

The Iowa Friend

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October 2020

How to Encourage Church Leaders This 'Pastor Appreciation Month'

By Troy Pollock • August 20, 2020



2020 has been unpredictable, unstable, and unlike any other year in recent history. Churches were forced to pivot overnight and build completely new ministry strategies to reach their communities. In the same way, church attendees were compelled to change the way they attend a worship service, engage with other members, and participate in Christian community.

However, one thing that does not have to change is the way we show pastors our appreciation for all they do.

October is Pastor Appreciation Month

This celebration was established in 1992 with the mission of uplifting and encouraging pastors, missionaries and religious workers. And, in 2020, they could probably use a little more encouragement than normal.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO ENCOURAGE PASTORS

At Summit Conference 2019 in Dallas, TX, Carey Nieuwhof polled a live audience of more than 1,300 church leaders. He asked, "Over the past year, how many times have you experienced burnout symptoms?"

A shocking 46% said they've experienced burnout once or twice in the past year. Another 38% said regularly (3-6 times) in the past year, and 9% said constantly. That's 92% of church leaders who have experienced burnout in the past year. And this was last year, before any of us had heard of COVID-19. What would the survey results look like now, if we asked 1,300 church leaders the same question today? I can't say for sure, but I'm guessing it would be closer to 100%.

Why? Pastors and church leaders went into ministry because of purpose and calling. They want to help people. They want to share the good news, make heaven more crowded, and make the world a better place. But today, the stresses and expectations of the role mean pastors have far less time to pray and care for the spiritual needs of their congregation. Additionally, as a result of our politically charged and divided culture, pastors often feel pressured to speak about current events and issues dominating the news cycle.

A senior pastor recently said to me, "This is not the job I signed up for. I went into ministry because I wanted to share the same grace and forgiveness I found from God with others. But today, I am forced to talk on things I know very little about.. It's challenging. For the first time in my 35 years of ministry, I have contemplated resigning more often than ever before."

So, what can you do? Here are a few little suggestions that can make a big difference in the life of your pastor.

Visit Page 3 for Non-Monetary ideas to Celebrate Pastor Appreciation Month



Iowa Yearly Meeting's Annual Mission

Thanksgiving Offering

Tracey and Dan Whitehead

In our 28 years of service with Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF), one of the constants has been the support and encouragement we have felt from the Iowa Yearly Meeting. So it is great to be able to send this update for publication in the Iowa Friend.

Those of you who have followed our journey know that for 26 years we worked in Latin America. Dan was able to fly thousands of hours over very remote parts of Latin America and use the airplane to help fulfill MAF's purpose statement – "To share the love of Jesus Christ through aviation and technology so that isolated people may be physically and spiritually transformed". Tracey served during those years in many capacities – flight following on the radio, working at the local mission school, volunteering at an orphanage, teaching Sunday school. It was a wonderful season of ministry, and God used it to prepare us for where we find ourselves now.

In 2018, we returned to the U.S., to MAF's headquarters in Idaho. Dan accepted the position of the Chief Operations Officer/Vice President of Operations of MAF, and these two years have opened our eyes to the broader ministry of MAF around the world. Our goal is always that the love of Jesus is shared with people in the isolated areas we serve. This story from one of our pilots in the Democratic Republic of Congo gives a great example of what our MAF aircraft do:

We get a lot of strange requests. One such request was a request to distribute 14 tons of medical supplies down in the Kasai province. The road system had suffered greatly this year due to the heavier than normal rains. There is a train that runs down in the area but because of changes in management the logistics of being able to send the supplies had experienced a great delay and there wasn't a clear end in sight.

The will to do such a trip to serve 6 communities who had been completely cut-off from their medical supply routes was there but the cost for such a trip was not something that MAF could float, nor the organization that was in charge of the distribution project. In addition to it being cost-prohibitive there were other problems. The airstrips in those communities had gone unused for years and around here the jungle will reclaim any land that is not kept. Additionally, there are many large airports here that do not have constant access to fuel. Even in this provincial capital where the project would be based there was no fuel available! It just didn't seem like we could provide a solution to this problem.

Then God did something...

We got news that there was a donor interested in covering the cost for the distribution of these medical supplies. Ok, that was great news! So, teams started cutting back the jungle and uncovering what used to be airstrips used by MAF many years ago. Great! But what about fuel? Well, we found a former mission airstrip that was in a small town near a hospital that we could use to base out of, and we started filling barrels. We put 25 barrels of fuel on a truck leaving Kinshasa for a week-long 1100km trip of which the last portion would have to be completed by land cruisers.

What followed was a very full week of flying nearly 20 tons of medical supplies to cut-off communities. Anything from hospital beds and wheelchairs to medicine, operating equipment, microscopes, operation and sanitation equipment was able to be delivered by airplane to communities who hadn't seen an MAF airplane in years. The crowds were overwhelming, and the kids overjoyed and amazed. These communities were not forgotten or unreachable for God and He moved in a powerful and surprising way to meet their needs. It took an enormous effort from so many different people to pull this off, everyone from airstrip maintainers and drivers to fuelers, loaders, guards, cooks, admin personnel, pilots and mechanics, and last but not least so many of our prayer and financial supporters who make this work possible. It was an absolute joy for us to be a part of it, and we hope that you feel the same way about your involvement with the work of Mission Aviation Fellowship here in the DRC. (from MAF Pilot Jonathan de Jongh)

In Dan's new role he works with a talented team of leaders who oversee things in our four regional areas of operations – Africa, Eurasia, Indonesia, and Latin America. In addition he supervises the operations team at our headquarters which provides the support needed for field operations. We appreciate your prayers for Dan as he leads the operations group at MAF.

On the home front, we are now empty nesters with kids spread around in Minnesota, Iowa, and Texas. And we have joined that wonderful category of people known as grandparents.

We close by saying thank you. So many in Iowa Yearly Meeting have been faithful in giving and praying with us over the years. Your support and encouragement has been felt often. You have been partners in what God is doing through MAF around the world. Thank you for being a blessing!

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Pastor Appreciation.....*

A HANDWRITTEN THANK YOU NOTE

Though this may seem insignificant, often-times written words can be the most encouraging for a pastor to read. Pastors are continually fighting the mental battle that they are not doing a good job. A handwritten note is something they can continually go back to as a source of strength.

AN ENCOURAGING TEXT MESSAGE OR VIDEO FROM YOUR SMARTPHONE

With the power of a smartphone, you can send encouragement through the click of a button. Craft a heartfelt message and send it via text to your pastor, expressing your appreciation for them. Make them laugh, or reflect on easier times, and they'll remember why they do this for a living.

Or you can flip the video around to selfie mode and film yourself — and your family — saying nice things to your pastor. Because many churches are still not gathering in physical locations, they would love seeing your faces!

A SOCIAL POST

If you don't have the ability to text them, post a message on social media using their handle. Maybe share your favorite bible verse, or tell them you're thinking back to one of your favorite sermons. Oftentimes, this will go directly to their phone. And if it's a public post, it may remind others who see it to do the same!

PREPARE A GIFT BASKET

If a financial contribution is not the route you want to go, preparing a gift basket with snacks and goodies is a great way to create something more personal without breaking the bank. You can even include a gift card to their favorite restaurant — a dinner date on you will always be greatly appreciated by your pastor.

There are so many ways we can come alongside our church leaders to let them know we see them, we hear them, and we appreciate them. Remember, a simple word of encouragement goes a long way, especially during this unprecedented time.



Viola J. Gray, 82, of Eldora, passed away Tuesday, September 1, 2020

Viola was born December 15, 1937 in Iowa City, Iowa to parents Ellis and Blanche (Wolfe) May. She married the love of her life, Leonard C. Gray, on February 1 1953 in Red Oak, Iowa. She held several jobs throughout her life, including working at Whinks, Dodger Mfg. and cleaning private homes. Viola was a skilled homemaker and especially enjoyed sewing, quilting, knitting and crocheting. She also enjoyed reading, her flower garden, and taking long walks. Leonard & Viola both enjoyed roller skating and chopping wood. She was a member of the Bangor-Liberty Friends Church and enjoyed doing mission work when she was able. Viola volunteered at the Little Girls Club in Eldora and at vacation bible school. She loved playing cards and board games with family and friends.

Year End Gifts for Staff

Our Iowa Yearly Meeting Pastors Association is giving gifts for staff in December. If you would like to contribute—please send your gift to Wes Blanchard (treasurer for the Pastors Association).

His address is 12172 150th Ave., Indianola, IA 50125 Please send your gift before December 16th.

The staff of our Yearly Meeting are:

Tom Showalter—General Superintendent of Iowa Yearly Meeting—Oskaloosa, IA

Mac & Berny McDonald—Mesquakie Friends in Tama, IA

Chip & Alicia Daleske—Camp Quaker Heights in Eldora, IA

Mary Thury—Office Administrator of Iowa Yearly Meeting—Oskaloosa, IA

Dates for the 2021 Quaker Camping season....

AVE 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 IOWA FRIEND

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

Information regarding your Iowa Friend subscription

After much research and cost consideration, it has been decided to not charge for a subscription of our newsletter. However, we are strongly encouraging folks to subscribe to our *mostly* weekly e-newsletter to receive that publication. The emailed news highlights prayer requests, calendar, links to other publications along with the Monthly edition of the Iowa Friend Newsletter.

If you would still like a paper copy of the newsletter, please send a request to our office with the self-addressed envelope (enclosed with this mailing)

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please continue my free paper version of the newsletter (include name and address)

If you would rather be subscribed to the e-newsletter (and are NOT already subscribed to it) please send your email address to our office with the enclosed envelope.

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Please add my email address to the weekly Friend of Friends e-newsletter

(email address)



INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS CHURCH MULTIPLICATION CONFERENCE

November 11-13, 2020

"For Such A Time As This!"



An inspiring, world-wide Great Commission gathering that will be the first of its kind in history!

Due to Covid-19 concerns, this conference is now a **100% online gathering** that will connect evangelically-minded Friends from homes, local churches, Yearly Meetings, and regions all over the globe.

Join the Friends Church multiplication movement—you will be inspired, challenged, encouraged, and thankful to be part of what God is doing!
You won't want to miss it!

**More information and
registration details
coming soon!**

Main Speaker:

Dr. Ed Stetzer

Billy Graham
Distinguished Chair
of Church, Mission,
and Evangelism at
Wheaton College,
church planter, and author of *Planting
Missional Churches: Your Guide to
Starting Churches that Multiply*



- *Strategic, practical workshops*
- *Fellowship receptions to connect with like-minded people around the world*
- *Affinity group gatherings for regional leaders, church planters, pastors of potential mother churches, prayers, and more*
- *Fresh ideas to apply to your home church*

Registrations for these events
through our conference website

growIAYM.org

Both events are free of charge. See
information on the website!

**2020 Annual Ministry Conference
following Multiplication Conference**

November 13-14th— Event will be held virtually