

The Iowa Friend

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December 2020

The Light is Coming

Tom Showalter, Superintendent

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness...it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way. . . ." So begins Charles Dicken's classic work, A Tale of Two Cities.

These words could also have been spoken about our time. In many ways, we are experiencing the best times the world has ever known. At the same time, and in other ways, these are the worst of times.

The same was true of the time just before the birth of Christ. Despair and hope were both residing in the hearts of the people of Israel.

But the promise of the prophets that God would send the Messiah into the world gave hope. Holy longings filled their hearts. They clung to the words of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah: "For to us a child is born, to us, a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace, there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this" (Isaiah 9:6-7).

Into this good-times-bad-times-world, Jesus came. There was a sense that God was about to do something wonderful. God's good news was coming into a bad-news world.

The first thing we need to understand: **God's good news is greater than the world's bad news.** John described Christ's coming as light coming into the darkness, and he said that the darkness could not extinguish it. Darkness is negative. It is simply the absence of light. It has no power of its own. All the darkness in the world cannot extinguish a single candle.

God's light has come into the world to overcome the darkness, and the darkness is helpless against it. It can only create illusions. Light helps us to see what is real. Light is greater than darkness and God's good news is always greater than the world's bad news. There is not even any comparison.

But the second thing I would like to point out is: **God's good news transforms the world's bad news.** Because God's good news is greater than the world's bad news, it is able not only to overcome it, it can even transform it. The Bible says, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). God works in the good things and even the bad things because he can transform all things.

The only power that darkness has is to convince some that there is no light. Darkness takes hope away. Light brings hope. The Word of God says, "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. . . . For to us a child is born, to us, a son is given. . . ." (Isaiah 9:2,6).

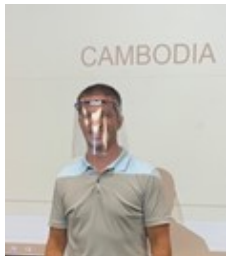




December Mission Highlight

Nathan & Brianna Martin

Serving with OMF



Warm greetings to each of you!

Even with Covid's limitations, this fall has been an exciting time. During October, I had the pleasure of connecting with the Follette family in Kansas and leading Barclay's missions conference. The conference went well and I loved my time with Barclay students. This month, I made a fascinating mini "trip to Asia" via Minneapolis with a new ministry partner named Rick Davis. Rick has been involved with ministry to Asians for over thirty years and currently runs a short-term mission trip and mission training experience called Engage Global. Utilizing the multi-cultural resources of the Twin Cities, he gives visitors an experience of Asia right here in the Midwest. We stopped together at an Asian market that looked like an aged factory from the outside. Once we opened the doors, however, the vivid colors of Southeast Asia rushed into focus. Picture an Asian county fair, with masks. One vendor was



selling cookware and spoons made out of metal from downed aircraft in Laos. A mess of roots, bark, and stalks lined the stall of another man, which I recognized as "forest medicine" for making tea. For lunch, I enjoyed fried pork belly, purple Lao sticky rice, and a spicy mango salad doused in a bit too much pungent fish sauce. My family was thrilled when I came home with Asian mangos and a "Kroch Talong" for Brianna (a pomelo-a giant cousin of a grapefruit). A true taste of Asia!

The second leg of our trip was to Wat Munisotaram, an enormous Cambodian Buddhist temple. It was striking to find this large piece of Cambodia right in the middle of the Minnesota countryside. My heart was stirred walking around the temple grounds. The large golden Buddha statues surrounded by offerings were all too familiar. The Wat is impressive in stature, but it is also a place for the worship of idols and ancestors. The Minneapolis/St. Paul region is home to an estimated 66,000 Hmong people, mostly from Laos, and also home to around 8,000 Cambodians. It is challenging to travel to those places to experience their culture and ways, but there I was, almost transported back to Cambodia.



This kind of experience brings excitement as I look forward to this coming year. Around the world there are new restrictions, but restrictions have also given us an opportunity to be creative. I cannot easily take a team to Cambodia right now, but helping groups taste, see, and understand Asia more deeply is still possible. This kind of experience can birth and renew missions awareness and bring focus in prayer...without the jet lag. :)

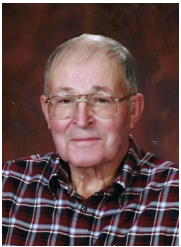
Another opportunity I would like to invite you to are the weekly prayer times for unreached peoples. I will be leading a prayer time Saturday afternoon on December 5th for the Khmer. If you are interested more in Engage Global or a missions prayer time, email me at nathan.martin@omfmail.com or 641-530-8532. Thank you for your partnership in the gospel as we seek to enjoy God's grace and be a blessing to the nations!

Yours in Christ, Nathan



Charlotte Marie was born April 13, 1939 in Indianola, Iowa to Orlo and Mary Sargent Thompson. She was raised in Indianola and attended school there graduating Indianola High School in 1957. She loved to drive and while cruising around in her Dad's '56 Oldsmobile she met a young man named Jay Mosher. A few short months later on November 28, 1957 they were married and blessed with five children: Jayne, Janna, Jeanet, Joel, and Jon.

Charlotte passed away November 30, 2020 at the age of 81 surrounded by family.



David Edward Jones, 86, of rural Pleasant Plain, died peacefully at home, surrounded by family, on Tuesday December 1, 2020. Dave was born in Fairfield February 6, 1934, to Bruce Edmund and Mabel Addie Lincoln Jones.

Dave married Janet Arleen Parcell on Easter Sunday, April 14, 1968, and they enjoyed more than 50 years together. Dave was a lifelong farmer, a true steward of the land. Mechanically inclined, he enjoyed the challenge of maintaining and repairing equipment around the farm. Dave is survived by his wife, Janet, and their children, Jim (Melisse) Jones and Judy Jones.



John Philip Mann left his earthly home and entered the loving arms of his Savior on November 29, 2020. Born the youngest of three boys to Wallace and Eileen (Gross) Mann on May 4, 1951 in Sturgeon Bay, John lived his 69 years on the family homestead. He married

Georgene in 1973, at Friends Church in Sturgeon Bay, and welcomed two children, Jason and Jennifer, in the following years. John's love for Georgene was so evident to all those around them, and their marriage of 47 years a testament to that deep love and commitment.

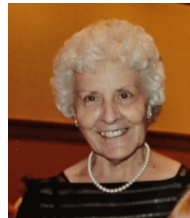
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We can live with anger and negativism.
We can give in to pessimism and despair.
We can look for the worst, and fail to believe the best.
It is so easy to believe in the power of darkness.

But you have to be looking for good news if you are going to find good news. You have to believe that God brings the best of times in the middle of the worst of times. You have to receive the good news into your heart and make it a part of your life. It is so easy to live in the darkness. We can live as though there is no good news — only bad.

That being said, I believe the message is still timely for 2020. Merry Christmas!! Light has come into the world!

This writing comes from a message I shared in 2008 (much of it was probably borrowed, but in 2008, I did not cite my work very well or do my own research when writing or preaching...sorry to the original authors).



Gladys M. Lane, 88, of New Providence, Iowa passed away on Sunday, November 29, 2020. Gladys was born on February 21, 1932 in Marshalltown, Iowa to Elmo and Mildred (Halstead) Lutes. Following school, she married the love of her life John Lane on August 6, 1950 at the Bangor Liberty Friends Church. The couple moved to New Providence where Gladys helped on the farm.

Those left to cherish her loving memory are her children Linda (Kevin) Miller, and Steven Lane; grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband John, siblings Ted Thomas, Barbara Meyers, Harry Lutes, Freida Peterson, and Carroll Lutes.

Dates for the 2021 Quaker Camping season....**SAVE THE DATE**

Little Fry Camp – June 11-13

Middle School Camp – June 13-17

High School Camp – June 18-23

Elementary Camp – June 24-27

"The Body of IAYM exists to exalt Jesus Christ by becoming fruitful disciple-makers and expressing God's love by serving all people (John 15:1-17)."

Camp Quaker Heights

In this crazy 2020, Camp Quaker Heights has had limited use. As we approach the end of the year, would you consider making a donation to Camp Quaker Heights to offset the losses for 2020? Thank You!!



Make a donation today to:

Camp Quaker Heights

22605 V Avenue

Eldora, IA 50627

Upcoming Dates:

- Superintendent Tom Showalter will be away from the office from December 18-25 & December 28-January 4.
- Office closed December 24 & 25 and January 1st.
- January 9th, 2021: **World Café Multiplication Discussion** 9 am via Zoom.



- January 23, 2021: **Board on Coordination (BOC) meeting**
- April 9-13, 2021: **Pastor's Retreat & Conference** (due to the change of Yearly Meeting sessions and COVID shutdown, we will be planning to have pastor's retreat & conference for these dates at Camp Quaker Heights). Our plan is to have Sonlife's Joel Zaborowski back to lead the Sonlife Retreat "Repair & Prepare"

•Dates for the 2021 Quaker Youth Camping season....

SAVE THE DATES

- Little Fry Camp – June 11-13
- Middle School Camp – June 13-17
- High School Camp – June 18-23
- Elementary Camp – June 24-27

Save Your Postage Stamps for Missions

Save your used postage stamps to raise money for Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR) which is an independent Quaker not-for-profit organization sharing the abundance of God's love by working for equity through partnerships around the world. Since 2009, the Quaker Missions Stamp Project has raised over \$12,500 from used stamps that have been sent in, sorted, and sold. And all it takes is people like us saving and sending in our stamps!

Mail stamps to:

Stamps for Right Sharing
c/o Indianapolis First Friends
3030 Kessler Blvd. East Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46220

If you have questions about the stamp program, please contact RSWR at 937.966.0314 or rswr@rswr.org.



Update as of July, 2018: The stamp program now accepts stamps of all issue dates and countries, both used and unused stamps, sheets of stamps, albums or boxed collections of stamps.

please follow these guidelines:

Foreign stamps (excluding Canada):

These may be left on the postcard or envelope, especially if the envelope has some special drawing or indication of the country. There are collectors who like to receive a whole envelope or postcard with a foreign stamp.

USA and Canada stamps:

Cut the stamp(s) off the envelope or postcard. Leave the perforations on the stamps. Leave 1/4 inch to 1/8 inch around the stamp so the whole stamp is preserved, including the perforations. When there is more than one stamp, treat the group as a unit.

Peelable stamps:

Please leave these on the envelope paper. If you try to peel them off of the paper, they stick to other stamps, and damage both.