

# FOCUS

on the ministries of

*Friends*  
United Meeting

## Bikes for Boys in Belize

Sometimes we take transportation for granted in the United States. If we need to go to the store or to work, we drive or take a city bus. If we need to go to school, Mom drops us off in the car or we take a bus. Once in awhile we walk somewhere, but how often do we depend on our feet to get us everywhere we need to go?

In many countries, transportation is made possible by your own two feet. Anything else is either not available or too expensive for regular use. Belize is a country like that. While it is true there are many cars and even some bus service in Belize, it is also true that the Friends Boys School (FBS) serves a very poor community for whom most transportation is done on foot. Our FBS students sometimes have to walk over two miles to get to school each day.

**The 2009 Summer Mission Project is “Bikes for Boys in Belize.”** We hope that purchasing bikes for the boys will not only help them get to FBS, but will be a good source of transportation to high school and any future employment they might have. For \$150 a student, we can purchase a bike, helmet, chain, padlock, pump and spare parts. Our goal is to raise \$6,000 for 40 bikes by the end of August 2009.

The next time you get in your car or on the bus to go somewhere, think about how things might be different if you had to make the same trip on foot. Let's give the FBS boys a better future this summer.



### Pennies for Postage

Thanks to your eagerness to collect “Pennies for Postage” for the 2008 Summer Mission Project, we received \$7,288.69. We were able to ship 1,871 pounds of books to Africa, Belize, Jamaica, Ramallah, Mexico and Cuba. Thank you for your pennies! They went a long way.

**Uganda Yearly Meeting** was officially set off from East Africa Yearly Meeting in 1980, and encompasses the entire country of Uganda. However, Quaker work in Uganda began much earlier, when Luhya people from Kenya shared their faith with their friends and family on the Ugandan side of the (arbitrary) colonial border. The first Ugandan Friends Meetings were established in the 1940s, and in the early 1970s a Friends Center was opened in Kampala. Ugandan Friends have undergone significant hardship as the country experienced dictatorship and civil war — Quakers were officially “banned” during two different regimes, and resorted to meeting in secret.

Currently, Uganda Yearly Meeting has almost 4,000 members in 10 quarterly meetings. The headquarters are in Mbale, on the western slopes of Mt. Elgon, and most Friends are concentrated in this area. However, significant energy is being dedicated to reviving the Friends presence in northern Uganda, which has been devastated by decades of civil war. Peace and development programs such as the Alternatives to Violence Project, school fees for orphans and micro-enterprise loans are a priority for Ugandan Friends. Uganda Yearly Meeting became a full member of Friends United Meeting in 2005.



*Uganda YM leadership, left to right: Nambafu Julius, Fred Katandi and Charles Waninga*

The FUM Africa Ministries Office sponsored a short-term mission trip of Kenyan Friends to Uganda in November 2005, funded entirely by the Kenyan yearly meetings. Over 40 Kenyan Friends — men and women, young and old, pastors, yearly meeting leaders and members — worked in Lutolo and Kimidi, building a church and a school, and carrying out evangelistic meetings in the local communities. This event was transformative for both the Kenyans and Ugandans, and has established the core theme of FUM’s contemporary work in Africa, in which Africans are the missionaries, workers and leaders of the Friends Church today.

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