



# MFSA IOWA CHAPTER MEMO

Eloise Cranke, Iowa Chapter Coordinator [www.mfsaiowa.org](http://www.mfsaiowa.org)

SEPTEMBER 2020

Dear Friends,

While the Labor Day weekend may look a little different this year, its purpose, to honor workers remains the same. It's a time to rededicate ourselves to the cause of justice for workers everywhere, a cause that has been a core issue for MFSA since its beginning in 1907.

This prayer, by Dr. Edie Rasell, Interfaith Workers Justice Board member, captures that spirit:

“Creator God, Help us to build a new world in the midst of the old. A world where those who clean houses are also able to buy houses to live in. A world where those who grow food can also afford to eat their fill.” May it be so!

*Joy and peace, Eloise*

## **MFSA Fall Statewide Gathering:**

We are excited that the presenter for our Fall Statewide Gathering will be **Bridget Cabrera, MFSA's Executive Director!** She will be leading the discussion on “**Intersectional Justice,**” a program in keeping with MFSA's theme for 2020: “In the Midst of New Dimensions.”

The Gathering will be held virtually on **Saturday, October 24 from 9:30-12:30.** Devotions will be led by members of **Simpson Youth Academy.** Social Action Awards will be presented to Kathleen Clark and Barb Dinnen (posthumously). There will also be election of officers for 2021.

Join The Gathering on Zoom with meeting ID: **894 0168 4627** and passcode **116252**

Or use this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89401684627?pwd=RVNtVFpuYzc5T0ZFc2JtLyttc1VMUT09>

Sign up for a free Zoom account at: <https://zoom.us/>

## **Invest in MFSA's Anti-racist Work with MFSAIowa's Match!**

We at MFSA, both locally and nationally, have engaged in serious dialogue, training, and holy confession over the past several years around systemic racism operating in our governance and organization. We have named this as a priority for ourselves and know that we have work to do. The national MFSA organization began that work this year by engaging CrossRoads Anti-Racism Organizing & Training. As a regional community, we can support anti-racist work in many ways. One of the most important ways to show our support is through giving of our financial resources. At the national level MFSA has invested \$25,000 in this consulting process to begin to dismantling racist systems, policies, and practices within our organization.

During September, you can make your own investment in anti-racist work by giving to MFSA's anti-racist work. **We believe in this vital work enough that we will match donations received during September up to \$1,000.** To make your donation, you can visit [mfsaiowa.org](http://mfsaiowa.org) or mail a check to Mike Biklen, 515 East Eleventh Street, Muscatine, IA 52761. (designate for anti-racist ministry)

## **Iowa Climate Solutions Forum:**

Iowa IPL (Iowa Power and Light) and the Center for Rural Affairs invite you to this virtual Forum for District 4 on **Tuesday, September 8, 9:45- 10:45 AM.** Local leaders will facilitate a discussion about strategies to address climate change in rural and suburban areas. Panelists are **the Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Thompson**, pastor; **Seth Watkins**, a farmer and landowner; and **Michelle Franks**, a non-profit leader. **Rep. Cindy Axne** will also participate in the Forum. For more information, or to register, please contact Irene DeMaris at: [idemaris@iowaip.org](mailto:idemaris@iowaip.org).

## **Vote Safe!**

The next General Election is November 3<sup>rd</sup>, and it's easy to vote safe! **You can request an absentee ballot now.** Simply contact your county auditor. Early voting begins October 5.



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## **“Shaping Peace Together”**

That is the theme of this year’s observance of the **International Day of Peace, September 21**, as designated by the United Nations. The Des Moines Faith Committee for Peace will live stream an event that day, featuring **artist Ted Lyddon Hatten** as he creates an ephemeral art installation, while accompanied by **harpist, Kristin Maahs**. It will be live on Des Moines Faith Committee’s Face Book page on **Monday, September 21 at 6:30 PM**. In addition, a video of responses from faith leaders and others to the question, “How can we shape peace together in this time of pandemic, uprising and immense change?” will be posted on the Face Book page shortly after the live event.

## **Children of Abraham:**

Discussions resume virtually in September with some timely topics. They will begin with a more structured interview of panelists, followed by the opportunity to talk with each other in large and small group formats. More information can be found at: [www.cofabraham.org](http://www.cofabraham.org).

## **Support Urgently Needed:**

The derecho and COVID 19 have hit immigrant and refugee communities disproportionately hard, and they often don’t have the ability to access assistance programs for basic needs., Thus the help offered by the Iowa Sanctuary Movement (MFSA is a member) is more important than ever. Financial support can be directed to these funds. (See especially #5.)

- 1.) Donations for asylum- seekers and DACA recipients can be made through First Unitarian Church, 1800 Bell Ave., Des Moines, 50315. (Indicate the project you are supporting on the memo line.)
- 2.) For families affected by Mt. Pleasant ICE raid, contact  
First Presbyterian Church, 902 S. Walnut St., Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641.
- 3.) For families in Des Moines separated by ICE, contact  
Walnut Hills UMC, 12321 Hickman Rd., Urbandale, IA 50323-1810.
- 4.) For bail funds contact  
Eastern Iowa Community Bond Project, PO Box 3174, Iowa City, IA 52244-3174.
- 5.) A Central Iowa Emergency Fund for undocumented immigrants affected by COVID 19 (who cannot qualify for government relief) can be supported by mailing checks to:  
AFSC, 4211 Grand Ave., Des Moines, IA 50312 (memo: emergency relief for immigrants)

## **Hunger, Faith and Justice Response:**

The Center for Social Ministries, in partnership with DMARC is offering this new 8-week program that will inspire and equip participants to take concrete action to end hunger and food insecurity. Dates: **October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, and November 5, 12, 19**. Cost is \$80.00. Registration is required. For more information and to register, please contact: [cemterforsocialministry@gmail.com](mailto:cemterforsocialministry@gmail.com).

## **Book Recommendation:**

Longtime MFSA member, Rollin Howell, recommends an excellent book, Deaths of Despair, by Anne Case and Angus Deaton. It’s about the serious problems of drug abuse, alcoholism and suicide and their causes, plus what is wrong with our health system. The Guardian reviewed the book in March 2020: [www.theguardian.com/society/2020/mar/19/us-healthcare-industry-working-class-deaths](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/mar/19/us-healthcare-industry-working-class-deaths)

Subscribe to **MFSAVoices**, news from Bridget Cabrera and National MFSA: [www.mfsaweb.org](http://www.mfsaweb.org)  
(scroll to bottom of page for sign up)

Extensive resources and stories are to be found in the [September 2020 MFSAVoices online](#)