



West Branch Friends Meeting

March 2021

“Renewal”

It's on it's way! Spring is in the air, and for me, that brings a sense of renewal. I feel refreshed, and reinvigorated and ready to take on new things. This season also brings me a sense of the need to renew my commitment — my commitment to God, to the faith community, to being about God's work in the world, to my efforts to shine God's light in my everyday life. I find it is good for me to revisit that commitment, for it makes me intentional about my prayer, my actions, my dreaming and imagining. It also increases my sense of renewal.

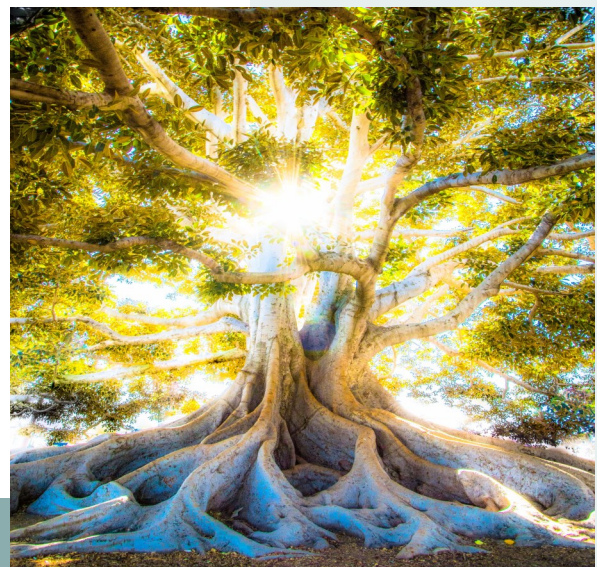
One of the primary ministries on my mind is that of environmental stewardship, or Creation Care. Environmental justice (energy equity, unsafe water in places where poverty reigns, community gardens, etc.) is also a part of this.

I am a member of an advocacy group called Interfaith Power and Light. Each year they send a “kit” to members to help organize for Faith Climate Action Week, which occurs each year around Earth Day.

I would love to see us create and build awareness around environmental stewardship and justice this year during this week. I am trying to put together an ad hoc group that would work on planning and implementing a Faith Climate Action Week in our community.

If this sounds like you, would you let me know? Give me a call at 319-210-4038 or drop me a line at deaconchris@peculiarpilgrimage.org. I am hoping to form the group soon, as Faith Climate Action Week occurs April 16-25. Together, we can renew our commitment to caring for the Earth.

In Riotous Joy,
Pastor Chris





March Anniversaries, Birthdays, and Upcoming Events

Birthdays

March 1: Margaret Hurst

March 13: Ryan Bowers

March 20: Julie Tallman

March 22: Carolyn Hansen

March 26: Otto Jeddeloh

March 27: Stan Hinkhouse

March 28: Ed English

March 29: Alan Bohanan

March 30: Carolyn Meisner

Upcoming Events

March 2: M&C meeting 7:00 pm

March 7: Pre-worship discussion group 9:30 am

March 9: Humans for Racial Justice 5:30 pm

Endowment Meeting 7:00 pm

March 11: WBARC meeting 12:00 pm

March 21: MMFWWATB 11:40 am

March 23: Humans for Racial Justice 5:30 pm

Stewardship meeting 7:00 pm

March 28: Palm Sunday

Each Monday in March: Prayer Group at 9:30 am

MEET NEW FRIENDS

This month I am launching a new column in this newsletter. Each month we will get to know someone new to the meeting. We begin this month with Tom and Lois Long — in their own words...

Since we have been hanging around for a while we thought you might be curious about who Tom and Lois are. We are in the process of moving to West Branch, we purchased a home at 204 Cedar St. last Sept. and are doing some remodeling before we move in around the first of May. We are living at Crown College in St. Bonifacius, MN and coming to Iowa about 1 week each month.

We have been full-timing RVing during the last 3 years and are settling down again but will continue to RV on a casual basis, and during the winter months chasing the sun and warmth. We have a daughter and her family that live in Iowa City, thus our move to West Branch. The reason we are in MN this winter is our son and family are home from Senegal Africa for the year, and we want to be grandma and grandpa up close and in person. They are international workers with the C&MA.

Our faith journey has been, Lois has a Lutheran background and we have been with the C&MA most of our married years (44). Tom grew up EUB then UM. We are looking forward to learning more about the Friends. We have enjoyed our time with you all so far but are excited to meet people in person.

Tom is particularly looking forward to learning more about Scattergood School and Farm. We have a gardening background and are looking forward to learning about No-Till Gardening at the farm.

Thank you and Jim for keeping us informed via emails about what is going on and including us. Please let us know how we can serve you and the church.

Blessings, Tom and Lois Long

BLESSINGS AND PRAYERS

Our Senior Friends

Larry Reiner

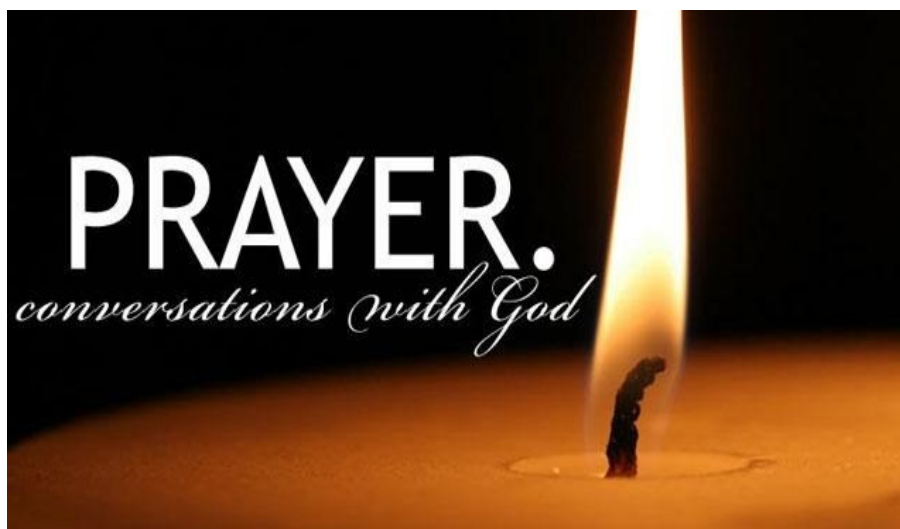
Lois Semotan

Marvin and Fran Fritz

Nancy Stacks

Ed and Maria Denmead

Mildred Torkelson



Joys & Blessings

- New friends joining us in worship
- The joy of gifts shared in worship: our pianists, special music, and children's messages
- Friends helping each other in times of need
- For all those who have received their COVID vaccine
- Lois' 88th birthday
- Jonny and Scott each celebrating their mom's upcoming birthdays and getting to travel to see them
- Larry is grateful for the VA being so close and all the good care he is receiving
- The beauty to be found in the winter season
- Celebrating friendships
- The recovery of the "frozen" calves on the Millett farm
- John Yapp celebrating his daughter Margaret's engagement
- The joys and laughter to be found in sledding — even when you thought you might have "outgrown" it!
- Julie celebrates the opportunity to have a role in worship and her joy in playing the piano

Requests for Prayer

- Mary Denmead and family upon her father's death this past week
- Anita continuing to battle chronic pain as she recovers from nerve ablation
- Larry recovering from surgery
- Diane who continues with cancer treatment
- Racial injustice
- Mental health and the lack of funding for needed services
- The smooth distribution of COVID vaccine
- Margaret Fraser's son-in-law Mark and family as Mark was diagnosed with COVID this week
- Scott's mother and her battle with Alzheimer's. She lives in a rural area — please pray for a placement or other services that will meet her needs
- Lyn's friend Cathy upon the death of her husband



March is Women's History Month! I recommend to you this brief article about the origins of women's history month and on the next page, a BRIEF list of Quaker women and books that will help you learn more about them. Who would be on your list of influential women? Email me and let me know — I would like to get acquainted with these women!

In Riotous Joy,

Pastor Chris

A Brief Chronicle of Women's History Month

Women's History Month got its start as a national celebration in 1981 when Congress asked President Ronald Reagan to proclaim the week beginning March 7, 1982 as Women's History Week. According to the [Library of Congress](#), legislators passed various joint resolutions over the next five years designating a week in March as Women's History Week.

After being petitioned by the National Women's History Project, Congress designated March 1987 as Women's History Month. To add a bit of perspective, we lowered the voting age from 21 to 18 (26th Amendment), launched humans into space, and fought in two World Wars years before women — who [comprise nearly 50 percent of the global population](#), were acknowledged for our contributions to the United States.

Over the next several years, Congress passed additional resolutions asking the president to proclaim March of each year as Women's History Month. Since 1995, presidents have issued a series of annual proclamations designating the month of March as Women's History Month. These proclamations were designed to celebrate the contributions women have made to the United States and to recognize the achievements women have made in a variety of fields. Women's History Month is a vehicle to promote and amplify the work and voices of women who for decades may not have received the respect and acknowledgment they are due.

Women have been powerful ministers in the Religious Society of Friends since its creation in the 17th century, and have made history as spiritually-grounded agents of change. Here are seven Quaker women who made a difference through their talents, determination, and their faith.

Margaret Fell: Founder of the Religious Society of Friends with her future husband George Fox, Margaret Fell was a prolific writer and was imprisoned many times for her support of the budding Quaker movement. Her most famous work, "Women's Speaking Justified," was a pamphlet advocating for women's religious leadership using scripture.

Recommended Reading: [*A Sincere and Constant Love*](#), [*The Quaker Reader*](#)

Mary Dyer: Before she was executed for defying Puritan law, Mary Dyer was an activist and Friend who was dedicated to promoting religious freedom for Quakers despite countless prison sentences and the risk to her own life. Her execution brought about a key provision of the Rhode Island Charter of 1663, which guaranteed religious freedom for settlers of Rhode Island and eventually paved the way for Constitutional rights guaranteeing freedom of worship.

Recommended Reading: [*Mary Dyer: Friend of Freedom*](#)

Sarah Mapps Douglass: Sarah was a scholar, educator, abolitionist, and artist whose legacy has much to teach us now. Her famous watercolor paintings appeared in a rare collection of letters written between friends and represent the earliest surviving signed paintings by an African American woman.

Recommended Reading: [*Sarah Mapps Douglass*](#)

Lucretia Mott: One of the Quaker world's most famous Friends, Lucretia Mott was an abolitionist, a feminist, and a human rights activist. When she and many other women found themselves excluded from the World Anti-Slavery Convention in 1840, Lucretia began forming ideas for promoting equal rights measures for women. She would go on to organize the Seneca Falls Convention with Elizabeth Cady Stanton and was elected the first president of the American Equal Rights Association, a universal suffrage advocacy organization.

Recommended Reading: [*Valiant Friend*](#), [*Angels of Progress*](#)

Sarah Moore Grimké and Angelina Emily Grimké: Born to a life of privilege and wealth in the South, the Grimké sisters renounced their slave-holding heritage to become two of the most celebrated members of the abolitionist movement in the United States. They were also outspoken feminists who became pioneers for women's rights in America.

Recommended Reading: [*Rad American Women A-Z*](#), [*White Allies in the Struggle for Racial Justice*](#)

Alice Paul: One of the central figures in the fight to secure voting rights for women, Alice Paul's Quaker upbringing in Mount Laurel, NJ, heavily influenced her activism. She was also the student of some of the most celebrated Quaker education institutions, including Moorestown Friends School (where she graduated top of her class), Swarthmore College, and the Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham, England.

Recommended Reading: [*Alice Paul and the Fight for Women's Rights*](#)