application deadline is January 31, 2004. If possible, please respond by e-mail with a résumé and a letter explaining why you are interested in the job.

## The Iowa Friend (USPS 582-120)

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## VITAL SIGNS



### DEATHS -

**Maudie Applegate**, 92, life-long member of Bear Creek Friends, passed away on November 13th. Funeral services were held at Bear Creek on November 17<sup>th</sup>. Maudie's sons, Donald Applegate, and Bear Creek pastor, Dallas Gilreath, officiated at the service. Maudie leaves to remember her life with one son, Donald, one daughter, Jean Gilbert, their spouses, and 3 grandchildren. Maudie's presence in her church and community will be greatly missed by all those who knew and loved her.

**Mina Josephine (Griggs) Burt Parker**, passed away on November 17, 2003, at the age of 92. Funeral services and a celebration of her life were held November 22, 2003 with Phil King and Bill Griggs (also her nephew) officiating. She was a non-resident member of First Friends Church in Marshalltown and also attended St. John's Methodist Church in Davenport. She loved genealogy and spent many years collecting information. She was very active in the Friends church in Marshalltown and donated money to purchase bible for the 4<sup>th</sup> graders. Several nieces and nephews survive her.

### MARRIAGE -

**JOSHUA PAUL CROOKSHANK** and Natalia Page Benenate were united in marriage Saturday, December 6, 2003, at First Christian Church in Ames, Iowa. Joshua is the son of Dan and Denise Crookshank, LeGrand Friends Meeting.

*Hello from Elektrostal, Russia!*

*I read the "news of interest" concerning the Bible in Chinese and Arabic, and am happy to report that Friends have made a contribution to the publication of a contemporary-Russian New Testament, "Joyful News". It has been out a couple of years, but I finally got my hands on a copy while visiting the All-Russian Union of Evangelical Christians/Baptists in Moscow, and a second edition has just hit the streets. It seems like a wonderful translation. Valentina Kuznetsova was the translator. Iowa Yearly Meeting's United Society of Friends Women made a gift of some \$800 or more toward this translation about five years ago, which was given to the Russian Bible Society's translation project through Friends House Moscow.*

*- Johan Maurer*

## DID PEOPLE IN THE BIBLE HAVE CHRISTMAS?

Christmas is a celebration of the birth of Jesus. People did not celebrate Christmas before Jesus was born. It was many years later that Christians decided to celebrate Jesus' birth each year with a special holiday. They chose December 25. That day is probably not the exact day Jesus was born, but that's OK. What matters is that we have a day to remember the day Jesus was born and to celebrate that he came to save us from our sins.



*"An behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus."*

*--Luke 1:31 (RSV)*

*May the Peace and Happiness  
of Christmas be yours today  
and every day throughout  
the coming New Year.*



*Merry Christmas!  
Ron, Ric and Daneta*

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