

# West Branch Friends Meeting

January 2022

## “The Most Basic Blessing”



Friends,

I don't think I'm speaking out of turn when I say out loud that 2021 was not the easiest year we've ever lived through. Then, again, neither was 2020! Despite the many challenges, we have come through, and we would be remiss if we didn't take a moment to identify and celebrate all of the blessings that we also experienced in the last two years.

I look forward to the next year with profound joy and hope. We have a great deal to offer each other, our community, and our greater world as we live as Faithful Friends in this place. What are the greatest hopes of your heart? Share them! How can we live out God's call in this place? Share those ideas too!

I am truly blessed to be part of this warm, caring, discerning community of faith. I thank God daily for each of you and I am profoundly thankful not only for the love gift you gave this Christmas, but the gift of each of you each day.

We are each a blessing in the world and God works amazing things in and through us. I leave you with this contemporary look at Psalm 67 — The Most Basic Blessing. Looking forward to living 2022 with you!

### The Most Basic Blessing

Psalm 67:7 “May God continue to bless us; let all the ends of the earth revere God.”

A blessing is

a small thing, really:

a gift of relationship,

bringing depth and breadth to a communion

both mysterious and self-evident.

The most basic blessing, really:

breath — in and out,

over and over

that gives us life in this world

and welcomes us with love into the next.

In Riotous Joy — Pastor Chris

# BLESSINGS AND PRAYERS

## Our Senior Friends

Larry Reiner

Lois Semotan

Marvin and Fran Fritz

Nancy Stax

Maria Denmead

Mildred Torkelson

Darlene Baum

Pat Bradley



## Joys & Blessings

- Seeing family and friends for the holidays
- Al Bohanan home from the hospital
- New technology — sound and cameras helping to improve the quality of our Zoom worship and the tech committee and Zoom hosts for their dedicated work
- Justin Kane returning to work after shoulder surgery
- The musical gifts shared in worship

## Requests for Prayer

- The family of Marilyn Vincent following her death
- Eddie Starr continuing dialysis
- Lois Semotan with health issues
- Diane Painter resuming chemo
- Marvin and Fran Fritz with health issues
- Maxine's father-in-law Jerry, undergoing dialysis
- Jonny Stax caring for his mother
- Deborah Dee dealing with health issues

## The Ecumenical World Prayer Cycle for January

**December 26, 2021-January 1, 2022:** Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Taiwan

**January 2-January 8:** TBA

**January 9-January 15:** TBA

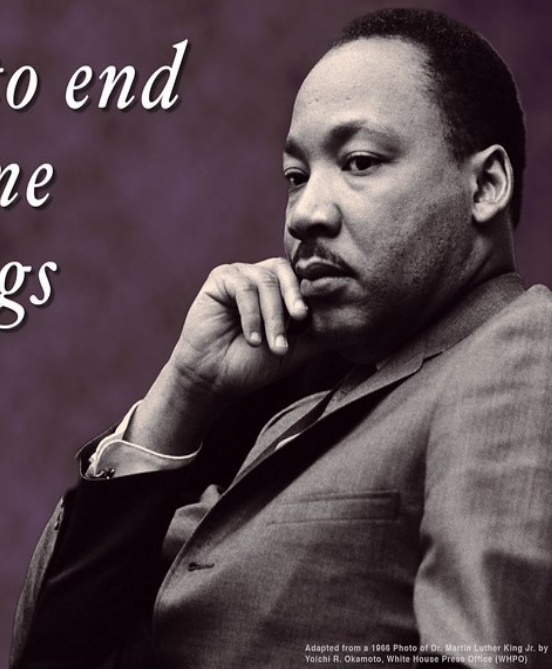
**January 16-January 22:** TBA

**January 23-January 29:** TBA

**January 30-February 5:** TBA

*Our lives begin to end  
the day we become  
silent about things  
that matter.*

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*



Adapted from a 1966 Photo of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by Yoichi R. Okamoto, White House Press Office (WHPO)

## **Upcoming Events**

- January 4: M&C meeting 7:00 pm
- January 11: Endowment meeting 7:00 pm
- January 16: Monthly Meeting 11:45
- MLK Day celebration 2-4 pm Town Hall sponsored by Humans for Racial Justice
- January 17: MLK Day Observed
- January 24: Humans for Racial Justice 7:00 pm
- January 25: Stewardship meeting 7:00 pm
- January 30: Special Offering for WB Food Pantry

- Gathering Music each Sunday 10:20 am
- Meeting for Worship Sunday 10:30 am
- Prayer Group Mondays 9:30 am at the meetinghouse

## **January Anniversaries, Birthdays, and Upcoming Events**

### **Birthdays**

- January 11: Thad Piegors
- January 22: Jonny Stax
- January 26: Barbara Hatfield
- January 27: Whitt Bowers



# Friends Committee on National Legislation

It's time to discern our legislative priorities!

A distinctive feature of the Friends Committee on National Legislation is our practice of asking Quakers around the country to help shape our work.

## UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS: SETTING LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

### 1. NATIONWIDE QUAKER DISCERNMENT

Every two years, FCNL asks Friends and their meetings, churches, and other groups all over the country to discern **which public policy issues they feel are most pressing for the next Congress**. These groups highlight [legislative priorities](#) from the many topics and questions identified in FCNL's Policy Statement, "[The World We Seek](#)."

### 2. POLICY COMMITTEE

Next, the 13-member FCNL Policy Committee, appointed by the 200 Friends on General Committee, reads all the responses and meets together to consider what meetings, churches, groups, and individuals are telling FCNL.

For each concern raised, the committee considers how that area is supported in the FCNL Policy Statement and the historic leadings of Friends. The committee also considers the capacity of staff, the financial resources of FCNL, and the potential role of FCNL and other groups working on the issues. Finally, the committee considers whether a chosen issue is likely to come before the upcoming Congress.

The committee makes difficult choices among the many advances we would all like to make toward the World We Seek, **knowing that if we try to do everything, we will do nothing well**.

### 3. GENERAL COMMITTEE AT ANNUAL MEETING

The Policy Committee brings its recommendation to the FCNL General Committee meeting for final discernment in the November Annual Meeting. The General Committee may choose to accept the recommended priorities or ask for further modifications. Throughout the discussion, however, the priorities discerned by Friends across the country remain at the center of the Committee's consideration.

**\*\*Keep your eyes and ears open for word from our clerk, Gwen Senio on the date for our meeting to discern and discuss the priorities we see going forward.**