

NOVEMBER 2025

# NOTES FROM FRIENDS

The monthly newsletter of West Branch Friends Church



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## It's all about perspective...

**Perspective: a particular attitude toward or way of regarding something; a point of view**

When I taught Confirmation classes in the United Methodist Church, I used to tell my students this: "I want you to be able to articulate where you stand, what you believe, especially in the face of a world screaming at you that you're stupid for standing there. And I want you to be able to do this while **always** remaining open to **at least** one more new idea."

When we are able to stop and hear or see someone's perspective, things change. There is an opportunity to find common ground, or to build bridges. Willingness to look at another's perspective does not mean you have to adopt it, or even agree with it. It simply means you are open to an understanding that they are looking at something through another lens, or from a different place. Mutual regard and respect can come from this. It is my prayer to remain humble, teachable, gentle, and grounded – to maintain perspective and to gain perspective. Please God, may it be so.

Love Big, Be Well,

*Chris*



# *Testimony of the Month*

## **Peace**

### **Clearing Pathways; Building Bridges**

**At its best, peace is less about eliminating threats and conquering discord and more about disarming the distress caused by our differences. In effect, it takes away the occasion for war. Imagine a world where our commonality eliminates the urge to hate rather than love or to conquer rather than coexist, and you will have caught a glimpse of peace as a testimony.**

### **Toward a Testimony of Peace Questions for Further Reflection**

1. In living with others, what are ways that you can help eliminate the unnecessary conflict and especially the escalation of disagreements toward violence?
2. Can you identify particular hot button issues where you find it difficult to maintain composure conducive to maintaining a commitment to peace? What makes these topics so controversial? What steps can you take to defuse them?
3. Philosophically or theologically, is peace always the right commitment? Why or why not?
4. When you survey locations where violence repeatedly prevails, can you determine its root causes and imagine ways to restore wholeness?
5. As you face differences with others, how will you commit to actions that unite rather than divide?

# Time for Prayer



## Pray for Our Elders

Darlene Baum  
Pat Bradley  
Maria Denmead  
Fran Fritz  
Mary Humrichouse  
Pat Langrehr  
Donna Mortenson  
Larry Reiner  
Lois Semotan  
Nancy Stacks  
Mildred Torkelson

## Joys & Concerns

- *Allan & Teresa as Allan goes through treatment*
- *Jeff's upcoming surgery*
- *Shawn's girlfriend Sharon with health issues*
- *Johnny's friend Mike with health issues*
- *Mary's friends' adopted son struggling with the current attitudes and actions toward immigrants from other countries particularly Central and South America*
- *Hunger and food insecurity in our communities*
- *Ramallah Friends School during this time of war and famine*

## Ecumenical Prayer Cycle for November

**Oct. 26-Nov. 1:** *The Caribbean: Anguilla, Antigua&Barbuda, Barbados, Bonaire, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guadalupe Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, Saba, St. Barts, St. Eustacia, Saint Martin, St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad&Tobago, Turks&Caicos, US Virgin Islands*

**Nov. 2-Nov. 8:** *Canada, United States of America*

**Nov. 9-Nov. 15:** *Oceania: American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kanaky, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu*

**Nov.16-Nov.22:** *Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia*

**Nov. 23-Nov. 29:** *East Timor, Indonesia, Philippines*

**Nov. 30-Dec. 6:** *Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore*

## Friends World News: November 2025

Dear Friends,

I'm delighted to share that [World Quaker Day 2025](#) was a resounding success!

We've now received reports of nearly 80 events in Aotearoa, Australia, Bolivia, Burundi, Canada, Denmark, France, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Malta, Mexico, Peru, The Philippines, El Salvador, South Africa, Uganda, UK, Ukraine, USA and Zimbabwe, including the following highlights:

- In Accra, Friends from across Africa gathered to celebrate 100 year of Ghana's Hill House Meeting
- In Australia, an international online meeting was hosted with FWCC clerk Esther Mombo as a speaker
- In Paris, Friends from across Europe and the Middle East gathered to talk about peace and service
- In Richmond (Indiana), Friends from 4 meetings sang and worshipped together in English & Spanish
- In Tacna, visitors from Bolivia joined the congregation of 'Nueva Esperanca' Friends Church across the border in Peru

Various events centred around creative activities, including screenings of the recently released [Living Ubuntu](#) documentary, Quaker art exhibitions, music and drama performances.

Others undertook various acts of service and compassion, like Kamenge Friends Church who raised funds to help a [patient detained at the local hospital to pay her medical bills](#).

We secured a fair amount of coverage in Quaker media, including a preparatory video recording for [QuakerSpeak](#), as well as two pieces in non-Quaker media – the [BBC Daily Service](#) and [Sight Magazine](#) (Australia).

We were also glad to see three other pieces in local or faith-based media titles, [Times Colonist](#) (Canada), in [Ghana News Agency](#), and on South East Radio (Ireland).

Find the full story on our website [here](#), and other reports on [our Facebook page](#).

One of World Quaker Day's concluding events was a Love Your Neighbour themed Global Online Worship hosted by the Section of the Americas, where Sandra Elizabeth Espinoza was announced the winner of the [Quaker Hymn Contest in Spanish](#), with a song called 'Buscando la Verdad' ('Seeking the Truth' in English).

With the Section-led Global Online Worships having been well received and attended this year, they will continue to be held into 2026. Stay tuned for the next one.

Also this month, the annual in-person Central Executive Committee and the AWPS Section Gathering both took place in Seoul, South Korea.

One big decision was confirmation that on World Quaker Day 2026 (4 October) we will host a massive open online worship meeting. The committee also agreed a holding position on the use of Artificial Intelligence. Read future editions of Friends World News online for further updates.

On a personal note, it has been a deep honour and a blessing to work with so many of you to make World Quaker Day happen this year.

From planning thoughtful events and activities, to inviting and involving Friends and communities near and far, the power of your faith in action has been truly remarkable.

Thank you for all you have done and continue doing to Love Your Neighbour.

In Friendship,

Ruby Cumming

On behalf of the World Office



**The North American and Caribbean Board of Friends United Meeting write:**

**Dear Friends,**

**We will put the bad news first: at our current income and expenditure rate, FUM will not have sufficient operating funds to remain open by July of 2026.**

**We understand that this may come as shocking news, and we're taking some actions to improve the situation. Keep reading to learn more.**

**The Board has been aware of the magnitude of our financial crisis for several months now; in late spring, we were startled to learn that we were not certain we would make payroll. Rather than release bad news in a piecemeal fashion, we took some time to fully understand the problem. We assessed all our various forms of income and expenditures, looked at historical trends to understand how much of our current situation is temporary and how much is an ongoing problem, asked Lloyd Stangeland of Iowa Yearly Meeting to serve as our temporary CFO, and worked to reconcile bookkeeping errors.**

**Over time, overall giving to FUM has risen—especially for designated ministry work. What has not kept pace is support for the Ministry Support Fund, which covers the administrative expenses of FUM's work. While most of our individual ministries have sufficient funding for themselves, for the past several months our administrative expenses have exceeded income by an average of about \$34,000 a month. In the past twenty years, contributions from Yearly Meetings that funded our administrative work have decreased significantly. Individual donations have risen, but not quickly enough to make up the difference. The costs of doing our work have risen tremendously. We also experienced unexpected complications with a transfer between bookkeeping systems, which obscured the seriousness of our financial predicament.**

## **Friends United Meeting continued....**

**We, the Board, are profoundly sorry to Friends for the role our own inaction has played in this crisis. Our audits have not been done in a timely fashion, internal financial controls have been missing, and we did not ensure that good accounting practices were being followed. We have not been careful enough in reviewing financial information given to us or in developing the ability of new board members to understand FUM's complex financial structure.**

**In response to this crisis, we are taking several steps...**

**Read the rest of the letter from the Board here (link opens as a PDF).**

**If you have questions, you can use the Contact List below to get in touch with your representatives or other members of the Board. The Board is meeting in a called session on Friday, October 24th, to consider the Fiscal Year 2026 budget. Please pray that Board members will be open to hearing God's wisdom and able to hear how the Spirit is calling Friends forward.**

**In Peace,**

**Sarah Lookabill**

**Presiding Clerk of the Friends United Meeting Board**



## **AED Training a Great Success!**

**Have you seen the latest edition to our meetinghouse? We now have a defibrillator to use in case of emergency in worship or during a meeting. Thanks to the Trustees for this addition. Thanks to Sandy and Cindy Heick for offering training (as well as community CPR training), and thanks to all who attended the training. If you were unable to attend, don't worry. If you ever need to use the defibrillator, the device itself will talk you through the procedure. The AED is located in the front entrance directly across from Chet's desk.**

## **Our New Organ Is Here!**

**Many thanks to Allan Winder for tracking down, transporting, and moving our new organ. It was not easy to find an organ in good condition for a reasonable price, but Allan managed it! Many thanks also to those who helped Allan with the installation. We look forward to the worshipful sounds of our new organ in the near future!**



## Upcoming Events to Consider

### Christmas Past Free Community Brunch

**Saturday, December 6 9:00 am**

*Opportunities: Breakfast/brunch dishes, pastries/baked goods  
Serving and other hospitality; set-up and tear-down*

**Interested in helping?** *Sign-up sheets will be shared in meeting for worship each Sunday. Or... contact Chris at [christine@homeforthewildsoul.com](mailto:christine@homeforthewildsoul.com) Thanks in advance!*



### Spiritual Growth and Practice Group You're Invited!

**Mondays, January 12-February 23  
6:30 pm online on Zoom**

We will be using the resource  
*The Cup of Our Life* by Joyce Rupp  
(no need to purchase a book for participation)

**Interested?** Contact Chris at  
[christine@homeforthewildsoul.com](mailto:christine@homeforthewildsoul.com)  
or sign-up on the clipboard in  
meeting for worship on Sundays.



## **Featured Recipe: Ginger Snap Cookies from the kitchen of Pendle Hill**

**Seasonal baked goods are the star of the show this time of year! These spicy, comforting cookies are always a welcome treat at the end of a cold day. Makes 27 cookies**

### **Ingredients:**

**2 cups butter  
4 cups brown sugar  
2 eggs  
1/2 cup molasses  
1/2 Tbsp vanilla  
2 Tbsp cocoa powder  
1 1/4 tsp cinnamon  
1 1/4 tsp ginger  
3/4 tsp cloves  
1/4 tsp salt  
4 cups flour  
1 Tbsp baking soda**



### **Directions:**

**Preheat oven to 350 degrees F and line your baking sheets with parchment.**

**In a large bowl or mixer, cream together butter and brown sugar. Slowly add the rest of your wet ingredients and mix until just combined.**

**In a separate bowl, sift together all dry ingredients. While the mixer is running on the lowest speed, slowly add the dry mixture to the wet mixture until just combined.**

**Scoop generously portioned cookies onto your lined baking sheets with enough room between each to allow cookies to spread as they bake. Optional: refrigerate dough for an hour before baking to limit cookie spreading during baking.**

**Bake for 12 minutes, or until they're crisp to your preference. Enjoy with a mug of something hot and comforting!**

# WORSHIP SERVANTS



## **November 2**

**Greeter:** Gordon Edgar  
**Zoom Host:** Jim Glasson  
**Piano:** Julie Tallman  
**Special Music:** Mary Denmead  
**Children's Message:** Chris Humrichouse

## **November 9**

**Greeter:** Maureen Arensdorf  
**Zoom Host:** Maxine Koepp  
**Piano:** Gwen Senio  
**Children's Message:** Sue McCracken

## **November 16**

**Greeter:** Gordon Edgar  
**Zoom Host:** Teresa Winder  
**Piano:** Julie Tallman  
**Children's Message:** Kathleen Darling

## **November 23**

**Greeter:** Gordon Edgar  
**Zoom Host:** Dick Hinkhouse  
**Piano:** Gwen Senio  
**Children's Message:** Joan Blundall

## **November 30 (Chris out)**

**Greeter:** Hilda Bowers  
**Zoom Host:** Connie Petersen  
**Piano:** Julie Tallman  
**Children's Message:** Sue McCracken