



MFSA IOWA CHAPTER MEMO

Eloise Cranke, Iowa Chapter Coordinator www.mfsaiowa.org

MARCH, 2015

MFSA's Spring Statewide Gathering- Sat., March 21: "Conversations of Hope"

The Spring Statewide Gathering will be held **Saturday, March 21st, at 10:00**, in the Parish Hall of **First UMC in Indianola**. The program will be led by Rev. Jan Everhart and Rev. Mara Bailey, and feature **Simpson College Students**. A light lunch will be served for a free will donation. Following lunch, **Terry Montgomery, Conference Treasurer**, will be available for conversation about the 2016 Annual Conference Budget and concerns raised by many at the Town Hall Meetings held last year. (flyer attached and on the [MFSA Iowa website](http://www.mfsaiowa.org))

Moral Mondays IOWA at the Iowa Legislature ([online flyer](#))

A coalition of progressive organizations, including MFSA, is sponsoring this project, modeled after a similar project in North Carolina. People are asked to come to the Capitol each **Monday at Noon** during the legislative session. Go to **Room 15.4** by walking through Room G15 on the ground floor of the Capitol. Legislators speak to a different issue each week.

Alternative Discussion Group in Cedar Rapids – Tuesday, March 3:

This group meets **7:00 PM, at Hy-Vee, 32nd St. NE & Oakland Road NE**. The new book is *Divine Rebels: American Christian Activists for Social Justice* by Deena Guzder. The group will discuss the preface and chapter one.

"Shut Down Creech!"

There will be a mass mobilization on **March 4 – 6, in the Nevada Desert, at Creech Air Force Base** north of Las Vegas, to stop drone warfare and the terror of endless U.S. global wars. MFSA has endorsed this event, and urges any who can to participate. For more information, please go to: <http://shutdowncreech.blogspot.com>.

No to Drones for Warfare – Candlelight Vigil on Wednesday, March 4

Join Iowans on **March 4th, 5:45 – 6:30 PM** to insist that Iowa must not pilot Armed Reaper Drones. The Candlelight Vigil will be held at the **Iowa Air National Guard 132nd Attack Wing, 3100 McKinley Ave. in Des Moines**. Join others in declaring that we do not want this base to become a piloting center for weaponized drones. MFSA is a co-sponsor of this event.

Garden to Garden: A Biblical Primer on Creation Care & Creation Celebration!

Two sessions led by **Rev. Rebekah Simon-Peter**, director of Bridge Works, and creator of the award-winning group leadership program, *Creating a Culture of Renewal* and sponsored by the Iowa Board of Church and Society. To RSVP, please go to: www.greenchurchinitiative.wordpress.com.

Both sessions will be held on **Thursday, March 5 at Broadway UMC in Council Bluffs** and repeated on **Friday, March 6 at First UMC in Waterloo**

Garden to Garden: an interactive study will provide a wealth of preaching and teaching resources to deepen understanding for God's will for our world and all that is in it. (1:00 – 4:00 PM)

Creation Celebration! Find out how your church can go green in three easy ways, while celebrating the Creator God with music and prayer. A gallery of resources will be available for pastors and laity to support your ministry as you move forward in creation care. (6:00 – 8:00 PM)

Volunteers Needed Now!

Trinity/Las Americas UMC needs volunteers to teach a weekly citizenship course for immigrants preparing to take the Citizenship Test. Tentative time is two hours on Wednesday evenings, though this can be arranged depending on the volunteer's availability. For more information and/or to volunteer, please contact **Andrew Stober** at: AndrewELLTrinity@gmail.com, or at: 650-380-9012.



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Boycott! The Art of Economic Activism:

This collection of historical boycott posters, providing a visual history of economic activism over the last 60 years will be exhibited at two locations in Des Moines during the month of March. It will be at the **Ritual Café**, 1301 Locust St, **March 2 – 6**, with a reception and speaker on **Monday, March 2, at 5:00 PM**. It will be at the **Des Moines Social Club**, 900 Mulberry St., **March 8 – 26**, with a series of informational forums at **7:00 PM** on several dates. Please go to www.afsc.org/boycott for specific information about the program topics/speakers.

Children of Abraham:

On **March 5th, at 7:00 PM**, Muslim comedian **Azhar Usman** will do a stand-up comedy act focused on diversity issues and religious pluralism. The event will be held in the Alumni Campus Center Ballroom at **Loras College in Dubuque**. The event is open to everyone, and child care will be provided.

3rd Annual LGBT Health & Wellness Conference:

This Conference will be held on **Saturday, March 7th, 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM**, at **Des Moines University**. For more information call 288-4019, ext. 208, or 271-1596. Register at: <http://www.dmu.edu/event/lgbt>.

Empowered women: Protecting Rights and Resources:

Foods Resource Bank is co-sponsoring an Oxfam America event celebrating International Women's Day on **Tuesday, March 10th, reception at 6:00 PM and program at 7:00 PM**. The event will be held in the **World Food Prize Hall of Laureates**, 100 Locust St., in **Des Moines**. Remarks will be by Former Wisconsin Lt. Gov. **Barbara Lawton** and **Dr. Deborah Turner**, President of League of Women Voters, DM. Keynote speakers include **Laura Krouse**, Owner of Abbe Hill Farm and **Joanna Manu**, Ghanaian Small-holder Farmer and Community Activist. For more information, please call 515-318-2433, or Joan Wooters Fumetti at 515-421-5545.

"Abrazos"

This immigration documentary will be shown on **Wednesday, March 11, at 7:00 PM, at the Catholic Pastoral Center**, 600 Grand Ave., in **Des Moines**. It tells the journey of a group of U.S. citizen children who travel from Minnesota to Guatemala to meet their grandparents for the first time after being separated for nearly two decades. It is produced by noted film maker, **Luis Argueta**, who will be present for the showing. In addition, Iowa **Attorney General Tom Miller** and **Bishop Richard Pates** will attend. A free will offering will be taken.

Vandana Shiva to Speak:

Vandana Shiva will be speaking in the Great Hall, Memorial Union at **Iowa State University in Ames** on **Wednesday, March 11th, at 8:00 PM**.

Civil Human Rights Symposium:

The annual **Symposium** of the Des Moines Civil Human Rights Commission will be held on **Wednesday, March 18th, 8:00 AM at Des Moines University in Des Moines**. Some of the sessions include: Fair housing and equal opportunity, civil and human rights issues, immigration, racism, human trafficking and racial profiling. For more information, or to register, go to: <http://www.dmgov.org/Departments/HumanRights/Pages/default.aspx>.

Children of Abraham Conversations:

The March conversation will be held on **Thursday, March 19th, at 7:00 PM, at the Tri-State Islamic Center in Dubuque**. The topic will be "Muslim Scripture Study."



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Religion, Race and Identity: The Role of the Churches in Post-

Apartheid South Africa:

Willy Mafuta will address this topic on **Wednesday, March 25th, at 7:00 PM in Room 101, Meredith Hall, Drake Campus in Des Moines.** His address will speak to the identity of post-apartheid South Africa, a nation where race and ethnicity never receded. While no longer pathological, they have become normative and typifications of the overarching identity. Churches have played a major role in this identity formation.

Palm Sunday Procession and Service for Peace:

The annual Palm Sunday Procession will be held on **March 29th.** People will gather at the **Capitol West Mall, 7th and Locust, in Des Moines, at 2:30 PM.** The **Procession** will begin at **3:00,** and will be followed by a **Prayer Service at St. John's Lutheran Church, 600 6th Ave. at 3:45.** **Rev. Minna Quint,** Senior Pastor at Capitol Hill Lutheran Church, will bring the reflection, as we urge political leaders to seek peaceful resolutions to ongoing world conflicts, and insist that "War Is Not the Answer!"

Speaking Truth to Power: Bearing Witness Against Occupation and Injustice:

Building a Mosaic of Peace in Israel/Palestine:

Sue Dravis, longtime peace and justice activist with the Presbyterian Church USA, will discuss her recent trip to Palestine and the ongoing non-violent struggle against the occupation. The event will be held on **Sunday, March 29, at 2:00 PM at the Iowa City Public Library, Meeting Room A, in Iowa City.** It is free and open to the public, sponsored by People for Justice in Palestine (www.iowapjp.us).

Speaker Chosen for MFSA's 2014 Awards Event!

Mark your calendars for MFSA's Awards Event on **June 6,** with keynote speaker **Janet Lahr Lewis,** formerly from Bethlehem. Details will be available in the coming months.

Gather at the River!

MFSA and RMN are planning this Gathering to be held on **August 6 – 9, at Travis Park UMC,** an historic, open and justice-seeking community of faith in downtown **San Antonio,** steps away from the renowned River Walk entertainment and cultural district. Go to: www.gather2015.org, for information about this exciting Conference, its worship leaders, preachers and speakers, entertainers and children and youth leaders, as well as information about accommodations. Register early as the **deadline for the lowest Registration Fee (\$250) is April 1st.**

March Against the Bakken Pipeline:

March 1 – 31 Ed Fallon will walk about 400 miles following the proposed path of the Bakken Oil Pipeline to encourage opposition to it. He will also discuss the urgency of the climate crisis and the need to protect our water, as he meets with people at various locations along the route. Some early dates/locations are: **March 2 and 3, Donnellson** (contact Brenda Knox at 319-835-3372); **March 5, Birmingham** (contact Kim Steele-Blair at 319-293-6168, or tbdoc@netins.net); **March 6, Fairfield** (contact nobakkenhere@gmail.com); **March 11, Iowa City** (contact Dr. Maureen McCue at mickiq@earthlink.net); **March 14, Newton** (contact State Rep. Dan Kelley at Dan.Kelley@legis.iowa.gov). For more information, contact Ed at: fallonforum@gmail.com, or 515-238-6404.

"Poverty in Ministry" with Tex Sample –April 7 at Wesley Woods Camp & Retreat:

Central and South Central District\clergy and laity leadership are invited to join Dr. Tex Sample for A Day Apart on Tuesday, April 7 **from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM.** Lunch is \$8.00. Please **register** by contacting either District Office by **March 27th.**



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Suicide Is Not the Answer – Thursday, April 9

This course for clergy and other faith community leaders will be from **9:00–4:00** at **First Christian Church in Des Moines**. It is offered by the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center, and CEU's are available. **Register by March 27th**. For information, or to register, contact Diane McClanahan at: dmcclanahan@dmpcc.org, or 515-251-6667.

Mission Trip to Israel and Palestine – September 12-25:

A mission team will be traveling to Israel/Palestine for a VIM experience. We will be visiting many holy sites and will participate in a work project and visit a number of projects that receive UM Advance Special dollars, or who are UM partners in the area. We will tentatively visit a Fair Trade Farm run by Palestinian women, an Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, a conflict resolution center and a refugee camp. We will also worship with a local Christian congregation and meet with representatives from the three Abrahamic faith communities. If interested, call Christine Anders at 515-244-6209 or 515-240-0314, or email: Christine@dmfirstchurch.org. The group must be formed by the end of April.

Peace Vigils & Walks:

DES MOINES: Join members of local peace groups who gather each **Thursday, 11:45 – 12:15**, in front of the **Civic Center**, 221 Walnut, to protest war and the coming of drones and to insist that “War Is Not the Answer!”

IOWA CITY: Demonstrate for peace each **Friday, 4:45 – 5:15 PM** at the **southeast corner of the Pentacrest**, intersection of Washington and Clinton Streets in **Iowa City**.

CEDAR RAPIDS: Street witnessing vigil for peace is held every **Friday, 4:30 – 5:30 PM**, at **1st Ave. and 1st St. NE** (Across from the old Federal Building at the Tree of Five Seasons.) The witness is held regardless of the weather. Bring your own sign or hold one of theirs. For more information, contact **Bob at 319-360-5119**

CEDAR RAPIDS: Walkers for peace walk **every other Sunday at Lindale Mall, 4:00 – 4:45 PM**. Please gather in the center of the Food Court. Participants may wear anti-war T-shirts though this is not required.

Save these Dates!

April 11: “Welcoming the Stranger,” Storm Lake UMC

April 11: - Dingman Award Dinner, Holy Trinity Catholic Church, in Des Moines

April 16: Islam Lecture, Drake University in Des Moines

April 21-24: UM School for Ministry, with Dr. Rita Nakashim Brock, Dr. Pamela Lightsey and Dr. Kristen Leslie

April 23-26: AMOS fund raiser, “Red Hot Patriot” in Des Moines and Ames

April 24-26: Retreat: “Lectio Divina and the Four Senses of Scripture”

Connect with National and Global MFSA!

Want to know more about justice issues around the globe and connect with MFSA? Then sign up for **MFSA's bi-weekly eNews!** We promise not to spam you, sell your email, or publish it for the world to see. We do promise to share the work of MFSA on issues of peace, poverty, people's rights, progressive issues and justice in the UMC—social holiness at work! Sign up now by going to http://mfsaweb.org/?page_id=212.

Please Send Information:

We want to publicize **events around the state** of interest to MFSA folk. Please send information about events in your area by the last week of each month. 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: wmbiklen@juno.com. Contributions can also be sent to Mike.