

AUGUST 2025

# NOTES FROM FRIENDS

The monthly newsletter of West Branch Friends Church



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## A Word from Quaker Poet Nancy Thomas

### Just Asking

Ephesians 4:1-3

Was it optimistic naivete  
when Paul told the children of God  
to *make every effort*  
to *keep the unity of the Spirit*  
in the *bond of peace*?

Church history suggests that.  
More than geography  
and the accidents of birth  
have divided the body  
of Christ. While Jesus  
responded with silence  
to Pilate's question,  
*What is truth?*,

the church has squabbled,  
split, and splintered its multitudinous  
answers down through  
the centuries, Even we Quakers  
in the northwest corner  
of a country once known  
for its open arms  
have sacrificed our reputation  
as people of peace  
to propound our separate versions  
of gospel truth. Now, victims all  
of the resulting divorce,  
we seek revival and hope  
to once again walk  
worthy of our calling.



## *Query for the Month*

**Take a moment to read and ponder the poem on the  
previous page.**

*What questions and thoughts arise in you as  
you consider the poem “Just Asking”?*

# Meeting for Worship



*Join us in meeting for worship Sundays at 10:30.*

This month we will explore Quaker revivals and the challenges of faith

## Worship Servants

August 3  
Greeter: Maureen Arensdorf  
Zoom Host: Dick Hinkhouse  
Children's Message: Sue McCracken  
Special Music:  
Piano: Gwen Senio

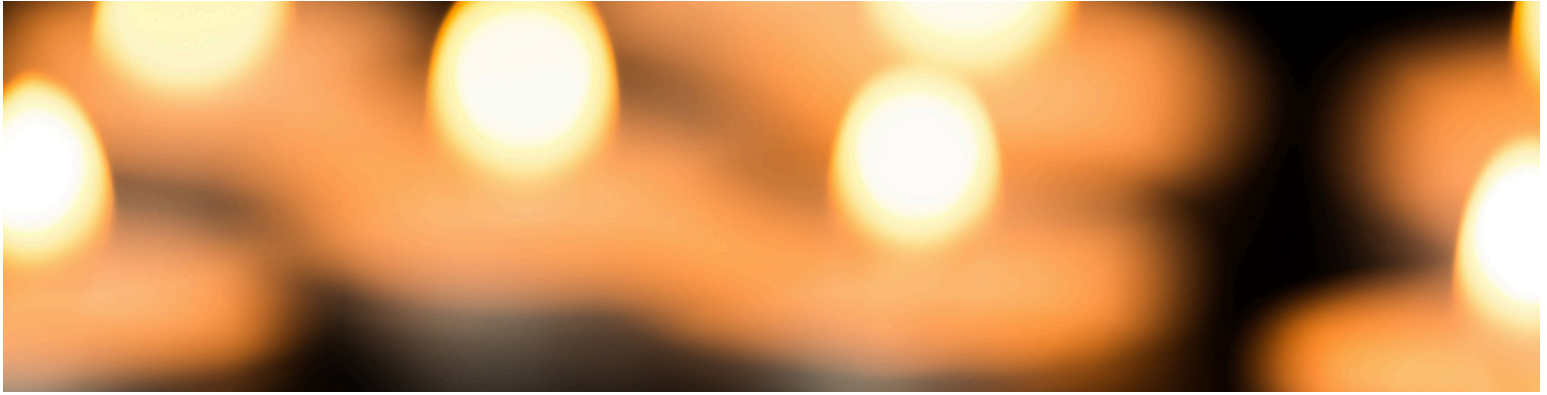
August 10  
Greeter: Hilda Bowers  
Zoom Host: Teresa Winder  
Children's Message: Kathleen Darling  
Special Music:  
Piano: Julie Tallman

August 17  
Greeter: Carolyn Hansen  
Zoom Host:  
Children's Message: Joan Blundall  
Special Music: Mary Denmead  
Piano: Gwen Senio

August 24  
Greeter: Gordon Edgar  
Zoom:  
Children's Message: Joan Blundall  
Special Music:  
Piano: Julie Tallman

August 31  
Greeter:  
Zoom:  
Children's Message: Sue McCracken  
Special Music: Lucas McCracken  
Piano: Lucas McCracken

# Time for Prayer



## Joys & Concerns

### 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*

- Carolyn H. received good news from her cardiac follow-up
- The Starrs have sold Lois' house!
- Ed A. recovering after a recent stroke
- Allan and Teressa as Allan begins a new treatment plan
- Joan dealing with rheumatoid arthritis flare-ups
- Tali starting a new school
- The start of school for everyone later this month

## Ecumenical Prayer Cycle for July

July 27-August 2: *Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda*  
August 3-August 9: *Republic of Congo, Gabon, Sao Tome, Principe*  
August 10-August 16: *Cameroon, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea*  
August 17-August 23: *Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger*  
August 24-August 30: *Liberia, Sierra Leone*  
August 31-Sept. 6: *Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal*

### Prayer for the start of school – a prayer for new beginnings:

Dear God, we pray for teachers, educators, and school administrators as they begin the new school year. Thank you for the men and women who have dedicated their careers to teaching and leading. We pray that classrooms and school buildings can be a place where love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control flourish. May they all have energy, creativity, and an abundance of compassion. Protect their mental and physical health as they work hard to create safe places of learning. God, we also pray for students and learners. Give them minds that are eager to learn. Give them courage to ask good questions, confidence to take risks, and the discipline to focus and study. We pray for quality friendships and safety in and out of the classroom. We pray that learning is engaging, valuable, and exciting. Give the students focus and direction as they prepare for what lies ahead.

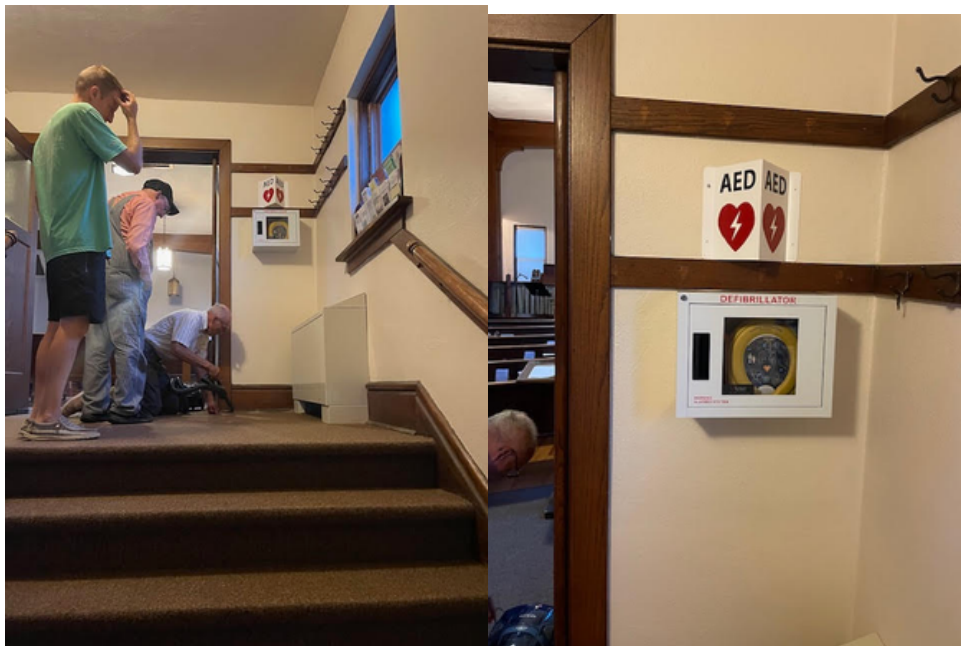


# Around the Meetinghouse

## What Are Those Trustees Up To Now?

If an emergency ever arises during worship - or any other event in our building - we can now respond to that emergency – eliminating minutes of waiting for personnel to arrive!

Thanks to our Trustees and the Rotary Kerber Heartsafe Community Campaign, we now have an AED in the meetinghouse. Located on the upper landing, the AED is accessible – and usable - by anyone in attendance, should the need arise. While the device comes equipped to walk you through the use of the defibrillator step-by-step; training is also available through our local EMTs. Trustees are working to coordinate a date.



Other Trustees projects in the works:

- New address numbers on our church building. (Can you locate them?)
- New flooring in the lower level. (Check out the samples when you're in the building and make your opinion known!)

Thanks to our Trustees for keeping our building safe, beautiful, and shipshape!

# Special Worship Services Coming Soon

## Sunday August 24

Annie Glen, the new Field Secretary for the New Association of Friends (our yearly meeting), will be visiting our meeting on this Sunday. She will bring the message in meeting for worship and join us for potluck at 11:30. Please join us in welcoming Annie and showing her some real West Branch Friends hospitality.

## Sunday, August 31

Our own dear Sue McCracken will bring the message on this Fifth Sunday. Sue's son Lucas will be bringing his engaging piano style to our hymns on this Sunday and will also provide special music. Let's welcome Lucas and his family back to our meeting and enjoy the gifts that all of the McCracken family bring to our worship!





**From Nan Fawcett:**

**Earthcare Working Group, August Meeting**

**Where: Prairie Hill Cohousing, 140 Prairie Hill Lane, Iowa City**

**When: Saturday, August 2, 2:00 in common house living room,  
1st floor**

*Dear Friends,*

*We're looking forward to our third session of our newly resurrected organization and have an interesting meeting planned. As usual, there'll be plenty of time for discussion and sharing of opinions as well as a time for snacks in the middle of the meeting. Our main speaker will be Becky Ross. She's a founding member of 100 Grannies for a Livable Future and has been chair of the committee on plastics for many years. We're fortunate to have her come and share with us! She'll be speaking to us about the plastic crises that we are in. She will talk about health concerns and how you can use less plastic. Knowing what plastic is doing to us and every other creature on this planet helps keep her and us on the right track. She will bring items that she uses daily that you can find online or in local stores that do not come packaged in plastic. You are welcome to bring your own stories and discoveries about plastics to share.*

*At this meeting, we'll also be planning to participate in the Iowa City Club Fair on September 7th, where we'll have a table to spread the word about earthcare and our organization.*

*So far, our meetings have been inspiring and a good time to get to know each other and share about our own forays into caring for our planet and our home environments. Feel free to bring your friends and neighbors. The meeting will last about 2 hours. For more information, you can email me at [nanjfawcett@gmail.com](mailto:nanjfawcett@gmail.com). We hope to see you on the 2nd!*



# HISPICS Is Here!!

**Come one, come all and make sure to invite others!**

Our annual Hymn Sing, Pie and Ice Cream Social will take place Saturday, August 9, as part of Hoover Hometown Days. Hymn Sing begins at 4:30 with pie and ice cream served at approximately 5:15.

Let everyone know!

HISPICS Helpers: Please look at the sign-up sheet to double-check your assignments.

We are still in need of: one gallon of ice cream, one gallon of lemonade, and one set-up or take-down person.

*Thanks everyone!*

