

The Iowa Friend

MAKING SPACE

BY MANNY GARCIA

In the last newsletter of 2023, I wrote about the need to embrace and value the traditions that make us who we are. After all, we cannot possibly grasp the path ahead of us if we do not have our bearings about us. Maintaining a sense of our identity, of who God has created us to be, is invaluable in accomplishing the good works that He has prepared for us to do. That, however, cannot be our excuse to resist adapting and changing the methods by which we seek to accomplish these works.

I recently attended Friends Summit, a conference of nearly 300 young adults from within our stream of Evangelically-minded Friends. What I heard and experienced was nothing short of inspiring. These 16-25-year-old leaders from across the country are eager to join in the work ahead of us, but they also recognize the need to adapt to the world around us as we do it. The church has seen these kinds of adaptations before. In the 18th century, Sunday schools were started to provide education for working children. In the early 19th century, organs gave way to pianos, which gave way to guitars and drums in the 1960's. The mid-19th century saw youth groups begin dedicated ministry to young people who were moving into urban areas. In the 1980's, many churches became "seeker-sensitive" and designed experiences that would attract unchurched people. None of these things were inherently wrong, and when done in the proper spirit, they did not detract from the central purpose of the Church. These were merely methods by which the mission was being pursued.

As I listened to conversations taking place among the gifted young people at the conference, I began to notice that the next season of necessary change in our churches lies with them. They are on the front lines of culture and have an acute awareness of how to reshape our methods while maintaining the mission and the message. I often advocate for doing old things in new ways even as I attempt to fully grasp the complexities of fleshing that

concept out. But many of these young leaders are living into that reality now, and they are eager to help the rest of us learn how to do it. There is a great deal of wisdom and insight in the hearts of these young leaders, and if we don't allow the space for it in their current churches, they'll find somewhere that does. We've seen this happen time and time again, a promising and gifted young person gets so boxed in to "how we do things," or we put them on the back burner as the "future of the church," and they eventually depart for a place that allows them to stretch their leadership legs now. I can affirm that the caliber of leader that I experienced at Friends Summit is not the future, but they are the NOW. We cannot afford to lose any more of them.

Friends, I am more confident than ever in the future of the Church. If we have any hope that our stream of Friends remains a part of that conversation, we must make space for the next generations. Yes, to learn from the wisdom and experience around them, but also to do things their way while being supported, affirmed, and joined by the seasoned saints around them. The sweet spot is in the collaboration (co-laboring with Christ and one another; 1Cor. 3:9). Don't just move out of the way leaving the next generation to figure out everything on their own. Instead, make space next to you at the table, and be as open to hearing and learning as you are to offering your thoughts and opinions. Continue to love them, train them, and encourage them and let them show us what they are capable of.

Do not let anyone treat you as if you are unimportant because you are young. Instead, be an example to the believers with your words, your actions, your love, your faith, and your pure life.

1 Timothy 4:12 NCV

Summit 2023 was an opportunity for me to see young people in the church. Being there and leading a small group has made me really excited for the future of the Friends church in America. It's encouraged me to try and find ways to help my own church in it's mission to our community
Isaiah Smith,
Middle River Friends

Summit is a great place for young adults to learn how to help the church and grow in their relationship with Christ. You also learn about the friend's church's missions and the what the church is doing.
Isaac Smith,
Middle River Friends

For me, Summit was full of hope and encouragement. It was amazing to see how many young friends there are. One of my favorite parts was meeting new people and making memories with old friends. The messages were filled with so much great information, and I'm still processing most of it. The first main speaker, Denae Warren, brought a powerful message, and it was really neat that the first speaker was a female. Then another night, we heard from Nick Chesnes, a young pastor from Ohio. He was very relatable. There are few main points from the conference that really stick out to me. First, success is expanding the kingdom of God and hearing Him say "Well done my good and faithful servant." Second, "When we understand our Kingdom, mandate our mission, and leverage our passion, we can change the world." -Kyle Reynolds Ohio. Third, Summit was a great reminder of how powerful prayer is. My dream for the Friends Church is to see the number of youth increase dramatically. Summit was such a neat experience because everyone was so passionate about the friends church and the young friends.
Anna Blanchard, Motor Friends

As a pastor, I was encouraged by the response of our teens and young adults. I thank the yearly meeting for investing in our young people. We need patience and we need to be a consistent influence in their lives that they can depend upon. Yes, some will move on to greener pastures, others may leave us altogether. BUT, not all, the church and its work is generational. It will not be done until our Groom comes to take His Bride.
Matt Smith,
Middle River Friends



Summit was an encounter with God that will be a milestone in my walk with Him. I grew up in the Quaker church but had never understood how vast the Quaker church was. Being able to worship and fellowship with people going through that same stage as life as I am was truly a life changing experience. I found a new sense of community at Summit and I can't wait until God brings us all together again!
Selah Hadley

My hope for the Friends church is that these young people will grow up to follow God's call on their lives boldly and fearlessly. I hope they will be given spaces to stretch out and try new roles in a space where older adults are receptive and fostering an atmosphere of growth, while maybe nervous for the changes, open to them. When I was young, it meant the world to me to be trusted into leadership position roles and to feel like I had a voice that mattered. I hope that young people here will get to experience that so that they feel connected and supported in their home churches, so even if they wander they always have a home to come back to when they are ready. My hope is that as they get plugged in, they won't even feel the need to wander. And lastly, my hope is that they understand the love of our God deeply and personally, that their roots grow down so deep that they aren't shaken by circumstances or the garbage this world offers, and that they won't be able to keep quiet about what God has done for them.
Tracy Andermann, Salem Friends

As a mentor, I didn't know what to expect from Summit. I honestly had lowered the bar for my experience and was there for my mentee. I was surprised for the renewing of feeling alive in Christ and the joy to start dreaming what his kingdom might look like. I will be savoring the book of Ephesians for a long time due to Summit. One quote from a speaker Kyle Reynolds was as a vessel where God lives, we become temples we either bring the kingdom of heaven or retract from it. How often do we want to pause the Kingdom of God?
Sarah Radcliffe,
Riverside Friends

FRIENDS SUMMIT

2023



*MORE
INFO TO
COME*

Spring Body and Leadership Workshop

March 22- 23

Riverside Friends Church

Mason City, IA

SAVE THE DATES

Do you love camp and what to support students who need financial assistance to attend? Please email the office to get more information on what it might look like to donate to the camp scholarship fund!



HIGH SCHOOL CAMP - JUNE 7-12 | MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMP - JUNE 12-16
ELEMENTARY CAMP - JUNE 18-21 | LITTLE FRY CAMP - JUNE 21-23

Our dad and husband went home to his Heavenly Father on December 3, 2023 at 7:15 am. He leaves behind a legacy of love, respect, tolerance, faith and giving. He was soft spoken, intelligent and so very kind. When he spoke he had a way of connecting with all around him, sharing his faith, offering advice and telling questionable dad jokes. He had a way of touching the lives of those who truly needed him.



OBITUARY OF DONALD COFFIN

He is mourned by his wife, Helen (Chandler) of 53 years, his two daughters, Chris and Suzanne, a son-in-law, Steve and two grandchildren, Matthew and

Kathryn, his two sisters, Wanda (Doug) Baker and Dorothy, his brother, Daryl (Pat), and one sister-in-law, Rosamond (Bob) Cumings, and beloved nieces and nephews. Don was born on May 2, 1947. Don is preceded in death by his parents, Howard and Gladys (Watts) Coffin, one sister, Evelyn and his brother-in-law, Doug.

Don graduated from William Penn College majoring in Religion and with minors in Psychology and New Testament Greek and later a Bachelors in Counseling. He attended the Earlham School of Religion in Indiana and graduated seminary with a Masters in Ministry. A pastor for 53 years, he served both Quaker and Methodist churches throughout Iowa. He loved fishing, fixing up old fishing equipment, his time coaching the defensive line in high school football, watching football and most of all, spending time with his grandkids.

He truly believed and lived by his Quaker values and those passed on by his parents. He had such a true and strong relationship with God that he made all around him stronger in faith. We love you dad. We are so grateful that you taught us to be the people we are today.



2024 CALENDAR

JANUARY

- TBD Christian Ed & M&C Roundtable
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FEBRUARY

- 2-3 YAYA Winter Retreat - WinterJam
 - 24 Quaker Men Family Banquet
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MARCH

- 8-17 YAYA Missions Trip
 - 22-23 Spring Body and Elder Workshop
 - 26-27 Pastor's Short Course
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APRIL

- TBD USFW Spring Fling - CQH
 - 27 CQH Spring Work Day
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JUNE

- 7-12 High School Camp
 - 12-16 Middle School Camp
 - 16-22 Kaleo Academy - Barclay College
 - 18-21 Elementary Camp
 - 23-25 Little Fry Camp
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JULY

- 25-28 IAYM Annual Sessions
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OCTOBER

- TBD Pastor's Retreat
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NOVEMBER

- TBD Board on Coordination
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