



West Branch Friends Meeting

January 2021

“Happy Happy New Year”

It's here! It's 2021! Even though our issues don't magically disappear because the date changes, it sure does feel good to flip that calendar page! It also feels good to look personally at the possibilities ahead.

Long ago, I stopped making new year's resolutions. I found that not only did my resolve disappear quickly, most of my resolutions were pretty critical. Every resolution was about improving myself. Now, I believe that life-long learning and growing is not only possible, but necessary. However, most of my resolutions pretty much “slammed” the current me — somehow I didn't feel like I measured up in some area. Measured up to what? Your guess is as good as mine!

For the last several years, instead, I have taken on the practice of finding a Word of the Year. Usually, the word chooses me rather than the other way around. This word acts as a great intention for the year, and a pretty constant notification to pay attention to the world around me and what's going on in it. I have had some great words over the years: joy, shine, play, truth... Last year's word was “continue” from a poem that really captured my attention. Little did I know how appropriate that word would turn out to be in 2020!

For the last 3 years I have led a workshop designed to help others find their WOTY. We go through some reflection processes, and make bracelets with our word engraved on them. This year's workshop is January 10 from 2-4 on Zoom. If you are interested drop me a line at deaconchris@peculiarpilgrimage.org and I can help you get registered.

By the way... my word for this year has already found me. It is “savor”. I look forward to savoring all that God has to offer this year with all of you. Blessings to each of you, and Happy New Year!

In Riotous Joy,
Pastor Chris





January Anniversaries, Birthdays, and Upcoming Events

Birthdays

January 11: Thad Piegors

January 22: Jonny Stax

January 26: Barbara Hatfield

Upcoming Events

January 5: M&C Meeting

January 10: Book Study Discussion Group 9:30 a.m. (**Please note this change from Jan. 3)

January 12: Endowment Meeting

January 17: Monthly Meeting for Business 11:35 a.m.

January 26: Stewardship Meeting

January 31: Special Offering for West Branch Food Pantry
Pastor Chris off — 5th Sunday

Which West Branch Friend Am I?

??????????

My favorite food is: **chocolate**

The best book I ever read (other than the Bible) was: **Jane Eyre**

My favorite hymn is: **Come Thou Found of Every Blessing**

I have lived in: **Ankeny, IA; Allen, TX; Cincinnati, OH; Tecpan, Guatemala; Cedar Falls, IA; Coralville, IA; West Branch**

I have: **2 children**

My favorite color is: **millennial pink**

The scripture most meaningful to me is: **Luke 15:31 “My son, the father said, “you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.”**

My favorite season is: **late Fall**

My favorite thing about West Branch Friends Meeting is: **Eating together, silence during worship, but most of all, unconditional acceptance.**

WHO AM I??

BLESSINGS AND PRAYERS

Our Senior Friends

Larry Reiner

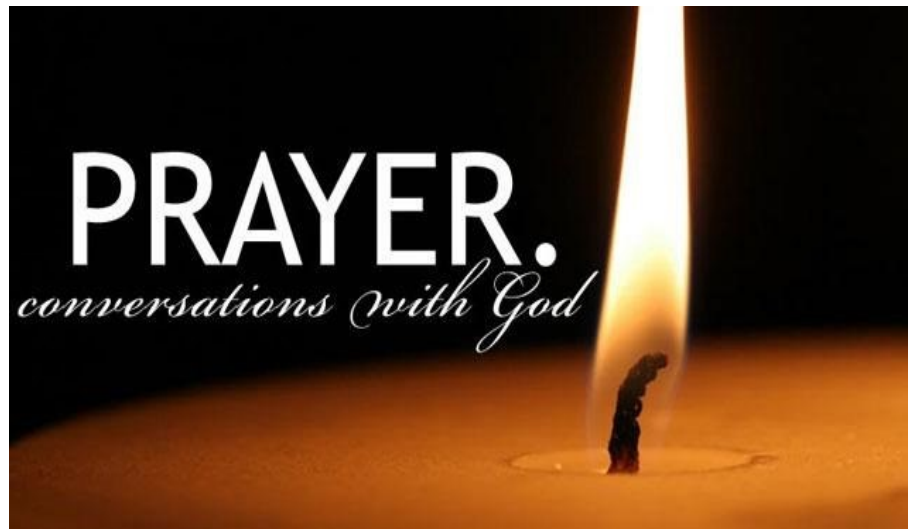
Lois Semotan

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, children's messages
- Friends helping each other in times of need
- Larry's successful surgery and recovery
- Katy's parents moving to Iowa City
- Birthdays and anniversaries

Requests for Prayer

- All those fighting cancer and their families
- Diane, home from the hospital and starting new treatment
- All the front-line workers fighting covid
- All those living and working nursing homes during the pandemic
- Racial injustice
- All those grieving and mourning and marking milestone dates
- Mental health and the lack of funding for needed services
- All those struggling with isolation and loneliness during this time of pandemic
- All those who have contracted the virus
- Everyone connected with schools — teachers, staff, administrators, students, families, making tough decisions during this time of pandemic
- The smooth transfer of power from one administration to another

Roasted Carrot and Red Lentil Ragout

from the kitchen of Elaine Wedeking

Yield 6 servings

Time 1 hour 15 minutes

1 1/2 pounds carrots, peeled

5 tablespoons olive oil

2 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

1 medium onion, sliced thin

3/4 teaspoon ancho chili powder

3/4 teaspoon chipotle chili powder

1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 cup red lentils

5 cups chicken stock

Warm 2 tablespoons oil in a saucepan. Saute carrots and onions. Add the chili powders and the cayenne pepper; cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Stir in the lentils. Add the stock and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 20 to 25 minutes, until the lentils are falling apart. Season with remaining salt and pepper to taste. Serve with rice, or as a thick soup.

Elaine's notes on the recipe: To make this dish truly vegetarian, use vegetable stock instead of chicken stock. Also, we top with a dollop of sour cream or Greek yogurt, which tempers some of the heat.

Bon Appetit!

News from Friends United Meeting:

Samburu Mission Takes Entrepreneurial Training

Katrina and Shawn McConaughy recently spent six days in Samburu with pastors from Samburu, leaders from Turkana, and trainers from the Global Disciples organization. The week was sponsored by Indiana Yearly Meeting and centered around a four-day training course in business for pastors developed by Global Disciples. A similar training happened with the Turkana mission leaders several years ago and has made a significant difference there.

Shawn writes, “The Global Disciples training was meaningful and important for several reasons. For one thing, thirteen Friends pastors and pastors-in-training were introduced to a helpful framework for combining mission and small business. “As in many places, sacred and secular work here gets separated so that pastors feel like they must choose one over the other. This training does a nice job of helping leaders learn to blend the two. It emphasizes the importance of doing business with ministry in mind and of recognizing that ministry can take place outside of a religious framework.

“Scripture was woven throughout the training, and tied to God’s call on us no matter what we doing. I found that a number of Quaker values were highlighted by the curriculum: all persons are ministers; God has equipped us to respond to God’s call on our life; all of life is sacramental, not just church stuff; and God has created us to be holistic in our ministry—all of a person’s life matters to God.

“Breaking down the divisions between secular and sacred work helps pastors to become less reliant on their mission to support them. They become more financially stable, their families are happier, and it helps pastors get out in the community in a different role. FUM has invited all of its ministry partners to consider how they might find ways to become more financially self-sufficient. While the Samburu mission is not fully ready to stand on its own, a workshop like this helps move the mission in that direction .

“Another advantage of this training is that donors have supplied funds so that those who successfully complete the training have access to a revolving loan fund. That fund helps provide up-front capital for several pastors to get a simple business started. Possible businesses could be a small shop, a restaurant, a motorbike taxi, and so on. To request a loan, a participant in the program must submit a solid written business plan, as well as a ministry plan that explains how the business and ministry will be woven together. As loans are repaid, the next-in-line trainees can borrow.

“While unrelated to the content of the Global Disciples training, the workshop also provided an opportunity for Kenyan Friends to develop as leaders. In addition to the Global Disciples staff, three Friends from North Yearly Meeting—led by John Moru, Turkana Friends Mission Director—served as trainers for the workshop. And bringing Friends from Turkana and Samburu together allowed for deeper connection to form among Friends from different parts of Kenya.

“In addition, John Moru, who is well respected by the leadership of Samburu mission, came ready to deepen the relationship between the two missions. The interim administrator of the Samburu mission is quite new to the role and benefits from mentoring by those with more experience. John Moru has taken on the role of mentor.

“Coincidentally, the chair of the Turkana Mission board happens to work and live in Samburu. Therefore, many informal constructive discussions happened throughout the week. These two mission points are growing as partners in the work to which they are called. There is no competition between them, even though the two pastoralist cultures that they represent have historically been at odds with one another. As they lead their people towards a new way of life in faith, they are demonstrating to all those who are watching that peace building is possible.

“We hope to see similar trainings happen in parts of Tanzania or among ministries to the Maasai in Highland, Bware, and Nairobi Yearly Meetings. Or in other places where church growth is hampered by limited resources. While it requires seed money from outside sources to provide the initial loans, and some funds to sponsor a training, the potential benefit for East African Friends is profound.”

This month’s West Branch Friend: Katy Meren-Fuchtman