

# The Iowa Friend



## Formed By the Ordinary

*Manny Garcia, General Superintendent*

In her book *Liturgy of the Ordinary*, Tish Harrison Wells masterfully describes how our lives are not meant to be fragmented into the sacred and the secular. Rather, as those who have accepted our identity as God's beloved, we are invited to view all that we do as sacred. She writes, "before we begin the liturgies of our day—the cooking, sitting in traffic, emailing, accomplishing, working, resting—we begin beloved." She also rightly points out that many of us want life to reflect the nonstop, action packed, never dull rhythm of our favorite movies or books. "We want a Christian life with the dull bits cut out," she says.

What if, as Wells contends, the small, seemingly insignificant moments of my day are what form me in the deepest ways? What if, as Eugene Peterson notes in his paraphrase of Romans 12:1, my "everyday, ordinary life . . . sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life," is the laboratory within which we are truly shaped? If this is true, then it's not so much about the mountain top experiences. Instead, it is the ways in which I live and love and respond to the mundane moment-by-moment experiences that make me who I am. Wells says, "today is the proving ground of what I believe and of whom I worship."

If today is that proving ground, if how we live life in this every moment reveals who we are and whom we worship, then what story is your life telling? Is it a love story that begins with you being loved by God? A story that continues with you reciprocating that love to Him and loving others the way He loves you? Do you take time to consider your position in God's kingdom daily, or do you lose sight of who you are and Whose you are? These kinds of things matter deeply. Any attempts to discern our identity apart from God, no matter how unintentional, has a deforming effect on us.

Wells echoes the wisdom of many heroes of the faith when she encourages readers to, "learn how grand, sweeping truths—doctrine, theology, ecclesiology, Christology—rub against the texture of an average day." Our ordinary lives matter because the ordinary life of our Savior also mattered. "Because God's children are human beings--made of flesh and blood--the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death" (Hebrews 2:14).

If anything, we all need this reminder that we should do our best not to take anything for granted. As much as we can, we should avoid the "autopilot" kind of living where we go through the motions of our day unaware. Just because we can do most tasks without thinking, doesn't mean we should. Instead, we should consider the blessings and miracles and grace that are found in each and every moment, from the minute our eyes open in the morning until the moment we drift off to sleep at night, our days are a series of sacred moments, where God is near, at work, and available to us, if we would only take the time to notice.

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## 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.





### Spring Body and Elder Workshop | March 24-25

There is an Elder Worship being held March 24 from 6-8pm at Bloomington-Muscatine Friends for all local M & C members.

Spring Body is the following day, and roll call will begin at 9:30am. Lunch will be available by free-will offering.

If you would still like to attend, please contact the IAYM office before March 15.

### Pastor's Short Course | March 28

Pastors Short Course will be combined with the Beane Lecture on March 28th at 11:15am at William Penn University's Chief Mahaska Room. Joe Stevens of Joppa in Des Moines will be speaking on Addressing Homelessness. After Joe is finished, we will gather for lunch and if time and weather permits, meetings will continue at Harvest Point Golf course

*More information to come.*



CAMP QUAKER HEIGHTS  ELDORA, IOWA

September 15-17

Family Camp is for families of all shapes and sizes, from single adults to couples, families with young children to empty nesters, single parent families to blended families, and everyone in between. Everyone is welcome because in IAYM we are all FAMILY!



## IAYM EASTER OFFERING: Lindi Friends School

For many years Lindi Friends School has been a refuge of hope and joy for the children of Kibera, a large urban slum in Nairobi. The school was established in 2005 by Friends in Nairobi, who were called to serve the impoverished families living in Kibera. Today, Lindi Friends School has nearly 340 students in its nursery and primary programs. Many of our graduates pass the national exams, which qualifies them to go on to secondary school.

Friends were shocked to learn of the traumatic fire on the evening of Sunday, 24 July, 2022, that destroyed the school building, leaving only several temporary structures. While an emergency plan was put in place to ensure that educational activities continued, these were only temporary measures, and a permanent solution is now being considered. In the interim, our students are meeting in the temporary structures and the shell of the burnt-out building, which is now covered with a tarpaulin.

In 2023, FUM will partner with Nairobi Yearly Meeting to rebuild the school and replace old structures with permanent ones. While the rebuilding will occur in phases, we anticipate the construction to cost \$211,000. The new building will be on three floors, featuring classrooms, a library, staff rooms and offices, a kitchen, and a multipurpose hall. The new building will provide a safe environment for learning and continue our vital ministry to the families and children of Kibera.



THE PROPOSED STEEL  
STRUCTURE BUILDING



FUM is grateful to be awarded a grant for £20,000 (British pounds, approximately \$24,000 US dollars) from the Robert & Kezia Stanley Chapman Trust, a trust under the care of Friends from Ireland. Friends United Meeting is now receiving donations from other Friends who want to support this rebuilding effort.

In addition, we welcome your prayers:

- Pray for the teachers and administrators guiding the school during these trying times
- Pray for our students as they continue to learn in a harsh educational environment.
- Pray for the families of our students who live under challenging and vulnerable circumstances.
- Pray for the school board and the leaders of Nairobi Yearly Meeting, who are working hard to continue the school's mission and prepare for the future.
- Pray for the fundraising efforts, construction workers, building suppliers, and everyone involved in building the new school.
- Pray that the Lindi Friends School will continue to be a refuge and beacon of hope in the Kibera community.

Checks can be made to Iowa Yearly Meeting with memo: "Lindi Schools" These can be mailed to:

Dorothy Taylor  
1121 Parkway Drive  
Boone, IA 50036-5046

## USFW Spring Fling | April 15

The USFW Spring Fling will be held April 15 at Woolson Friends Church. Charlene and Mike Martin will be sharing about their Living Letters experience in Cuba. The offering will go to FUM's Living Letters program and the FUM Cuba mission. The lunch fee will be \$12.

Registration begins at 9:30.

*Please RSP to Jaquie Wilbur  
(515) 205-0692*

## Camp Work Day | April 15

Work day will begin at 9:00am at the Lodge. There will be coffee and donuts in the morning, and soups and sandwiches will be served at noon for lunch. Please bring rakes, chainsaws, painting supplies, your favorite cleaning supplies, and cordless tools.

*A more detailed list of projects will be available at a later date.*





# 2023 Camp Dates

**Little Fry Camp** (grades K-2) **June 23-25**

**Elementary Camp** (grades 3-5) **June 20-23**

**Middle School Camp** (grades 6-8) **June 9-13**

**High School Camp** (grades 9-12) **June 14-19**

Registration for Camp will open April 1, 2023.

- Little Fry Camp | \$235  
(\$100 for each additional child)
- Elementary Camp | \$235
- Middle School Camp | \$305
- High School Camp | \$375

Prices will increase by \$25 on May 1, 2023.



**empower a leader.  
change your church.  
fuel a movement.**

FRIENDS  
**SUMMIT**  
**2023**

December 28, 2023 - January 1, 2024  
Houston, TX

Friends Summit is all about the movement. The movement among young adult Friends. The church movement. The Kingdom. Summit is a national conference for young adults to experience how the reality of God's kingdom is calling the Friends Church in mission and engaging us with passion.