



MFSA IOWA CHAPTER MEMO

Eloise Cranke, Iowa Chapter Coordinator www.mfsaiowa.org

NOVEMBER 2011

Love Your Neighbor: The Training:

The Iowa Annual Conference RMN and Iowa Chapter of MFSA will host an exciting training on **Saturday, December 3rd, from 10:00 AM – 2:30 PM, at Collegiate UMC in Ames.** This training will include skills for organizing and storytelling, as well as information about how participants can help the UMC become a more fully inclusive church which does not discriminate based upon sexual orientation and gender identity. A representative of RMN will lead the training, building on earlier *Called to Witness* and *Believe Out Loud* trainings. It will also include new elements which bridge our theological, political and ideological differences so that we may all reclaim common values and work tougher to build a more inclusive UMC. **Registrations are now due!** To register, please send a note with your name, contact information and your plans to attend the Love Your Neighbor Training to: register@cwames.org.

Balanced Budget/Military Budget:

Last chance to attend one of the Fall Regional Gatherings (flyer attached) on this important topic. We will take a look at where our tax dollars go, what scripture and our faith say about budget priorities, what would constitute a “balanced budget,” whether the military budget is out of proportion, and what we can do about it. The one remaining date and location is as follows:

Musserville/San Pablo/Alive@Five Worship Centers for Fellowship UMC, in Muscatine,

Saturday, November 12th, at 10:00 AM

Host: Mike Biklen; Devotions: Nate Nims

MFSA Supports Occupy Iowa!

At its Fall Statewide Gathering on October 22nd, MFSA approved supporting the Occupy Iowa movement. Citing MFSA’s long-time commitment to the cause of economic justice, the group gave unanimous support to the current efforts to bring attention to the inequalities in our society. An offering was taken, and \$400 was contributed toward the purchase of a large and sturdy tent that can be used during the winter months. Several Iowa MFSA members, along with Steve Clunn, Coalition Coordinator from the national MFSA Office, visited Tent City that evening to express MFSA’s support and to learn more about the needs. Peace and Justice Advocate, Chet Guinn, Hugh Stone and others continue to visit Stewart Park from time to time as an expression of MFSA’s ongoing support. MFSA has also signed a statement written by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (attached), which expresses our thoughts and feelings on this issue.

Report of Fall Statewide Gathering:

Over 60 persons attended the Fall Statewide Gathering on October 22nd to hear Jim Winkler’s powerful address on the topic of “Perpetual War.” The Gathering was held at Walnut Hills UMC in Des Moines. Jim, who is General Secretary of the General Board of Church and Society, also spoke at an ecumenical gathering of 40 people the previous evening at First UMC in Des Moines. Later on Saturday, Steve Clunn, Coalition Coordinator for MFSA’s National Office held a very informative session on some of the structural changes being proposed at General Conference, along with some alternatives that will be considered. During the business meeting officers for 2012 were elected, and guidelines for future elections were adopted. Inez Dawes and Dick Clark will continue at Co-Presidents. (For a list of all members of the Executive Committee, please contact Eloise at: ecranke@mchsi.com.)



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MFSA Now Receives Donations through PayPal!

You can now renew your membership, contribute to the Organizer Fund and/or support the Iowa Chapter of MFSA online through PayPal. Click on the DONATE button on our website, <http://mfsaiowa.org>, to log in to your PayPal account and follow the directions to make a donation. Email Mike Biklen at donations@mfsaiowa.org if you have questions.

Young Adult MFSA on Face Book:

Are you a young adult, or do you know a young adult who would be interested in the work of MFSA? Check out MFSA's Young Adult Face Book Page at Iowa MFSA YAs. For more information, please contact Josh Steward at: revjosh@hotmail.com.

"Green Fire" to be Shown at Briar Cliff:

Briar Cliff's Center for Prairie Studies and Students in Free Enterprise will host the Western Iowa premiere of the new film "Green Fire." The screening will be held at the St. Francis Center at **Briar Cliff** on **Wednesday, November 9th**, and is free and open to the public. The film explores Leopold's life in the early part of the 20th century and the many ways his land ethic idea continues to be applied all over the world today. For more information, please contact Gerald Iversen at: geraldiversen@yahoo.com.

Louisa Thomas to Speak at UNI:

Louisa Thomas, granddaughter of Norman Thomas, and author of "Conscience: Two Soldiers, Two Pacifists, One Family—A Test of Will and Faith in World War I," will deliver an address about nonviolent conflict resolution on **Thursday, November 10th, at 7:00 PM in Maucker Union, Room 109, on the UNI campus**. A panel discussion of the topic will follow. The event is sponsored by the Center for Multicultural Education and is part of the series, "Reaching for Higher Ground—Community after 9/11." Contact Tabatha Cruz at 319-273-2250 or at: tabatha.cruz@uni.edu.

Vision for Waterloo:

The Waterloo Neighborhood Coalition will sponsor a day of dialog and visioning between community leaders, activists, and neighborhood residents. The purpose is to identify concrete plans to improve the quality of life in inner city neighborhoods. The workshop will be held on **Saturday, November 12th, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM at St. Paul's UMC**. Lunch will be provided. **RSVP by Nov. 7th to:** allen.hays@uni.edu, or Cheryl@northendfest.org.

Hope for the Hungry:

Sponsored by DMARC Food Pantry Network and Healthy Urban Food and Farming, the goal of this conference is to **end childhood hunger in Des Moines**. It will be held at **Trinity UMC, 1548 8th Street, in Des Moines, on Saturday, November 12th, 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM**. Speakers include Elisabeth Ballstadt, Food Pantry Network Director; Jason Grimm, Food System Planner with the Iowa Valley RC&D; Sarai Rice, Executive Director of DMARC and Diana Sickles, leader of the Coalition in Support of Hungry Children. A variety of workshops will be offered. **Registration is due November 5th**. After that date a late registration fee of \$25 will be charged. To download the registration form, visit: www.UrbanFoodDSM.org.

Immigrant Entrepreneur Summit:

The "Immigrant Entrepreneur Summit" will be held on **Saturday, November 12, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM in Olmsted Center, 2504 University, Drake Campus, in Des Moines**. The Summit brings businesses of diverse backgrounds together to network, learn and celebrate the immigrant entrepreneurship experience and its contribution to the overall community. For more information, please contact: ies@communitycpa.com.



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“The Climate Reality Project:”

This interactive, multimedia event will be held on **Tuesday, November 15th**, at **7:00 PM**, at the **Northeast Iowa Peace & Justice Center**, 119 Winnebago St., Decorah.

“Fairness Festival and Fundraiser:”

Mark the date! The First Annual NE Iowa Peace & Justice Center Fall “Fairness Festival and Fundraiser will be held on **Saturday, November 19th**, in Decorah.

Helping Hands 2012 Wall Calendar:

“Reaching Out in Compassion” is the theme of a 2012 Wall Calendar that **features 12 local agencies that assist central Iowans**, from help with food, shelter and other assistance, to offering opportunities for renewal. The Center for Social Ministry (CSM) has created this calendar as a way to highlight some of the many services available in the community, and as a reminder of the opportunities for anyone to get involved. **Cost of the calendar is \$15**, with quantity discounts available (plus shipping and handling, if applicable). To order one or more calendars, contact CSM at 515-782-3054, or at: centerforsocialministry@gmail.com. Calendars can also be purchased at Beavertdale Books, 2629 Beaver Ave., beginning Nov. 10th.

Focus on Homelessness:

The Cedar Valley Hospitality House and the Catholic Social Justice Network will co-host an opportunity for members of the community to learn more about homelessness. The program will begin at **3:00 PM on Sunday, November 20th at the Hospitality House**, 1003 Mulberry Street in **Waterloo**. It will include a walking tour, video interviews with Hospitality House guests, information about local agencies that serve homeless persons and more. **Pre-registration is requested**. Please contact Hospitality House at: 319-234-1311.

SOA Vigil, November 18-20:

The Sisters of St. Francis in Clinton are organizing and **Iowa bus to the annual vigil** at the School of the Americas at Ft. Benning, Georgia. The bus will leave Dubuque at 11:00 AM on Nov. 18th, and make stops in Dewitt and Davenport. Parking will be available at the pick-up sites. **Cost is \$160, plus overnight accommodations on Saturday and food**. For more information, please go to: <http://www.clintonfranciscans.com/news-and-events-events.html?id=35>.

The Justice Conference:

The second annual JUSTICE CONFERENCE will take place on **February 24-25, 2012**, at the **Oregon Convention Center** (Portland). This international gathering is for advocates, activists, artists, professors, pastors, lay people, students, and all who are passionate about connecting issues of faith and social justice to transform our communities and world. The diverse array of speakers includes Walter Brueggemann, Francis Chan, Mirolslav Volf, Richard Twiss, Maddy Delone, Shane Claiborne, and other renowned leaders as well as a variety of musicians and other break-out trainers with expertise on many issues facing the world today. To register and/or learn more about “The Justice Conference 2012,” visit <http://thejusticeconference.com/>.

Looking Ahead:

Save this date:

Spring Statewide Gathering: **Saturday, April 14th**. Watch for details in coming months.



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Interested in a More Active Role?

MFSA is always seeking to renew and expand our leadership pool, but we don't always know who would like to be more involved. If you have an interest in serving in a more active role at some time, please let me know (ecranke@mchsi.com) and we may call on you for assistance or leadership in the future.

Mall-Walking for Peace:

You are invited to join others walking for peace every other Sunday at **Lindale Mall in Cedar Rapids**. Many participants will wear anti-war T-shirts (eg., "Out of Iraq and Afghanistan Now"), though this is not required. For more information, please contact Dorothy Higdon at: dndhigdon@earthlink.net.

Please Send Information:

We want to publicize **events around the state** that might be of interest to MFSA folk. Please send information about events in your area by the last week of each month for the next month's E-Mail Memo. You can contact me at: ecranke@mchsi.com

Questions about Membership?

Contact Mike Biklen at 515 East Eleventh St., Muscatine, IA 52761, or by phone at: 563-263-1439, or by e-mail at: donations@mfsaiowa.org. Contributions can also be sent to Mike.

A REMINDER: When corresponding with me, please use this address:

ecranke@mchsi.com. If you simply respond to the Memo address, I probably won't see your message in a timely way, as I use that address only to send this Memo, and rarely check it.