



## CONVERSATIONS OF HOPE

with Simpson College students

**MFSA Spring Statewide Gathering**  
**Saturday, March 21 – 10:00 AM**  
**First United Methodist Church Parish Hall**  
**307 West Ashland – Indianola, IA**

*The Spring SQB features aspirations for the church written by four of the Simpson College students who will be leading us in conversation at the spring gathering - see page 2.*

**Program:**

**Jan Everhart**  
Simpson College  
Religion Dept. Chair  
**Mara Bailey**  
Simpson College  
Chaplain

**Lunch Served by**  
**United Methodist**  
**Women** (donation)

**Business Meeting &**  
**Conversation with**  
**Terry Montgomery**  
Treasurer of Iowa  
Annual Conference



### **Moral Mondays IOWA**

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. The topics include:

Feb 23: NAACP issue

March 2: Poverty/Minimum Wage

March 9: Women's Health Initiative

March 16: Voting Rights

### **No to Drones for Warfare!**

Join Iowans on Wednesday, March 4th, 5:45 – 6:30 PM to insist that Iowa must not pilot Armed Reaper Drones. A 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.

Visit the MFSA Iowa Chapter website for information on events, vigils and more in Iowa and beyond.

[www.mfsaiowa.org/memo.html](http://www.mfsaiowa.org/memo.html)

### **AMOS Leadership Training**

**Sunday, February 22** [www.amosiowa.org](http://www.amosiowa.org)

### **Judaism Lecture:**

**Thursday, February 26 - Drake University**

### **Injustice on our Plates: How Food Workers' Conditions Affect Us All:**

**Saturday, February 28 - Iowa City**

### **Retreat: Observing Lent in an Age of Permanent War:**

**Saturday, February 28 - Waterloo**

### **Rural Ministry Conference - March 1-3**

**Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque**

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

**Thursday, March 5 in Council Bluffs**

**Friday, March 6 in Waterloo**

### **Contacts:**

Eloise Cranke, Iowa Chapter Coordinator  
[ecranke@mchsi.com](mailto:ecranke@mchsi.com)

### **Membership & Donations**

Mike Biklen [wmbiklen@juno.com](mailto:wmbiklen@juno.com)

As you read and get to know some of the students through the introductions below, please ponder your own hopes and dreams for the action, service, and future of the UMC.

**Dani Mussleman, Simpson College Junior**  
**Majors: Religion and History**

In September 2014 I became United Methodist when I joined the Trinity United Methodist Church in Des Moines, Iowa. I joined this particular church for many reasons, including their passion for service and their diverse community where love is undoubtedly present and encouraged. Trinity helped me reflect more on my ability and passion to serve, and to share my love for people through service. This is why I am excited to take part in the MFSA meeting in March of 2015.

I am excited to continue sharing my passion for service with the United Methodist community, and I am looking forward to working with people who have dedicated their lives to similar service. I look forward to meeting and being in community with the folks who have worked their whole lives on the issues I am currently passionate about. For instance, I hope to discuss the issues that face our environment, and how to connect those issues with service in some capacity. One way that I think Christians can start this process is to change our outlook on how we view our relationship with the Earth. Instead of viewing our relationship as humans owning the Earth, I think it would benefit us to view our relationship with the earth as a part of our community. I look forward to working with other generations to continue seeking justice in our communities within the United Methodist Church, and the world around us.

**Emma Cain**  
**Simpson College Sophomore**  
**Major: Religion**  
**Minors: Political Science and Women and Gender Studies**

I've grown up in the United Methodist Church and I consider it to be a home. I am proud of my UMC membership, but I also know that we have a lot of room to grow. I dream of the day that my partner and I can stand in the front of the sanctuary of my home church and profess our marriage vows to each other without the fear that actions may be taken against our pastor. I also dream of a day when LGBTQIA+ people are able to fulfill their call from God and be ordained in the United Methodist Church. It is no longer enough to simply acknowledge that we are of different minds on human sexuality, but look to how we can overcome these and reach out to the LGBTQIA+ people that we have left behind. Many, myself included, have found strength and community within the Church, but many, including myself, have also been persecuted and made to feel unsafe. We must support our siblings in Christ and that means embracing all of the different ways that God has made us and delighting in them. We need to truly ask ourselves what it means to have open hearts, minds, and doors. There are a variety of ways that we, as a Church family, need to challenge ourselves to grow and these issues of inclusion are just the ones that lay most heavily upon my heart.

**Ishaya David**  
**Simpson College Sophomore**  
**Major: Biochemistry**

I am from Nigeria, so I have only been in the US for about two years, and though that is not really a long time, I have been involved in so many things especially with the United Methodist Church.

One of the things I noticed and I feel need to be addressed is the judgmental attitude towards young people who happened to be misled by society, ending up in gangs, drug abuse and even prison. There is always an increase in the harsh way these people are treated, especially those of minority groups. Such judgmental attitudes only end up driving them away from the church. I feel if people show more love and compassion towards them that will help in bringing them back to the church.



**Annie Collins**  
**Simpson College Junior**  
**Major: Psychology**  
**Minors: English & Spanish**

I have grown-up in the United Methodist Church and have been an active member for over 7 years. Within my church, I was surrounded with loving and supportive members, many of whom I refer to as my church family now. My pastor was a dreamer and visionary, always looking for new ways for our church to reach out to the community. Although our town was small and not very diverse, the atmosphere and belief system of the church was one that welcomed anyone no matter what their situation.

My vision is for this mindset of acceptance and change to go beyond the walls of my church. I believe the world is constantly changing and society has to change with it, especially regarding social issues and human rights. A church should be a safe place for those who are usually deemed as outcasts by society to be welcomed and loved. The United Methodist Church values service to others, recognizing that service can be done outside of the congregation and become one of the best ways to meet people who are most in need of the church within our community. Ideally, I picture a church that has its doors wide open and full of people who are willing to listen to the opinions of others without judging the person based on social economic status, family history, or heritage.