

THE IOWA FRIEND

Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends

Every Organization has a Purpose

“Mission True organizations understand that remaining true means they must think about Mission Drift in their boards, leaders, staffs, donors, metrics, programs, organizational culture, language, and their commitment to working with the church. Organizations drift when they underestimate the importance of any of these areas. Mission True organizations believe that throwing up our arms and floating in the strong currents of Mission Drift is not an option. Remaining in course won’t be easy, but we will not regret it” (Horst, Peter Greer & Chris, Mission Drift: The unspoken crisis facing leaders, charities, and churches, 2014, p.66).

Every organization has a purpose. Some of the purposes are stated and others unstated, but each organization has a reason for functioning. Decisions are made according to that purpose and our success or effectiveness is measured against the pursuit of that purpose. There may be no banner with the purpose proudly displayed, but something within each organization drives its methods. Have you ever stopped to ask, “What is the purpose of our Church?” and, “Is what we say and what we do the same?” Often, we can recite the “right answers” to these questions and yet the fruit of our pursuits may reveal a different target.

I read this a number of years ago and failed to cite the originator of the statement:

When it is functioning properly, the Church of Jesus Christ is the hope of the world. It is the only organization that has ever existed that is capable of healing broken lives, pointing people to God, and fulfilling the deepest longings of our souls. It is in the Church that the rejected find acceptance, the sinners receive forgiveness, and the lonely experience love.

This is a great statement of what The Church should be. Did Jesus have a “mission statement?” I think he did. Jesus states in Luke 4: 18-19:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

When Jesus called His early disciples, He said, “Come, follow me and I will make you fishers of men.” Before His ascension, He told them, “Go into all the world and make disciples” and “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you to be My witnesses.” Later we are told in 2 Corinthians 5:20, “We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.” Jesus passed the baton of His work to His Body, the Church. His purpose becomes our purpose and our job is to align our agenda with His.

As individual followers of Christ, we are a part of His Body and we have a function to fulfill. When parts of our body do not work properly, it is considered handicapped. When parts of the church body do not function properly, our church body is handicapped. I find great comfort that Jesus healed the blind, the lame, and the dead. Jesus started with twelve disciples and we are recipients of this life-changing message. In your local meeting, start with who and what you have, focus on the biblical purpose to bring the good news to hurting hearts, pray for seeds to become fruitful harvests, and work hard to make His body more healthy.

Tom Showalter ~ General Superintendent

CHURCH IN ACTION

The Greater Richland Area

"Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." -Romans 15:5-6 (KJV)

Unity by: Tim Hadley



An interesting word that challenges believers to lay down their own worldly agendas and doctrinal differences to work together for the cause of gospel of Jesus Christ. The Friends churches in the greater Richland area have done just that in the months of June and July.

Many churches host an annual Vacation Bible School. What makes the Richland area unique is that it isn't one or even two churches hosting together, all five churches in the area come together to give the children of their region an unforgettable encounter with Jesus. Making things even more special is that three of the five churches are Friends.

Without the support of all of the local congregations each church would be competing against the other for the same children, using valuable resources of time and money that could be used to further the gospel in other arenas. Beyond the fiscal stewardship, is the talent and gifts that come together.

Each member whether they be Methodist or Catholic, brings a different skill set. Some are gifted in music, others in arts and crafts. Whatever the gifting, it allows them to be used in the area they are most suited for kingdom work because there are more workers to help bring in the harvest. Seeing the whole body operate as one is almost as exciting as seeing the smiles on all of the children's faces who reap the rewards of this unity.

Extending unity, the Richland area churches also came together for an Ecumenical service in July. Much like Vacation Bible School, the service utilized the talents of each church in the area. One church provided music, another drinks, another games for children and so on. Pastor Kevin Rohr gave a great message on being the branch to Jesus who is our vine. As you looked at all of the "branches" of Christ represented that morning one couldn't help but realize how critical it is that we all come together as one to bear fruit in our community.

The event was held in the newly constructed Richland Pavilion. How fitting that the very first community event held in this structure was rooted in unity in a time when everything around us in the political and social realm says division.

Service was concluded with a shared meal by all the churches in which each person contributed a dish. It really had the feeling of the churches described in the book of Acts as groups intermingled to break bread together.

I don't describe all of this to you to lift this community over another, but rather to inspire and encourage you to continue to work with your neighbor for the cause of Christ. We could spend all day splitting hairs over our differences or we could choose to unite over a common goal of lifting one another up. It really is our choice. I hope you'll choose unity. We're together on earth, we'll be together above.

WANTED

Articles to share in a series called
"Church in Action"

Does your local meeting have an "action" article to share in future newsletters?

Please submit to:

office@iaym.org

Let's encourage each other in sharing the Love of God in our local communities!

Stepping into the Mess:

Peace and Social Concerns
Wings of Refuge

Have you ever watched a movie that profoundly impacted you? So much so that God wouldn't seem to let you let it go?

Joy Fopma did. The documentary *Nefarious: A Merchant of Souls* opened her eyes to modern sex slavery around the world. Joy was already a survivor of sexual abuse who had worked her way through trauma with Jesus' help. As she saw the plight of other young girls and boys being exploited in this way, her response was, "What can I do?"

Trafficking is a disgusting game of supply and demand, and Iowa is a prime location for it due to interstates 35 and 80, a major hub of transcontinental travel. A common strategy for exploitation involves gaining the trust of young boys and girls seeking a career in modeling or through internet chat rooms. Truck stops and online ads often connect the exploiter with the exploited. One of the most heartbreaking statistics is that the average age of a trafficking victim is 12 years old. Compared to surrounding states, Iowa ranks about in the middle of trafficked victims. According to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, by November of 2016, 31 cases of sex trafficking were reported. That number is down from 36 in 2015. In 2016, Illinois reportedly had the highest number of trafficked victims, 97, while South Dakota had the least, eight. It is hard to believe that these things are happening in rural American towns.

Joy began learning more about human trafficking and founded a faith-based anti-trafficking non-profit called Wings of Refuge. Its goal is to provide a place for victims of human trafficking to heal, be counseled, pursue opportunities for education, and be connected with a local church. Before Wings of Refuge came on the scene, there were no beds for human trafficking victims to be found in Iowa. Rick Bachman, a former law enforcement officer, has recently joined the Wings of Refuge board to share with it some hard won wisdom and experience of serving the ends of justice in Iowa.

Supporting Missionaries Around the World- Missions Board Update

We are so thankful for the generous gifts that have been given to support Missions. With great joy, we are sharing these funds with missionaries from Iowa who are serving around the world. During the July Missions Board Meeting, the board decided to provide a one-time gift of \$1000.00 to missionaries with Iowa roots who are serving around the world. Those include Nick and Becky Whitehead, serving in Costa Rica, Nathan and Brianna serving in Cambodia, Dan and Tracy Whitehead serving in Ecuador, Sam and Becky Barber serving in Belize, Jay and Amor Hallowell serving in Philippines and Sarah and Robert Radcliffe also serving in Cambodia. In addition, we are providing a one-time gift of \$4000.00 to Mac and Berny McDonald at Mesquakie Friends. We are also providing Oscar Mmbali with \$70/month support for 3 years for a total of gift of \$2520.00.

Please join us in praising God for these abundant gifts we could distribute to those serving in the various missions. Continue to hold our missionaries up in prayer that they may be encouraged in their various ministries.

GOD at WORK ~ Mary Glenn Hadley

Defending religious freedom is a focus of Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF). A Trinity Lutheran church's preschool was rejected from a state program that provides grants to purchase a rubberized playground surface solely because it is run by a church. The matter was taken to the Supreme Court where ADF argued that the government is constitutionally required to treat religious organizations equally. Can the government discriminate against religious organizations, thus treating people of faith—and especially our children—as second-class citizens? The Supreme Court ruled in favor of Trinity Lutheran Church.

ADF Action Update, July 2017

BEING KNOWN

Scott Biddle ~ Director of Youth and Young Adults

As I think about our churches, camps and retreats, and the individual conversations I have had, and problems I have had to work through over the last year, there is a word that seems to pop into my head that we have got to understand, “known”.

Our Churches are struggling with bringing students and young adults into our churches, or keeping them there. We don't know what to do with them when they come, don't know how to talk with them, don't know how or if we should accommodate them. We like to see them there, but our fear, both real and unfounded, keeps us from approaching hard subjects with them, and in fact, keep us from starting a real conversation at all.

Our students and young adults are struggling with being in a church but not part of it. They are struggling with fitting into a place that might recognize and want them there, but do not feel wanted there. They are struggling with finding their place in the world, with who they are and how people see them. And yet, most of them do not feel known or loved. They are dealing with peer pressure, identity, self consciousness just like we all did. But they are experiencing it in a world that has all the info you could ever want, both real and fake, within a few keystrokes on the internet. They are bombarded with information overload, constant feedback on social media and never being able to get away from the pressures around them. They are lacking in real relationships and are lonely.

Our young adults in the workplace are busy, alone and looking for real connections. In our churches they feel the burden to keep the church going, given “responsibility” without being given a voice to actually contribute.

There is a line in a video/production by Chris Kinsley called Woman of No Distinction that says, “To be known is to be loved and to be loved is to be known.” It is written from the standpoint of the woman at the well as she tells of her experience with meeting Jesus.

It is a line that has stuck out to me and has recently been thrown back at me through a sermon. As we think about where our churches are at, where they have been and where we want them to be, I want to ask a simple question, do you and the people in your congregation feel “known”? This is something more than just having

someone come up and say hi to you on a Sunday morning. It goes beyond a conversation about the weather over snacks between Sunday School and church. It is digging deeper into who someone is, which is both scary and delightful at the same time. It is taking the time to sit down and ask more personal questions. It is being available.

Timothy J. Keller in The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God says, “To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot like being loved by God. It is what we need more than anything. It liberates us from pretense, humbles us out of our self-righteousness, and fortifies us for any difficulty life can throw at us.”

Kids, students and young adults need a connection point, real people, to be interested in them. They need to have adults, of all ages, speak into their lives. They want to hear your stories, they want your advice, they want someone to listen to them and help in listening to God for them. They want to be connected to people that know them, and that know God.

Being Known is not just for those that are in our churches already, but those that are still looking for something real in the world. They are in our neighborhoods, schools, families and the restaurants that we eat. We have the opportunity to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19) starting in our local meetings and our communities. All it starts out with is a friendly hello and then both being known, by both them and you, and the chance of knowing God in a deeper way.

The President of Youth Leadership, Tiger McLuen, states that our young people need to have a ratio of 5:1. 5 adults, outside of their families, multi generational, for each student, that will love them and know them. People that will take time with them. He claims this is one of the areas of big impact.

If there is any way I can come and help train, equip, pray and/or give ideas and vision in this process, please give the office a call and we will work something out. I am here to help the local church reach their communities of teens and adults to be part of the Kingdom of God.

Kaleo Academy Testimony *by: Kodi Dailey*

A few weeks ago, my mentor and I started our year-long journey with the Kaleo Academy, a training experience for high school students through theology, mentoring, service, and calling. You kind of start off going to a Theology (the study of God) Camp in Kansas. It was a super cool and neat experience.

While we were there we took part in classes with some of the coolest teachers. One teacher in particular, who taught *Bible Interpretation* shared with us something that has really challenged me since he said it. He shared with us that he reads the Bible three times in one year, every year, and he's been doing it for long time (I don't remember how many years).

I was super challenged by this because there have been days, even weeks, where I haven't even thought to pick my Bible up. I just leave it in its little backpack carrying case or on the shelf, wherever it may lie. This teacher only spoke about it for a few seconds, but it has stuck with me up until this day.

This challenged my mentor and I so much that we decided that day, June 27, 2017, that we would read the entire Bible and finish it by December 31, 2017. That's 187 days to read 66 books, 1,189 chapters, and 1,586 pages from my Bible.

Today I'm in Deuteronomy, and I have 166 days to go with about 62 chapters to go.

I can honestly say I am probably the proudest of myself I have ever been, and the happiest with my self spiritually. Sometimes it feels like a hassle, but I love purposely taking time out of my day to spend with God and get to know my Creator.

—
So now, I challenge you to do the same. Pick up your Bible, dust it off, and get reading. Make a 40 day commitment to read the Bible everyday. Make a commitment to read the Bible in a year. Do whatever it is you want to do to become proud of yourself and get to know your Heavenly Father.

I know for some people this can be an obstacle they don't want to face, so I've thought up 5 {good} reasons you should/need read:

When you don't read the Bible, you're pleasing the enemy because he doesn't want you to take part in any of it. Who would you rather please?

This is God's love letter to you. If someone wrote you love letters and you loved that person would you read those letters or just let them pile dust?

Let's face it. Sometimes life sucks. The Bible will give you plenty of encouragement to keep going.

It is the most popular and the most scrutinized book ever written. So basically it's the coolest book of books you could ever read.

You could read the Bible a million and one times, and still get a different takeaway each time, because the Word of God knows you. **What other book have you read that can read you?**

Partners In Stewardship Webinar

Sept 12 at 7 PM and
Sept 14 at 1 PM

Thank you to the congregations who were able to be represented at the "IAYM and Everence: Partners in Stewardship" workshop recently at Iowa Yearly Meeting. This workshop described the breadth of services Everence offers congregations and individuals in their efforts to integrate their faith and finances.

Recognizing that there were many excellent workshops to attend at IAYM, we have invited Everence to offer the workshop again in a Webinar format. These will be offered on September 12 at 7 p.m. and September 14 at 1 p.m. If your congregation was not represented in attendance at IAYM, we would encourage both your pastor and one or more people from your stewardship team and/or church council to attend. If your congregation was represented, you may still find it helpful to ask other leaders from your church to take part.

Watch for more information that will allow you to register for the webinar. You can watch it from the comfort of your home on your computer or compatible mobile device.

Sponsored by Friends Development Fund.



Be safe!



Be kind!

Be helpful!

**Bee thinking about USFW
Fall Retreat, October 7,
9:30 am - 2:30 pm, at Mid-
dle River Friends Church.
Ladies, please come and
bring a guest.**

THE IOWA FRIEND

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- September 5, 12, 19, & 26: Camp Quaker Heights **Work Days**
- September 8-10, 2017: **Family Camp** at Camp Quaker Heights.
- October 6-8: **Man Camp**
- October 7: **U.S.F.W. Fall Retreat** @ Middle River Friends
- October 13 & 14: Fairfield Friends Battle Ready **Men's Conference**
October 15-17:
Pastor's Conference @ CQH. Details still being worked out.
- October 26-28: **FUM General Board** meeting in Richmond, IN
- October 27-28: **All Boards Retreat** @ CQH

2018

- **January 10-17, 2018: Quaker Men-Friends Response Team Trip to Belize**
- February 17, 2018: **Quaker Men's Winter Banquet**
- March 3, 2018: **Board on Coordination (BOC)** Meeting
- March 24, 2018: **Spring Body Meeting** (Location to be Determined)
- July 18-22, 2018: **Youth and Young Adult Board** sponsored trip to Chicago



**UPCOMING
EVENTS**