

□ Special events and seminars designed to inspire and equip local meetings. Recent examples have included a “Christ Summit” with David Bryant, a “Small Church – Big Impact” seminar, workshops for monthly meeting treasurers, and “Day Away” retreats for Ministry & Oversight members.

Discipleship of New and Existing Members and Attendees

People need the basic skills to be mature Christians: knowledge of the Bible, an up-to-date understanding of our Christian witness, familiarity and support for our Quaker missions, and the ability to speak confidently to other people about what we have discovered in Christ. Indiana Yearly Meeting supports these efforts through:

- A full camping program offered for all ages at Quaker Haven Camp
- Development of resources such as “IYM Quakers,” an eight-week curriculum designed for use by small groups, Sunday School classes, or new-member seminars
- Church planting efforts; IYM has recently sponsored or supported the launch of two Hispanic Friends Churches
- Disciple-making efforts around the world are supported generously through the IYM missions giving
- Scholarship assistance for life-changing short-term missions trips are available for members of IYM meetings wanting to experience first-hand how God is at work in other lands
- Support of IYM affiliate organizations like Quaker Haven Camp and White’s Residential & Family Services where lives are consistently impacted, and disciples are being made

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□ Yearly Meeting Sessions designed to include inspiration, training and opportunities for spiritual growth

Leadership Development

We need to identify, encourage, train, and hold accountable, leaders for our local meetings, yearly meeting, and missions, using both their natural talents and their God-given spiritual gifts. Ways that we seek to do this include:

- Providing opportunities for pastors to gather for support, inspiration and training at monthly pastor gatherings, occasional pastor summits, and the annual summer Pastors Short Course and Mid-Winter Retreat
- Financial assistance for formal ministerial education as well as seminars/workshops
- IYM staff includes a Ministerial Advocate whose role is to support and encourage pastors and help meetings learn how to do the same
- A Ministerial Excellence Fund is available to provide matching dollars to help alleviate financial burdens faced by IYM pastors
- An Independent Studies Program is available for those under the care of the Recording Committee or individuals seeking to be equipped for future ministry
- Access to professional coaching for IYM pastors with initial sessions available without cost
- Retired pastors or missionaries with financial need can find support through the IYM Disbursing Board’s monthly gifts to qualifying ministers. Friends Fellowship Community may also provide retirement housing to qualifying pastors and missionaries.

Come, Let Us Gather!

The Benefits of Belonging



**Indiana Yearly Meeting
of Friends**

Primitive Christianity Revived

We believe that George Fox and the early Friends did not set out to create a new denomination. They were simply hungry for a personal relationship with God. Many were disillusioned, having failed to experience this through church membership despite faithfully reciting its creeds and participating in its rites. Fox's discovery that, "There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition," resonated not only with his own heart but with the hearts of tens of thousands in 17th century England. The result was a spontaneous spiritual movement that swept over that land and even spread across the seas to America. This movement has been described as "Primitive Christianity Revived."

The similarities of the early days of Friends to the early church, as described in the Book of Acts, are striking. Both grew out of what the Bible refers to as a Baptism of the Holy Spirit, experienced personally and resulting in lives supernaturally transformed. The first century believers didn't initially have a common name to identify them, taking several years after the movement began before the name "Christian" began to be used (Acts 11:26). Likewise the spiritual movement erupting in 17th century England initially had no single descriptor, and only later did participants become labeled as "Quakers" and embraced the idea of being known as "The Religious Society of Friends" based upon John 15:14-15.

In both the early church and the early Friends we see spiritual movements that significantly impacted not only individuals, but entire communities. In both we see devoted disciples, transformed by Jesus Christ, who encouraged one another, supported one another, and demonstrated a high degree of accountability to one another as they sought to share the gospel of Christ while demonstrating their faith through acts of mercy and grace.

The Value of Belonging to a Yearly Meeting

It was only after the spiritual movement we now call Quakerism began, that organizational structure was created in an attempt to preserve, coordinate and channel the efforts of this emerging group. Monthly Meetings, Quarterly Meetings and Yearly Meetings were designed to encourage Friends to intentionally gather to seek the will of God together. The Council at Jerusalem described in Acts 15 is an example of believers seeking God's leading together and provides the pattern for how Friends intend to conduct God's business. The conclusions reached in the Acts 15 Council proved to be encouraging for all (Acts 15:31), and Yearly Meetings functioning in a healthy manner should prove to similarly build-up and encourage its members.

Belonging to a Yearly Meeting that drains the energies and resources of its members has no appeal, but when a Yearly Meeting is functioning in a healthy manner, its member meetings find energy and encouragement. Indiana Yearly Meeting of Friends is committed to function as a fully-Christian and fully-Quaker body, bringing honor to our Lord, Jesus Christ, along with encouragement and blessing to our member meetings.

Our Priorities

Building Strong, Healthy Local Meetings

At whatever size or stage of life, meetings need to be blessed with satisfying worship, lively times of prayer, warm Christian fellowship, and a sense of connection to other Friends meetings. Whether a local congregation is growing or not, it needs to be committed to the growth of the body of Christ, and to the Quaker vision that "Christ is present to teach his people himself." Some of the ways that Indiana Yearly Meeting seeks to nurture and equip local meetings include the following:

- Yearly Meeting Staff members and standing committees ready to consult with and lend support to meetings dealing with internal challenges
- Assistance with pastoral searches and pastoral transitions
- Matching grants from the Evangelism & Outreach Committee to assist in specific outreach efforts

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We understand Quakerism as a spiritual movement to be embraced rather than an organization to be supported. We welcome Friends who desire to be part of such a spiritual movement in our day.