

THE IOWA FRIEND

September/October 2023

2023 IAYM Annual Sessions Recap

BY MANNY GARCIA

It seems like it was ages ago that friends gathered in Oskaloosa for our Annual Sessions & Ministry Conference. Even still, I wanted to offer a brief recap from our time together while also trying to capture the themes that emerged. And if you couldn't join us this year, I hope you'll plan to be there next year from July 25-28!

The gathering kicked off with a meal which was supposed to be at Friends Park, but due to the scorching temps, we moved it to the fellowship hall at College Avenue Friends. As usual, this gathering quickly affirmed the blessing of being together with our larger Friends community as old friends reunited and new friendships were formed. I have become convinced that when we can move past the "inconveniences" that often enter our minds when we consider gathering together, we will always find fulfillment, affirmation, and blessing on the other side.

The theme of this year's gathering was Time to Dine and our speaker, Winn Collier inspired and challenged us to rethink the idea of God's table using a series of teachings from Matthew 15. By the way, if you missed hearing Winn, you can still watch all of the services online on College Avenue Friends Church's YouTube channel. Winn's teaching and faithful presence to us during this time was an encouragement. He also provided one of the many workshops at this year's gathering. Workshops were thoughtfully curated with ministry in mind and many in attendance shared their appreciation for the practical and applicable teachings available. As we plan future gatherings, we continue to be mindful of the needs our leaders, congregations, and communities face and we desire to provide helpful, timely, and godly resources that equip our movement for ministry in the "right now" of life. If any of you have specific themes or topics you would like us to consider for future gatherings, please let us know.

Of course, meeting for worship to conduct business continues to be one of the many reasons we gather. During this year's sessions, we heard many encouraging

reports from our boards and committees. We were especially challenged by the Board on Stewardship to continue moving within our mission rather than simply doing maintenance.

One of the significant changes that happened this year was shifting the entire conference over by one day which allowed us to close the gathering with a joint "One Church" worship experience. Several stayed to worship together in person while many other churches joined in via livestream. We plan to continue this practice in the coming years with the hope that more churches will join in. There is something special about worshipping together in one accord, being moved by the One Spirit, and responding with one heart as One Church. It will be especially important for us to practice this rhythm more regularly as we strive toward the vision of functioning as One Church that impacts the communities we serve with the love of Christ and reaches into new communities with the hope of Christ.

Friends, I am in awe of the many ways God continues to bless us, call us, and equip us for the work ahead. He is not done with IAYM! As a matter of fact, we're just getting started! I pray that those who were with us in July were as encouraged as I was. If you were, tell others! Let's keep striving together to embody the One Church vision God has given us. Let's grow in our capacity to impact the world around us for Jesus. Let's keep dining with Jesus because the fields are ripe for harvest!

Jesus said, "The food that keeps me going is that I do the will of the One who sent me, finishing the work he started. As you look around right now, wouldn't you say that in about four months it will be time to harvest? Well, I'm telling you to open your eyes and take a good look at what's right in front of you. These Samaritan fields are ripe. It's harvest time!

JOHN 4:34-35 MSG

An Update from Cambodia

BY BRIANNA MARTIN

Dear Friends,

I had the great joy this past spring to make a return trip to Cambodia and bring a small team with me. Ah, the joy to be back in the “Kingdom of Wonder” and to feel those familiar Khmer words roll off my tongue! I remember getting my passport stamped with tears of joy and then the rush of negotiating our late-night transportation while taking a deep breath of that familiar thick tropical air. Cambodia is a place God has rooted in my heart.

It was an honor to bring four young women with me to Asia on this trip. My goals for the team were to help them experience God’s love for Cambodia, to see the realities of missionary life, to dive into Khmer culture and history, and to help facilitate first-hand encounters that could fuel future missions vision and prayer. As a team we took language lessons, visited an international school for MKs, did prayer walking, traveled in Cambodian vans to the countryside, rode motor bikes to the village, saw an active Buddhist temple, spent a day hearing about ancient Khmer empires at Angkor Wat, and heard beautiful stories of God at work. Aside from the heat, the most challenging part for the girls was our visit to Toul Sleng, the Khmer Rouge Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh. It is hard to visit a place like that without a part of your heart torn apart for this nation and people—and yet it is important as it impacts so much of what one sees and experiences in Cambodia. It was a somber day for us as we remembered the pain the Cambodian people have lived through. We also had the opportunity to visit two rural church planting teams and experienced first-hand the challenges and thrills of ministry among an unreached people group where so few have heard of Jesus.



The team was touched by the simple beauty of church—the small group sitting on the floor singing songs of worship, reading God’s word together and praying for one another. Toward the end of our trip, the team also spent an afternoon interviewing missionaries focusing on healthcare. They heard from a mental health counselor, an occupational therapist, an anesthesiologist, and a dental instructor—each one investing their skills and lives into the people of Cambodia.

For myself, the most meaningful part of the trip was the three days in our old hometown of Snuol reconnecting with dear friends and ministry contacts. The women I’ve walked with are still living out their faith in the midst of trying circumstances. I was deeply blessed by their testimonies of God’s presence with them, and the warmth and generosity of their hospitality.

My deepest thanks to IAYM and the IAYM Mission Board for the support and prayers for this opportunity. Thank you to all who have loved us and prayed for us from the beginning of our missions journey until now—this season of investing in the next generation of missionaries and giving support to those who are serving. I had such a longing to return to Cambodia and saw the Lord answer my prayers. Thank you for being a part of that blessing! Our team returned home with new visions of God’s work, deeper understanding of Cambodian hearts, and stomachs full of fried rice and noodles. Thank you!

Mission's Board Thanksgiving Offering

This year the Missions Board has chosen Dan and Tracey Whitehead as the recipients of our annual Missions Thanksgiving Offering. Dan was raised in the Honey Creek-New Providence Friends Church. As an adult, Dan has been serving with Mission Aviation Fellowship for the last 32 years. Even though Dan is not working directly for a Friends organization, we still claim him as one of our Iowa missionaries.

Dan and Tracey wish to convey their sincere thanks for the support that Iowa Yearly Meeting has provided their family over these many years.

MAF provides support for missionaries serving with many different organizations around the world. Many of those are working in remote or dangerous locations. They provide transportation, deliver supplies, provide emergency medical transportation, and in some cases, emergency evacuations in times of civil unrest. After 27 years in Latin America, Dan and Tracey returned to the US to help at MAF headquarters in 2018. Dan's job (VP of Aviation) has evolved some during the past 18 months. He is now much more involved with the technical aspects of aviation operations in the U.S. and around the world. With the help of a great team this includes managing their fleet of about 40 aircraft, initial and recurrent training of the technicians in both flight and maintenance, ongoing flight and maintenance operations, purchasing and shipping services, and disaster response.

Dan is finishing up a multi-year project that was initiated as part of an extensive safety review done in 2020. In response to the findings of that review, he has worked to coordinate and unify MAF training around



the world. This involved acquiring some new flight simulators and staffing some new roles to oversee global training and operations. Additionally, a new hangar was built at MAF headquarters in Idaho, and the existing hangar is being expanded to provide space for training functions.

Another ongoing project that keeps the aviation team busy is continually upgrading older aircraft or preparing new aircraft for field use.

Tracey is also involved at MAF. She is a member of the MAF Spiritual Enrichment Team which works to provide opportunities for the headquarters staff to stay connected to God and each other. This includes planning weekly chapel services, as well as coordinating a practice called First Day. First Day happens on the first Wednesday of each month, and MAF staff are invited to step away from the busy-ness of the work and spend a day in worship, community, and fun.

Tracey also works part time with the housekeeping crew. MAF maintains several apartments for staff who are coming and going or other visitors who need overnight accommodations. Tracey works with the team that keeps those apartments clean and beautiful.

SAVE THE DATES! CAMP QUAKER HEIGHTS 2024

HIGH SCHOOL: JUNE 7 - 12

MIDDLE SCHOOL: JUNE 12 - 16

ELEMENTARY: JUNE 18 - 21

LITTLE FRY: JUNE 21 - 23



Eldon Clarence Coulter

JANUARY 29, 1929-JUNE 12, 2023

Eldon Clarence Coulter, 94, passed away peacefully at home, surrounded by his loving family, on June 12, 2023.

Eldon was a lifelong resident of the Bear Creek (rural Earlham) area. He was born on January 28, 1929 in rural Linden, IA to Clarence and Orpha Myrle (Hadley) Coulter. They moved to the Coulter family farm north of Earlham when he was two years old.

Eldon attended Hillside Country School through 8th grade, and graduated from Redfield High School in 1947. He took over the family farm at age 19 following his father's stroke, and continued farming well into his 80's. He was honored to receive the Heritage Farm Award in 2018, signifying 150 years of family ownership.

Eldon and Marilyn Louise Ludeke were married on February 28, 1954 in Clear Lake, Iowa. They made their home on the farm where they raised their three children. He was a member of Bear Creek Friends Church, serving on numerous committees and digging graves at the Bear Creek cemetery for many years.

People enjoyed Eldon's sense of humor and quick wit. He was a hard-working, dependable man of his word. In addition to his crops and livestock, he enjoyed raising dalmatians and chickens. He loved to drive by the freshly walked bean fields, admiring the clean rows that were a result of his family's hours of labor.

Eldon loved puttering with wood, and was very creative in making wooden canes, barnboard frames, ironing boards, and stools. He enjoyed doing jigsaw puzzles in the winter, and was always up for a game of cribbage with any willing competitor. Digging through his candy jar for just the right piece annoyed his family, but kept him occupied.

His children and granddaughter were his greatest source of pride. (But before they came along, it might've been his reserve champion 4-H Angus steer in 1946!)

Eldon's parents and two sisters, Eloise Mason and Martha Mendenhall, preceded him in death. He will be greatly missed and always remembered by Marilyn, his wife of 69 years; his children Eldonna, Juanita, and Lance Coulter, all of Earlham; his cherished granddaughter Emma Marilyn Klocke and her husband Mitchell of Indianola; his brother Marvin (Melanie) Coulter of Redfield; and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Memorials may be directed to the family. They plan to purchase benches for the Bear Creek cemetery, as Eldon always wished for a place to sit as he visited the graves of family and friends.





Registration for Summit is Open!

Summit is a conference that is designed around conversations that will celebrate and fuel the movement; from engaging worship sessions to quiet moments of prayer, from teaching to discussion groups, from Coffee House themes to simple moments with a friend. Our stories provoke the conversation. Conversations that capture the imagination. Conversations that draw out our passion for the mission of the Kingdom. Summit will host conversations that shape the church. Conversations that could change your life!

FRIENDS SUMMIT 2023

This conference only happens every three years and is THE only young-adult leadership conference within the Friends stream. We encourage each church to support any 16-25 year olds who want to attend. IAYM is paying \$300 for each attendee and the Youth and Young Adult Board is adding an additional \$100 per attendee. This covers about half of the total cost! To access the first \$300 use the coupon code "VISION" when registering.

DUE TO NEEDING TO BOOK FLIGHTS, THE DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATIONS THROUGH IAYM IS SEPTEMBER 30TH.

Even if your church doesn't have young adults ready to attend Summit, you can still be part of sending others from Iowa Yearly Meeting! If your church wishes to help, you can contribute directly to the Vision Fund. As you can imagine, offering a scholarship as large as this one will deplete a large portion of our fund and there are many other great things on the horizon! But, operating as #OneChurch we can support our young leaders going to Summit and still be able to partner with many other exciting opportunities in the future!

If your church wants to contribute to the Vision Fund, you can send a designated contribution to Iowa Yearly Meeting and memo it "Vision Fund".

Kingdom. Mission. Passion.

CONVERSATIONS THAT
COULD CHANGE YOUR LIFE

Register now at iaym.org
under the "Events" tab!

