

# West Branch Friends Meeting

## September 2022

### “What Matters to You?”



Many of you know that a guiding scripture in my life is Micah 6:8 — “And he has told you mortal what is good, and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God?” I pray daily that I (with Spirit’s help, or course) am able to keep these words in my heart and mind and try to live accordingly. Two other sets of words are also guides in my spiritual journey: The Prayer of St. Francis and this line from the Lord’s Prayer: “on earth as it is in heaven”.

It is no secret I feel that seeking justice, working for justice, noting injustice are all traits of people of faith. In that vein, I celebrate the efforts of our meeting to aid the Domestic Violence Intervention Program in covering their enormous shortfall (a result of deep cuts in government funding). We embraced this opportunity to be part of their important mission and were able to raise \$3, 489 for their cause. DVIP is doing important, essential work and I am so glad we can be a small part of helping that work to continue.

I celebrate also the work of Humans for Racial Justice in their continuing efforts to educate and raise awareness of the need for racial justice in our land. Their booth at Hoover Hometown Days brought much needed information to our community, and they continue to work at expanding their reach.

In this newsletter, I have included an opinion column written by Bridget Moix, the General Secretary of Friends Committee on National Legislation. In it, she sheds light on Quaker involvement in a history of horrific treatment of our Indigenous brothers and sisters in the boarding school era. I encourage you to read it, as this involves each of us who would claim the name “Friend”. What acts of repentance, reconciliation, and reparation could we be about concerning this issue? I welcome your thoughts and suggestions.

I also welcome your thoughts on the issues of justice that are near and dear to you. What causes spur you to action? What makes you want to be a witness of faith in the world — and in what ways? I look forward to these discussions — drop me a line and let me know what’s on your heart, and when we might get together to talk about it!

**In Riotous Joy,**  
**Pastor Chris**

# A reckoning on Native boarding schools is long overdue

*THE MORE WE LEARN, THE MORE WE SEE GAPING HOLES BETWEEN OUR COUNTRY'S TRADITIONAL NARRATIVE AND THE REALITIES OF HOW OUR NATION WAS BUILT AND WHO PAID THE COSTS.*

By

[Bridget Moix](#) (Bridget is the General Secretary of Friends Committee on National Legislation)

(RNS) — Like many white Americans, I grew up learning a relatively neat and sanitized version of our country's past. The depictions of history taught in my Ohio Catholic school emphasized our national triumphs, glossed over our shortcomings and depicted America as a chosen nation grounded in equality and freedom for all.

But the more we learn, the more we see gaping holes between our country's traditional narrative and the realities of how our nation was built and who paid the costs. As painful as it can be, we simply cannot create a more just nation without filling in those gaps with the complicated truth of our past.

We were reminded of this in May, when the U.S. Department of the Interior released the first volume of the Federal Boarding School Initiative's long-awaited investigative report. The initiative, first created by Interior Secretary Deb Haaland in June 2021, was established to document the harms caused by Native boarding schools operated throughout the country in the 19th and 20th centuries. As the report makes clear, those harms were immense — and their impact continues today.

Between 1819 and 1969, across 37 states, there were 408 schools and more than 1,000 other institutions involved in educating Native children, including day schools, orphanages, and asylums. These institutions were sponsored by the federal government and administered by a number of Christian denominations, including my current faith community, Quakers.

The "assimilation" tactics employed at the schools were brutal. They included renaming children with English names, cutting their hair, prohibiting the use of Native languages and religions, extensive military drills and manual labor. Abuse was commonplace, including the use of solitary confinement and the withholding of food.

A number of these schools were established and run by the Religious Society of Friends. In an 1869 letter, Edward Shaw, a Friends from Richmond, Indiana, wrote that Quakers aimed "to protect, to Civilize, and to Christianize our Red Brethren." Charles Eastman, a Lakota physician described the treatment he experienced at the Santee School, a Quaker-run institution in Nebraska: "We youthful warriors were held up and harassed...until not a semblance of our native dignity and self-respect was left."

Beyond cultural genocide, the schools also played a key role in the broader effort to grab land from Native Americans. The report found the schools would discourage tribal agricultural practices, which required less land, in favor of Western practices. To support these practices, tribal members were then encouraged to purchase goods on credit. When they fell into debt, they had no option but to cede lands to the U.S. as payment.

It was a pernicious and evil system. Yet, until this new report, there was little governmental interest in researching and addressing this devastating period. The creation of the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative is a strong start, but far more remains to be done.

For one, Congress must build upon the word done by the Boarding School Initiative. Lawmakers can do so by swiftly passing the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the U.S. Act (H.R. 5444/S.2907), which will be marked up this month. (June 2022). If enacted, it would establish the first formal commission in our history to investigate and address the harms committed — and critically, ensure the progress isn't derailed by any change in administrations. We continue to advocate for this bill in solidarity with Indigenous partners like the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition and the National Congress of American Indians.

This reckoning must also extend beyond the government. Faith communities, including Quakers, were undeniably complicit in the historic trauma of the boarding school era. We have a moral obligation to share records and accounts of the administration of these schools as investigations continue. In the Quaker community, which does not have a centralized governing body, individual meetings have begun taking on this responsibility.

The truth is, we cannot undo the harm caused by these institutions. It is a permanent stain on our history. But by fully acknowledging the sins of the past, we can begin taking steps to chart a more just relationship with Native communities nationwide. It's time, at long last, to shine a light on this dark chapter of American history and take the next steps toward reckoning and repair.

# September Worship Servants

## September 4

Greeter: Lyn Kane

Zoom Host: Teresa Winder

Special Music: Lucas McCracken

Children's Message: Sue McCracken

Piano: Lucas McCracken

## September 11

Greeter: Stan Hinkhouse

Zoom Host: Dick Hinkhouse

Special Music:

Children's Message: Sue McCracken

Piano:

\*Pastor Chris out; Message by Sue M.

## September 18

Greeter: Gordon Edgar

Zoom Host: Maxine Koepp

Special Music:

Children's Message: Kathleen Darling

Piano:

## September 25

Greeter: Maxine Koepp

Zoom Host: Lyn Kane

Special Music:

Children's Message: Joan Blundall

Piano:

# Your Gifts are Needed!

We have a great group of kids in our meeting — both in the room and on Zoom. They're looking for fun adults to hang out with during Children's Church each Sunday morning.

Each Sunday, after children's message in meeting for worship, the kids head downstairs for a lesson and our kids on Zoom login to join them. We have a fun and interesting curriculum that the kids enjoy — in fact, often our kids lead the discussion!

Could you be that adult who fosters an open, safe, sharing environment for our kids? Could you be that cool adult who knows that hanging out with our kids is the best place to be?

Children's Church begins September 11 and continues through the school year. Please prayerfully consider learning with our kids at least one Sunday this year. Contact Hilda Bowers for details!



## September Anniversaries and Birthdays

### Birthdays

September 1: Suzanne Wedeking

September 4: Ted Bowers

September 6: Morgan Draiocht  
John Yapp

September 7: Brent Waters

September 8: Ben Bowers

September 16: Brantley Alvarez

September 25: Lyn Kane

September 29: Joseph Cermak  
Geery Howe

September 30: Caleb Dlouhy

### Upcoming Events

**September 4:** Potluck Picnic at Hoover Park  
after worship

**September 5:** Labor Day

**September 6:** M&C 7:00 pm

**September 13:** Endowment 7:00 pm

**September 18:** Monthly Meeting for Business

**September 26:** Humans for Racial Justice

**September 27:** Stewardship 7:00 pm

Gathering Music each Sunday 10:20 am

Meeting for Worship Sunday 10:30 am

Prayer Group Mondays 9:30 am at the  
meetinghouse

### Anniversaries

September 14: Allan & Teresa Winder

September 15: Dustin & Cassey Bowers

September 22: Jim Glasson & Kathleen  
Darling



# BLESSINGS AND PRAYERS

## Our Senior Friends

Larry Reiner

Lois Semotan

Fran Fritz

Nancy Stax

Maria Denmead

Mildred Torkelson

Darlene Baum

Pat Bradley

Sheila Tallman

## Joys & Blessings

The success of our fundraiser for DVIP

The joy of the Hymn Sing & pie social during Hoover Hometown Days

Julie's dog Sid — lost in the wilds of Northern Minnesota— has been found and is back home

Jim & Kathleen's trip to Scotland to explore and visit Meredith

Jennifer Peck marking the 5th anniversary of the car accident that almost killed her — she is VERY glad to be here — and we celebrate with her



## Requests for Prayer

The Hemingway family after Loren's death

Erin Senio and family upon the death of her father

Eddie Starr and family upon the death of his sister Deb

Maxine and extended family upon the death of two family members

Malia and family upon the death of two dear friends

Joan's brother David hospitalized with covid and pneumonia

Matt Scott's mother in the hospital

Abe Scott recovering at home after a skateboard fall and a broken arm

## The Ecumenical World Prayer Cycle for September

**August 28-September 3:** Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal

**September 4-September 10:** Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Togo

**September 11-September 17:** Ghana, Nigeria

**September 18-September 24:** Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay

**September 25-October 1:** Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Peru