



**The Methodist Federation for Social Action, Iowa Chapter**  
*Seeking Global Justice through the United Methodist Church*  
[www.mfsaiowa.org](http://www.mfsaiowa.org) Iowa Annual Conference Issue - June 2016

## **2016 ANNUAL AWARDS EVENT**

**Sunday, June 5**

**5:00 PM**

**CCCU Convention Center/  
Hy-Vee Hall Level 3 (Rooms 306-307)**

**Keynote by CHETT PRITCHETT  
MFSA Executive Director**

Chett is a graduate of West Virginia Wesleyan College and Wesley Theological Seminary. Before coming to MFSA, Chett honed his talents in Christian retail, campus ministry, and non-profit administration. An advocate for LGBTQ equality in the Church, Chett has also spoken out on justice for Palestinians, environmental issues and immigration.

# **At the Intersections**



**MFSA proudly presents the 2016 Social Action Awards before the keynote**



**Disciples as Peacemakers**

**Walk for Peace & Social Justice  
DISCIPLES AS PEACEMAKERS  
Monday, June 6 - 12:10 PM**  
Details back page

**Walk from HyVee Hall (south door) to  
Cowles Commons for a brief worship**

**CAUCUS with MFSA Iowa Chapter on Friday, June 3 and  
after evening sessions at Chet Guinn's Fire Station (details back page)**



## At the Intersections

by Chett Pritchett

Chett Pritchett is executive director of the Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA). With 25 regional groups across the United States, MFSA is the oldest social justice caucus of The United Methodist Church, with a history of advocacy for peace, economic justice, human rights, and justice within the Church. After his time in Iowa, Pritchett will be leaving the helm of MFSA to return to his hometown and join the development and alumni engagement team at Marietta College. But before he does, he is excited to share some thoughts about General Conference 2016, MFSA's witness to the Church and world, and the future of Methodism.

"The United Methodist Church is at an intersection in our life together," states Pritchett.

"The question becomes 'Which road shall we take?'"

While the General Conference met in Portland, most of the world outside the Oregon Convention Center understood the gathering to be divided about issues of human sexuality, specifically the Church's welcome to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) Christians.

"What we experienced however was so much more than unwelcome and harm to LGBTQ people," reflects Pritchett. "What we saw were expressions of power and privilege: racism, colonialism, sexism, and a whole host of other concerns that show the work of justice is still incomplete within The United Methodist Church."

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## A Call from the Crossroads - Come, Spirit, Come

by Rev. Anna Blaedel, Executive Director and Campus Minister, Wesley Foundation at Ulowa

A few weeks ago, I was invited to pay attention to a particular crossroads. Clergy colleagues of mine were listening into the chaos together, hearing a call to come out publicly as lgbtq. I listened, with them. Friends, while this is never the language I would choose to use to self identify, I am a self-avowed, practicing homosexual. Or, in my language, I am out, queer, partnered clergy. And friends, by saying those words to you, I could be brought up on charges, face a formal complaint. I could lose my job, lose my clergy credentials, lose my income and my health insurance, risk losing the funding for a ministry context that matters deeply and profoundly to me, and to so many.

But "only one thing is more frightening than speaking your truth, and that is not speaking" (Audre Lorde). I cannot begin to describe the persistent pain and weary woundedness of being raised in and called to a church that continues to call my being and my loving a chargeable offense,

that continues to identify my being and my loving as incompatible with Christian teaching. I know some of you know this pain and woundedness well.

As I faced this particular crossroads with my other lgbtq clergy colleagues throughout the UM connection, we scheduled a conference call. On the night of the call I listened to this roll call of people both brave and foolish enough to declare, publicly, that it is the Book of Discipline that is incompatible with Christian teaching, not our being, and our loving. Name, after name, after name. I wept. I could hear others weeping. It was powerful prayer, this litany of names. Called out of our fear and isolation by Wisdom reminding us we were not alone. Remembering that the denomination could kick us out, and indeed might, but that this ecclesia, this beloved community, this body of Christ would hold fast. A call coming from the crossroads. Come, Spirit, come...

Video of entire message in May 24 post at <https://www.facebook.com/anna.blaedel>

**“Stop the Harm”**  
by Marsha Acord

**D**uring the 2016 session General Conference still did not extend love and justice to LGBTQI people. What they did do is accept a proposal by the Council of Bishops for a special commission on LGBTQ related policies. After 44 years of discrimination and injustice against LGBTQI persons, the policies of THE UMC DID NOT CHANGE.

Do No Harm joins with others in the Reconciling Ministries Network to call for the Council of Bishops to STOP THE HARM and HALT ALL PUNISHMENTS RELATED TO LGBTQI PEOPLE IN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH as a starting point for a way forward.

Harm is done to LGBTQI persons, as well as to the wider connection, when the UMC prohibits qualified candidates and active clergy from ministry and prohibits weddings of same-sex couples in United Methodist churches by United Methodist pastors. We call on the UMC to stop this harm by allowing LGBTQI candidates and clergy to continue in ministry without charges and by allowing pastors to minister and conduct weddings for all prepared couples, including same-sex couples, in United Methodist churches without charges.

The day before General Conference started, a love letter from LGBTQI clergy & candidates went out to The UMC in which they wrote of their love for their church and called for the church to end discrimination and injustice against LGBTQI people. Anna Blaedel, Taylor Gould, and Tyler Schwaller, three gifted, called and cherished ministers from the Iowa Conference signed the “Called Out” letter. Do No Harm supports these ministers as well as those LGBTQI clergy and candidates who could not sign the letter. It is past time to follow God’s love and grace and be a fully inclusive church.



One thing you can do is go to the RMN web site and sign the letter to the Council of Bishops to HALT ALL PUNISHMENTS RELATED TO LGBTQI PEOPLE IN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH.

<http://www.rmnetwork.org/newrmn/>  
Links to the Petition on [change.org](http://change.org)

*Do No Harm is a movement of Iowa United Methodists calling for justice and an end to discrimination against LGBTQ persons in the church. ([donoharmiowa.wordpress.com/](http://donoharmiowa.wordpress.com/))*



**Blue Armbands at Annual Conference Ordination**

Do No Harm will have blue armbands available at the MFSA table, the robing area and entries for those who wish to wear them during the Ordination Service. The armbands are a reminder that even as we celebrate the gift of ordination and all those who are being ordained, we recognize and stand in solidarity with those who are unable to be ordained under the current polity of our church because of their sexual orientation.

## 2016 MFSA Social Action Award Jane Magers

Nominated by Rita Carter

**J**ane Magers lives in Des Moines, but she's really a citizen of the world. She is someone who can start up a conversation and get to know anyone she is near and in anyplace she finds herself. This special gift has served her well throughout her life as she has connected with many people, places, and projects to further peace and justice in her neighborhood as well as our world. Over the years she was arrested 7 times for civil disobedience.

Except for four years when Jane was the head of Energy Extension at ISU, she refused to work a job with fulltime pay; part of her effort to NOT support the military machine. In 1987, Jane was one of 200 Americans walking – and camping every night - from St. Petersburg to Moscow on behalf of peace between the US and the former USSR. This experience led to her affiliating with Trinity United Methodist Church in the inner city of DSM.

Jane is an educator and has used her skills to inform others about the dangers of nuclear energy. She led the effort and lobbied almost daily at the State Capitol in recent years against the move toward a new nuclear plant for Iowa. Her friends in Japan continue to inform her about the disastrous aftermath of the tsunami and subsequent Fukushima reactor meltdown there in 2011.

Jane's concern for the environment and sustainable, healthy foods is also a long-time passion. It has even resulted in her personal construction of a solar oven, which she uses while camping and demonstrates during Earth Day and anywhere else she's invited. She led the effort to keep a grocery store open in the mid-city area when the company threatened closure.

Jane's concern for a peaceful and just world in the future is shown through her love and work for children, especially those in the multiracial, multicultural near Northside inner city of Des Moines where she has lived for years. She has founded organizations, most recently the Jane Foundation--“KeepinKidsFirst” (with the help of the late Jane Bibber), to help focus on and expand opportunities for youth in the area. This group most recently partnered with several elementary schools to provide music classes for children.

Jane continues a life-long commitment to peaceful living as a member of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom as well as MFSA, and can be seen at most events and rallies for peace issues around town. She witnesses against the spread of militarism and the School of the Americas and has even been designated one of WILPF's “Feisty Women.” Jane continues to be an inspiration for committed action for peace and justice for many people.



## **2016 MFSA Social Action Award Carmen Lampe Zeitler**

Nominated by Carol Kirk Crandall

**C**armen is retiring from her position as Executive Director of Children and Family Urban Movement, formerly known as Children and Family Urban Ministries, after nearly 20 years of dedicated leadership. CFUM is housed at Trinity United Methodist Church and serves the diverse community surrounding the church and Moulton Extended Learning Center.

Carmen has created a community of support for the children, youth and families of the neighborhood. Her passion and compassion are evident in all she does. Her efforts have created programs for children and youth in a safe and caring environment. The children and youth have been the beneficiaries of nourishment for their bodies, minds, and spirits through a variety of programs such as the breakfast program, literacy programs, leadership skills, and setting of life goals.

In addition to these many things, undergirding all of Carmen's work is her faith. Although she is a "Baptist", it is an honor for the United Methodist Church to claim her as one of their own. Her powerful, poetic and prophetic preaching is some of the finest around and she

has been willing to fill pulpits and enrich the lives of those who hear her messages. She has worked cooperatively with the heads of many UM agencies bringing her expertise and integrity in all that she does. Her efforts have been far-reaching. She is undeniably a "seeker of Justice" and she is a deserving recipient of the MFSA Social Action Award.

Thank you, Carmen, for enriching all of our lives through your many years of service at CFUM.



### **MFSA IOWA CHAPTER MISSION STATEMENT**

The Iowa Chapter of the National MFSA, an affiliate organization of the Iowa Conference of the United Methodist Church, seeks to move the church to be an inclusive, justice seeking, and risk taking Body of Christ in the world. In the Wesleyan tradition, MFSA seeks to transform the social order until it resembles the reign of God announced by the prophets and Jesus where justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like an everflowing stream.

## A Sermon for Peace and Justice Sunday

by Christine J. Anders, Minister of Discipleship, First United Methodist Church, Des Moines

**D**r. Martin Luther King Jr. once said: “Any religion that professes to be concerned about the souls of people and is not concerned about the social and economic conditions that can scar the soul is a religion waiting for the day to be buried.”

I have to be honest, this was a difficult sermon to prepare and it may be a difficult sermon to [read]. The Bible we read is filled with words that not only console us and encourage us, but also confront us with God's passionate concern for the poor, with God's demanding of justice and God's uncompromising expectation of peace. In the Bible there are thousands of verses about peace, justice and poverty and when you read it you will discover that our God has a bias toward the poor, the oppressed and the alien. The prophet Amos goes as far as saying that worship and offerings are offensive to God if we do not do all we can for those who suffer from injustice.

For some reason we seem to think that questions related to peace and justice are really political questions that we should leave to political people because after all, we are a people of faith. If that is the way you feel it is time you take a long look at this book. It is one of the most political, challenging and demanding books ever written.....

Our God has a bias toward the poor, the oppressed and the alien. In our gospel reading today Jesus lays out very clearly his mission when at the synagogue at Nazareth he opened the scroll of the prophet Isaiah and read: “The Spirit of the Lord is on me because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release for the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.” Jesus was all about caring for those in need and seeking justice and if we are his followers that is our mission, too. But how do we do justice?

Let me share two important ways I think that can happen. First of all, I believe that as followers of Jesus we need to get involved....

Secondly I believe that to do justice we need to speak out....

The poor, the oppressed and the alien have no voice in this world. It is up to us to speak for them. Before we speak out many of us ask ourselves two questions: “is it safe, is it popular?” Maybe the question we should be asking is “is it right?”

There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe nor popular. We must take a position because our conscience tells us it is right... I am the first to admit that I have often not spoken out when I have seen injustice and to be honest, I am ashamed of that. But when I returned from our mission trip to Israel/Palestine something had happened to me... I didn't talk about all of the amazing places we visited, all I could talk about was the daily injustices experienced by the Palestinian people. There is nothing fair or just about the situation in which they find themselves. Their land has been stolen, their movement restricted, their homes and crops destroyed, their water cut off, their young children arrested and detained. The injustices they face on a day to day basis are unimaginable to us... I knew that working in my own small way to bring justice to this people so oppressed was a new calling for me. Speaking on behalf of Palestinians in many circles is not popular. I have been called anti-Semitic and if I'm truthful it has caused a strain in some relationships but I am not backing down and I am not going to be quiet. I am learning that speaking out often has a cost but as a Christian not speaking out has a greater cost.

....An ancient Greek philosopher once said “Justice will not come to Athens until those who are not injured are as indignant as those who are injured.”

This is an excerpt; read the entire sermon on the **SQB** page of MFSA Iowa's website at:

<http://www.mfsaiowa.org/uploads/6/3/7/7/6377270/peace-with-justice-sermon.anders-5.22.16.pdf>



United  
Methodist  
Women  
FAITH · HOPE · LOVE IN ACTION

## United Methodist Women Gathering Sunday, June 5

During Evening Meal Break  
Wesley United Methodist - 800 E. 12th St., DSM 50316

### “CLIMATE CHANGE & CLIMATE JUSTICE”

with Rosa Mendoza, Muscatine

Tickets are \$10 (\$2 goes to Domestic Violence education).

Contact Gladys Alverez

515-277-7337, or [gkna2001@aol.com](mailto:gkna2001@aol.com)

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## Justice for Our Neighbors Luncheon

Saturday, June 4 - Noon

Trinity United Methodist Church

1548 8th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50314



Celebrate the mission work of JFON and the Board of Global Ministries. . Speakers include JFON immigration attorney April Palma speaking about the unaccompanied minor project, Give a Child A Chance, sharing success stories of teenagers helped through the process. Stephen and Gail Quigg, currently mission advocates for the North Central Jurisdiction, will also share stories of their 20 years in aviation ministries in Africa. **\$10 (pay at the door) supports the work of Las Americas UMC.**

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## MFSA Display Table

Look for our distinctive MFSA banner to locate our display table at Annual Conference. MFSA brochures, membership materials and other resources will be available. **Rita Carter manages the table; contact her to volunteer.**

## MFSA IOWA MEMBERSHIP

We celebrate faithful members of Iowa Chapter MFSA. To check your membership status, contact Mike Biklen, Membership Secretary, at 563-299-7347 or e-mail [wmbiklen@hotmail.com](mailto:wmbiklen@hotmail.com).

Member form/donations can be sent to Mike at: 515 E. Eleventh Street Muscatine, IA 52761-3920 or donate through **PayPal** or **Dwolla** links on [mfsaiowa.org](http://mfsaiowa.org).

### Website, Facebook & Links

Links can be found on our website to national MFSA resources, events, vigils and gatherings, archives and more at [www.mfsaiowa.org](http://www.mfsaiowa.org).

Join our Facebook group to receive notices and posts from MFSA friends.

### Sharing News & Email Updates

Friends, we would like to publicize **events around the state** that might be of interest to MFSA folk. Please send information by the last week of each month for inclusion in the next month's E-Mail Memo to **MFSA Iowa Chapter coordinator Eloise Cranke**.

Email address changes to [ecranke@mchsi.com](mailto:ecranke@mchsi.com).

### Walk for Peace & Social Justice

#### DISCIPLES AS PEACEMAKERS

Monday, June 6 - 12:10 PM



#### Disciples as Peacemakers

How does your faith impact your view on immigration, or the way you relate to Muslims, or the situation in Palestine/Israel? When you vote, do the values of your faith have an influence on how you choose candidates to support? What about racial profiling, or the growing climate crisis? Is there guidance in the Christian tradition to help shape our response to those issues?

These are the topics that our speakers will address at the service following the annual Walk for Peace and Social Justice. Chett Pritchett, National Executive Director of MFSA, will frame this topic, followed by Bishop Julius Trimble, Mayor Frank Cownie, DMACC Provost Laura Douglas, Christine Anders, Josh Stewart and Alejandro Alfaro-Santiz. Paul Burrow and Rita Carter will emcee and lead singing.

The Walk will begin at the south end of Hy-Vee Hall, and proceed to the Peace Garden in Cowles Commons. A van will be available for persons who are unable to walk that far, but would like to participate, so please join us!

#### **CAUCUS with MFSA Iowa Chapter at Chet Guinn's Old Fire Station #4**

**Pre-Conference Caucus: Friday, June 3 at 9:15 PM**

**Following evening sessions on June 4 & 5**

**1041 8th St., Des Moines, IA 50314 (Corner of 8th & Day - west of Holiday Inn)**

This will be a time to fellowship, meet friends old and new, discuss legislation that will be considered at Conference, and enjoy Chet's famous popcorn.

Do you need a ride? Can you provide a ride? (if so, contact Eloise Cranke)

Meet at the MFSA display table immediately following the session.