

The Iowa Friend



JANUARY 2023

Something Bigger

Manny Garcia, General Superintendent

Over the Christmas holiday, I visited a large church with my extended family. When we entered the doors of this church, we were greeted by a well-trained team wearing warm smiles and holding signs that communicated how happy they were to see me. I was given directions to the hot chocolate bar and invited to fill out a visitor card. With cocoa in hand, I entered the sanctuary and was directed to an area of open seats. The room was dimly lit and there were vibrant graphics on the screen telling me about the upcoming sermon series. The service started with a polished rendition of a Christmas hymn followed by some announcements given by an over caffeinated youth pastor. The music continued along with an incredible light show that filled the walls of the room. The message was captivating and directed us to consider the birth of Christ and the implications of his life, death, and resurrection in our lives. Overall, it checked all the boxes. But even still, something felt off.

It wasn't until about a week later that I figured it out. From the moment I arrived in the church parking lot to the moment I left, I felt like I was just along for the ride. There were no expectations on me to contribute to what was happening or what would follow. In a conversation with my wife, I said, "that service was kind of like taking a cruise." Now, to be fair, we've never been on a cruise, but I'm familiar enough with the concept. It's a voyage that requires little to no effort on the part of the cruiser. You are given a comfortable place to sleep, several options of food and entertainment that you can take or leave, and if something is not to your liking, you can find someone to offer a complaint to. Sometimes I think we can view the church like that. "Give me some cocoa and a soft chair and make sure I don't get bored."

My goal here is not to deny that large churches with high production elements have value. As my friend Jim often says, "it takes all kinds of churches to reach all kinds of people." And I'm sure that particular church was trying to leverage the fact that they had many visitors that evening due to the holiday. My point, however, is that it is often quite easy for us to engage with a faith community like we are on a cruise. "Meet my needs." "Entertain me." "Make me comfortable." "Be done on time."

In 1 Corinthians 12, the Apostle Paul likens the church to a human body. He points out that each part of the human body has a function that, when understood in the context of the entire body, is of equal importance and value to the other parts. If one part of a human body stops working, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant, the rest of the body is weakened. He then draws the conclusion that within the Body of Christ, the church, each member also has a function. When understood in the context of the entire church, each member is of equal importance and value to the other members. And, like a human body, when one member stops sharing gifts, abilities, talents, etc., the larger community is weakened.

When we are part of something like a church, or a community of churches such as Iowa Yearly Meeting, it comes with a certain level of expectation that we will contribute to the pursuit of the mission and vision of the group. God has called us to be about something bigger than ourselves, namely His kingdom. I have used the phrase "One Church" to describe the hope I have for our community of churches in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin to begin operating with a larger focus in mind. I also pray that within our churches, that the message of being part of something bigger than ourselves begins to resonate and bear fruit.

Paul teaches us that we all have something to offer and are expected to contribute. With that in mind, I began to imagine the church functioning more like an aircraft carrier than a cruise ship. Each person on an aircraft carrier has an expectation to contribute.

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From the Admiral to the Seaman Recruit, each person's contributions make a difference to the whole. And, as Paul points out, "and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor" (1 Cor. 12:23). If the person in charge of removing trash or cooking meals stopped working, it wouldn't be long before the entire ship has some issues.

The body of Christ needs each of its members to function in its healthiest and most effective form. We have a mission given to us to "make disciples of all nations." When a few members of the body aren't offering their gifts, abilities, time, and resources to that end, we are weaker and less effective. The church needs you. There are no small parts here. We are all invited into something bigger than ourselves. That is true locally in your churches, regionally as Iowa Yearly Meeting, and globally as the larger Church.

I often get asked, "what does Iowa Yearly Meeting do for us anyway?" This isn't a new question by the way, as my predecessors can attest to. I have resisted the urge to try to answer that question in a way that communicates that there will be an earthly return on your investment. This isn't a cruise and there's no buffet. Operating as One Church isn't about asking "What's in it for me?" Instead, it is about asking, "How has God uniquely blessed and gifted me to be part of his work in this world through the community I belong to?" The value of being part of a church or a community like Iowa Yearly Meeting is that we are better together. We can accomplish more for the kingdom as a movement than we can as a scattered group of individuals. It isn't about me or you, it isn't about a single church or a single community. We are invited to take part in something bigger than ourselves. We are invited to be One Church, making Christ known locally, regionally, and globally.

QUAKER MEN

FAMILY BANQUET

The Quaker Men Annual Family Banquet and Auction is scheduled for Saturday, February 25th at 11:30am at the Musco Technology Center on the William Penn University Campus. IAYM Quaker Men are encouraged to attend the business meeting prior to the banquet, at 10:30am.

This year's speaker is Dr. Tom Hamm, PhD. Dr. Hamm is among the world's leading experts on Quakers in America, the author of several books, including an anthology of Quaker writings. He is also an avid genealogist, historian, and bibliophile. He will be sharing about the Underground Railroad, which has a history that intersects with Iowa Quakers and deep ties to active IAYM Meetings.

We hope you will all make plans to join us for this event which is always a joyful time of fellowship.



ALL LOCAL MINISTRY AND COUNSEL MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO AN

Elder Workshop

with Colin Sexton

Date: March 24, 2023 | 6:00pm-8:00pm

A courtesy block of rooms will be reserved at Best Western-The Pearl City Inn for booking in order to accommodate those staying for Spring Body. Room reservations will be \$110.88 in total, and all reservations must be made by February 24, 2023.

SPRING BODY

SATURDAY,
MARCH 25, 2023

BLOOMINGTON-MUSCATINE
FRIENDS CHURCH

MEETINGS WILL BEGIN AT
9:00AM. LUNCH WILL BE
AVAILABLE AS A FREE WILL
OFFERING. REGISTRATION IS
REQUESTED BY FEBRUARY 24,
2023.

IGNITE YOUTH

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

March 10-12

2023

Winter
Retreat

February 10th-11th

WINTER JAM

2023

and
AFTER PARTY

MISSIONS

Friends Bringing Hope By Karen Bauer



Friends Bringing Hope (FBH) is a Christian organization dedicated to transforming the lives of those most in need in Kenya. Desiring to follow Jesus, and being an example of Christ's love expressed, we are committed to being advocates for vulnerable women, especially widows, and orphans as we work together toward meeting their basic needs of medicine, education, food, and shelter. Our aim is to provide opportunities for improved living conditions and to assist orphans and

widows in a manner that enhances families and communities. This is accomplished by offering economic assistance that promotes sustainable development. Our mission is to impact people's lives in such a way that they may fulfill their God-given potential free from stigma, oppression, and violence. We build homes for displaced widows, with many on a waiting list for houses. It costs \$600 to build a two-room mud home that comes with a wood door and wood windows and a metal roof that serves to capture rainwater. Because the widow usually loses her possessions, we also shower her with a few supplies of plates, cups, a cooking pot, mattress and blanket, as well as food basics, maize flour, sugar, oil, tea leaves, and lentils. As the work team assists in building, they get the opportunity to spend time with the group of widows, and it becomes a joyous day of work and celebration. We provide income-producing projects for widows groups, such as poultry, goats, pigs, or sewing. They are projects the group chooses and feel that they can be successful. They usually cost around \$200. In addition, we fund education for orphans. Education is the key to a hopeful future for the orphan. Many times, the sickness and death of a parent or family member makes it difficult for the child to attend school and they are forced to stay home because of the lack of resources. We partner with Rural Service Programme (RSP)— the Kenyan Quaker organization that identifies those most in need. Quakers have had a presence in Kenya for over 100 years in mission work. Rural Service Programme is a part of this historic connection between Quakers in America and Kenya. RSP has field staff who live in the communities and help people live more sustainably. I am excited to announce that I will be traveling to Kenya in June of 2023 with a work team to attend the FUM Triennial as well as lead the after-Triennial excursion to build two houses for displaced widows. If you are going to the Triennial, please consider joining the after-Triennial excursion and experience firsthand this vital ministry.

Ministry in India

Pastor J. Gerry and Kay Wilson from Friends Community Church- Sturgeon Bay are preparing for their return to India. They are looking for Partners in Prayer as well as those led by the Lord to provide financial support. They need to raise \$2,000 for travel expenses and ministry expenses for the Pastor's and Teacher's Conferences. If you would like to become a partner with the Wilson's, please contact them at gwilsonsb@yahoo.com, or Jerry's cell at 626-826-4982. Any financial gifts can be made out to Friends Community Church- Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235.

Kyela: A Growing Church

In 2010, Kyela area in Tanzania had three Friends churches. The churches are growing and they are starting new churches. Today there are fifteen Friends churches in the area. Friends in Iowa have contributed to this growth through our Iowa Yearly Meeting Missions Committee. A few years ago, three motorcycles were purchased and given to the pastors. The pastors used the motorcycles for their own transportation and also to provide taxi service to raise money for supporting their families. Another time, funds were sent to help build the main church building in Kyela. This year IAYM missions sent funds to purchase a keyboard, microphones, and sound equipment. The joyful music is attracting new people from the community to come and worship with them. The picture on the left shows the keyboard, and large speaker. The one on the right shows some of the people attending a recent CE conference at Kyela. If you look closely, you can see the church building in the background.

Kyela is the main Friends church in the area with several village churches nearby. Jacob Mwalwis is the pastor at Kyela and head pastor for the area. He is taking classes to finish his degree at Friends Theological College (FTC). Because his wife passed away recently, he needed help to finish paying tuition for his classes. IAYM Missions is paying his tuition at FTC this year. Kyela is an area where the seed sown has produced good fruit and IAYM had a part in that growth.





Iowa United Society of Friends Women William Penn University Scholarship Fund

The following are guidelines for the selection of candidates for Iowa United Society of Friends Women William Penn University Scholarship. The Scholarship Committee shall consider applications for scholarships and make decisions as to recipients.

1. The amount of the scholarship will be determined by need of the applicant and by funds available.
2. The candidate shall be a participating member of Iowa Yearly Meeting.
3. A candidate from Iowa Yearly Meeting shall have successfully completed secondary education requirements and shall have been accepted by William Penn University.
4. Applications must be received by **Saturday, July 1st**.
5. To be considered for a scholarship for the succeeding academic year, recipients must submit a request to the committee each year.
6. Scholarships shall only be awarded for a maximum of four (4) academic years.

Trustee Scholarship

Applications are now being taken for a \$500 college scholarship to be distributed in the 2nd semester of the 2022-2023 academic school year (January of 2023). College students within Iowa Yearly Meeting are encouraged to seek an application through the Yearly Meeting Office.

The Deadline is March 1, 2023.
**A recipient will be determined at
Spring Body 2023.**

Kenneth and Betty Palmer Scholarship

The purpose of the Kenneth & Betty Palmer Scholarship Endowment is to assist students who are members of the Friends Church and who are involved in graduate studies (Masters or Doctoral program) in preparation for or furthering their ministry. This includes, but is not necessary limited to, pastoral ministry, missionary service, Christian Education and youth ministry.

A maximum assistance of \$500 per semester shall be granted to an applicant but final determination will be based on funds available and the number of eligible applicants.

Recipients of scholarship assistance shall **apply by May 1, 2023** for the next school year or four months before courses begin. Continuation of scholarship shall be determined by need and by funds available. The maximum anyone can receive under this scholarship program is \$4,000 or eight semesters, whichever first occurs.

Applications available through the Yearly Meeting Office.

Missions Board Annual Scholarship

The Iowa Yearly Meeting Mission's Board is offering a college scholarship of up to \$1000 for the 2022-2023 academic school year. People within Iowa Yearly Meeting who want to pursue an education at a Christian college or an accredited college or seminary to prepare for full time mission's work with a Friend's organization may contact the Mission's Board's clerk, Nancy Stevens (nansteve@gmail.com) to receive an application.

The deadline is March 1, 2023.

Updates on the Iowa Friend

Going forward, *The Iowa Friend* newsletter will be sent out Bimonthly. If you would like to be added the email list for more frequent updates, scan this QR code or contact the office for a direct link.

