

## **2017 ANNUAL AWARDS EVENT**

**Keynote Address**  
**“You Are the Hero”**

**BETTY ANDREWS**  
**President, Iowa-Nebraska NAACP**  
**State Area Conference of Branches**



**Saturday, June 10 - 5:00 PM**  
**CCCU Convention Center/  
Hy-Vee Hall Level 3 – rooms 319-320**

In November 2013 Betty Andrews was elected President of the Iowa-Nebraska NAACP State Area Conference of Branches, representing over 30 units of the organization. Since then with her vision and strategic insights, she, with the support of the units, has significantly increased the visibility, platform and achievements of the NAACP in both states including highly successful advocacy for law and policy changes.

Betty's had a substantial career in broadcasting and media with numerous accolades and awards. She finds tremendous fulfillment and success in creating, organizing and promoting opportunities that build community. Betty is president & CEO of *Betty Andrews Media (BAM,)* a media, events, and strategic communications firm. She is Executive Director of *I'll Make Me a World in Iowa* – Iowa's African American Festival and recently has led the Iowa Summit on Justice & Disparities, among much other educational and cultural outreach.

**The 2017 Social Action Award will be presented  
before the keynote address**



**Walk for Peace and Social Justice**  
**Monday, June 12 – 12:10 PM**

**“Peace: Transforming the World  
through Social Justice”**



**2017 MFSA Social Action Award  
The Rev. Anna Blaedel**

Nominated by Marsha Acord and Carol Sundberg, Iowa Annual Conference Clergy

Rev. Anna Blaedel is an ordained Elder in the Iowa UMC and current Director of Spiritual Formation at the University of Iowa Wesley Center. She is a PhD student, doing doctoral work in the field of theology and philosophy. Anna has been instrumental in many activist causes for justice, guided by an understanding that the call of faith is the call of justice. Anna believes the heart of the Christian message is to seek peace with justice by building and being in right relationship with the Divine and with each other. Anna has provided leadership and shaped a deep spiritual response to many justice causes.

Her most personal witness occurred at the 2016 Iowa Annual Conference. Following the 2016 General Conference and its resultant inaction and continued harm to LGBTQI people, Anna joined with 110 other LGBTQ United Methodist clergy and candidates in the #CalledOut witness. Anna then prepared and offered remarks on the floor of the Iowa Annual Conference in June 2016 in Des Moines, Iowa, where she said, in part:

*I am a self-avowed, practicing homosexual. Or, in my language, I am out, queer, partnered clergy. I know that this is not news to most, if any, of you. But by simply speaking this truth to you, aloud, here, I know 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, lose my space of spiritual belonging, of vocational calling, my faith community, my faith home.*

*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 do not know if it is faithful or just plain foolish of me to continue giving my prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness to a denomination that continues to call me and so many I love an abomination, an issue, a divisive distraction. How can I be in honest study, prayer, and conversation within this connection when I am not safe to speak the truth of my living, and my loving?*

Within 24 hours of her witness at Annual Conference, a formal complaint with specific charges was filed against Anna by three male clergy colleagues. This was the beginning of the formal complaint process; including meetings with the Bishop, other denominational leaders, and those who brought the charges. She was ably accompanied by her clergy support person, Rev. Tyler Schwaller, also one of the #CalledOut. Throughout the process, Anna lived out the commitments to tell the truth, to bear witness to the systemic harm being done to LGBTQI people through the policies and practices of the United Methodist Church, and to take every opportunity available to her to remind LGBTQI people that they are beloved, holy, and filled with sacred worth.

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Anna is not guided by issues, but by faith boldly guided in the pursuit of justice for all people and for all of creation. One of Anna's core truths remains, "There is no LGBTQ justice without racial justice without immigrant justice without economic justice without ecological justice without gender justice without disability justice." Even now, Anna has been brought up on charges again, for doing a same-gender wedding, and the result of that complaint process is not known as of the writing of this article. Anna continues to live in the reality that she could be brought up on charges at any time. This is a constant reminder of the injustice of the system and the reality of living within this system, and the resultant spiritual harm to LGBTQAI persons.

Anna stands upon the shoulders of those who have travelled roads of injustice before her; of James Baldwin, "We can disagree and still love

each other unless your disagreement is rooted in my oppression and denial of my humanity and right to exist"; of Desmond Tutu, "If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor"; and, finally, of Martin Luther King, Jr., "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny; whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly."

In respect and gratitude, and with unity and courage, we nominate the Rev. Anna Blaedel for the 2017 Iowa MFSA Social Action Award.

In and through the witness of Jesus Christ,  
Rev. Marsha Acord, Retired Clergy Iowa UMC  
Rev. Carol Sundberg, Active Clergy Iowa UMC

**Assist with MFSA Display Table**

Volunteers are needed at Annual Conference:

**Display Table** rotation (contact Rita Carter  
515-979-0605 or [ritaac@mchsi.com](mailto:ritaac@mchsi.com))

**United Methodist Women's Event  
Intergenerational Mission Trip  
Experience**

Sunday, June 11 during Annual Conference  
supper break at Wesley UMC (800 E. 12th; DSM.  
50316)

Tickets are \$10 (write checks to Iowa  
Conference UMW) RSVP to Gladys Alvarez  
[gkna2001@aol.com](mailto:gkna2001@aol.com) or call 515-277-7337. Mail  
checks to Gladys Alvarez, 1140 45th Street; Des  
Moines, IA 50311



**Annual Conference Laity Session**

Sat., June 10- 10:20 am Event Center Halls B&C  
The session will include words from Bishop  
Laurie Haller, music by The Metro Brass and Phil  
Carver, and workshops to help us "Make a  
Difference" in our own churches.

**Iowa Justice for Our Neighbors/  
Board of Global Ministries Luncheon  
Saturday, June 10 at 12:15pm**

Trinity UMC; 1548 8th Street, Des Moines 50314  
Contact: Frank Camp ([Fscamp77@msn.com](mailto:Fscamp77@msn.com) or  
319-899-3585)



In the fall of 2009 the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church issued a pastoral letter titled “God’s Renewed Creation: Call to Hope and Action.”

The foundation document states:

Creation is in crisis. A starting point is in the convergence of these three interconnected and urgent threats to life and hope:

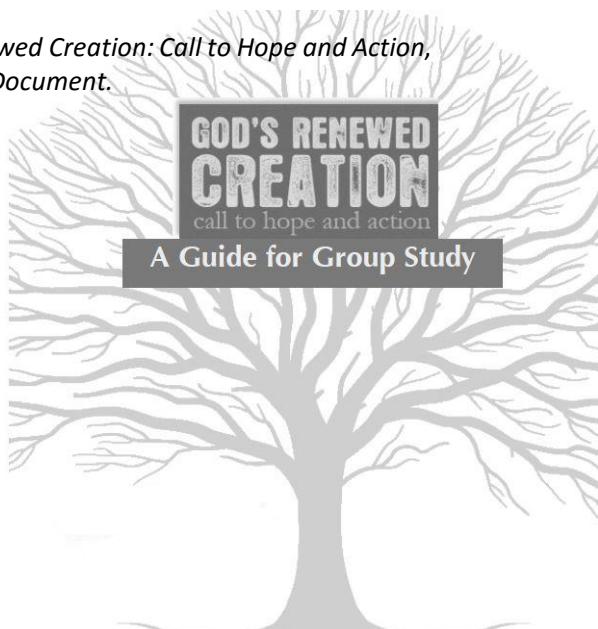
**pandemic poverty and disease  
environmental degradation, and  
the proliferation of weapons and violence**

“Because these threats are interconnected, each one compounds the effects of the others. This means that people and the planet experience the cumulative effects of this storm.

“The interrelated nature of these threats also makes it exceedingly difficult to make any real headway on any individual issue.

“We find ourselves overwhelmed by complex *webs of brokenness*: injustice against migrants, resource scarcity elevated to warfare, energy crises, environmental racism, economic globalization, and violence against the most vulnerable, especially women and girls.”\*

\**God’s Renewed Creation: Call to Hope and Action, Foundation Document.*



One of the calls to action is: “**Let Us Practice Social and Environmental Holiness**”

Practice personal and social holiness by joining us as we:

- Organize within our own congregations to study and plan what we can do as individuals and members of our churches (for example, congregational “Green Teams” reclaiming the familiar refrain: Think Globally, Act Locally)
- Learn the positions of The United Methodist Church on these issues, and consider the many options for response and action recommended by our General Conference
- Update our knowledge of nuclear proliferation; pending legislation, conventions, and treaties, and the critical timelines for achieving a truly secure world free of nuclear weapons
- Connect within our own community groups already active in peace, health, and justice ministries including energy, immigration, consumerism, discrimination, and population growth
- Call to accountability public officials and decision makers in local and national governments to eliminate barriers to flourishing and sustainable communities

And practice environmental holiness with us as we:

- Conserve natural resources and use only renewable resources in every gathering and every ministry of our congregations and Church
- Become partners with other groups already active in defending God’s creation by teaching others, volunteering in projects, and guiding young people and children in the ways that continue this transformation
- Interact with those in power over community, national, and international policies to change systems and structures that destroy, deplete, or damage the earth

**“We Are Called!”**

That’s the theme of this year’s United Methodist Women Mission U, and we’re “calling” on women, men, youth, and children to share in a spiritual Covenant for Community, or your choice of study of the Missionary Conferences of the U.S., or Climate Justice. These events qualify for CEUs for pastors or professionals.

Choose from two dates:

**Summer Mission U July 16-18**

Sunday 4:00 p.m. to Tuesday 3:30 PM

**Fall Mission U October 20-22**

Friday 5:00 p.m. to Sunday 3:30 PM

Site: Iowa Valley Community College in Marshalltown, with several reasonably-priced hotels nearby for the two overnights.

Brochure/registration online or from local United Methodist Women:

<http://www.iaumc.org/missionuformerlysocm>

Ask anyone who’s attended: it’s a wonderful experience to spend a couple of days learning, singing, worshiping, and eating delicious food, with United Methodist Women from around Iowa.

You are called! Please answer!



**Iowans for United Methodist Kairos Response**

Our Christian brothers and sisters in the Holy Land are pleading for our help and asking the Church to take effective action to end the Israeli occupation and bring about a just peace in the Holy Land. The national United Methodists for Kairos Response group formed in response to this urgent call from Palestinian Christians. We are currently forming a more local (statewide) UMKR group.

If you are interested in seeking justice for Palestinians and would like to join this group, please contact Christine Anders at First UMC in Des Moines. You may reach her by phone at 515-244-6209 ext 209 or by email at [christine@dmfirstchurch.org](mailto:christine@dmfirstchurch.org). The first project we will be working on is a display for Annual Conference.

Visit the website to learn more about United Methodists for Kairos Response [www.kairosresponse.org](http://www.kairosresponse.org).



## SOLIDARITY NOW!

By Rev. Bill Steward

Iowa workers took repeated hits in the latest Iowa legislative session:

**\*MINIMUM WAGE** increases approved in four counties were voided by the legislature and the Iowa minimum wage was left at \$7.25/hour, unchanged since 2009.

**\*COLLECTIVE BARGAINING** for public employees (teachers, administrative staff, prison workers, sanitation workers and more) was gutted, abandoning a long-time, well-functioning agreement struck by Governor Robert Ray and public unions in 1974; Teachers (and others) cannot bargain on issues that would improve working conditions, workplace safety and health insurance.

**\*WORKERS COMPENSATION** rules were rewritten to limit financial protections for workers injured on the job. Particularly cruel was the adoption of rules limiting workers' ability to recover from shoulder injuries, frequently suffered by packing plant workers. In addition, legislation that would have protected working people---against wage theft and exorbitant interest rates on payday loans---was ignored.

These are "evil times" that call us to remember and renew the passion for the welfare of working people that led to the creation of the first social creed among denominations.

The 1908 Social Creed of the Methodist Episcopal Church stood:

\*For equal rights and complete justice for all...in all stations of life;

\*For the principle of conciliation and arbitration in industrial dissensions.

\*For the abolition of child labor.

\*For such regulations of the conditions of labor of women as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community.

\*For the recognition of the Golden Rule and the mind of Christ as the supreme law of society and the sure remedy of all social ills.

This Social Creed led to charges by industrial robber barons that the Methodists were meddling in politics and should limit themselves to "religious" pursuits. But those Methodists persevered---and now is our time to persevere and reverse our passivity in the face of these insulting attacks on Iowa's workers.

Our 2016 Social Principles continue to call us to advocacy:

\*"We support the right of all public and private employees and employers to organize for collective bargaining into unions..."

\*Every person has the right to a job at a living wage."

At the State Capitol, big bucks are spent opposing our Social Principles and the people they defend.

May many fierce and feisty United Methodists speak and act out in their support. Bold disciples always beat big dollars and the common good always has the last word.



## Ban Nuclear Weapons

By the Rev. Josh Steward

There are nine nations that have nuclear warheads: United States, Russia, United Kingdom, France, India, China, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea. Of the nearly 15,000 warheads in their combined possession, the United States has 6,800 nuclear warheads, second-most in the world behind Russia which has 7,000. The United States spends more on our nuclear arsenal than all other nations combined.

Due to increasing anxiety over the potentially disastrous impact use of these weapons could have on our planet, the UN held a conference in Vienna in December 2014 which committed 127 nations to working towards a nuclear-free world. In 2016 in Geneva various proposals were discussed. Negotiations on a treaty began at the United Nations headquarters in New York in March of this year and will continue from June 15<sup>th</sup> to July 7<sup>th</sup>.

Regrettably, the United States voted against the UN resolution to even begin negotiations, and strongly opposes any such treaty. This is at a time when the United States spends nearly one trillion dollars annually on military spending, which averages to 1.2 million dollars per minute!

President Dwight D. Eisenhower is often quoted for saying that "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed." This line is from a speech he gave in April of 1953 entitled "The Chance For Peace." The occasion for the speech was the death of Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, and the opportunity President Eisenhower saw to end the Cold War.

## Ban Nuclear Weapons, continued

Everyday we have the choice to follow Eisenhower's wisdom that people and peace come before giving into the kind of fear that can lead to total annihilation. Everyday we United Methodists have the responsibility to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Why not transform the world through peace? Please do all you can through prayer-led action to inspire ourselves, our leaders, and our nation to finally support the elimination of nuclear weapons.

For information on nations with nuclear warheads see [www.icanw.org](http://www.icanw.org).

Ibid. For information on the negotiations.

Figures according to the American Friends Service Committee online: [oneminuteforpeace.org/home](http://oneminuteforpeace.org/home). See

<https://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/robert-schlesinger/2011/09/30/the-origins-of-that-eisenhower-every-gun-that-is-made-quote>.

### **Website, Facebook, Contacts, Membership**

Find links to national MFSA resources, events, vigils and gatherings, archives and more.

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

Join our Facebook group to receive notices and posts. [www.facebook.com/groups/132356340118525/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/132356340118525/)

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

To donate or check your membership status contact Mike Biklen, Membership Secretary, at 563-299-7347 or [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 via the PayPal link on [mfsaiowa.org](http://mfsaiowa.org).

**Walk for Peace and Social Justice**

**Peace: Transforming  
the World through  
Social Justice**

**Monday, June 12 - 12:10 p.m.**

Meet at the south end of Hy-Vee Hall.  
We proceed to the Peace Garden at Cowles Commons,  
Walnut and 3rd Ave.

Speakers include **Bishop Laurie Haller, Des Moines Mayor Frank Cownie, Dr. Lallene Rector, President of Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary, and Aaron Smith, Artistic Associate with the new Pyramid Theatre Company.**

Mr. Smith will re-enact portions of a speech given by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at Riverside Church in 1967.



**Sponsored by MFSA Iowa Chapter**

**Co-sponsors: Conference Board of Church and Society - Conference Board of Laity  
Conference Board of Global Ministries - Commission on the Status and Role of Women  
Iowa United Methodist Women - Conference Legislative Advocacy Team - Do No Harm**

A van will be available for persons who want to participate, but are unable to walk.  
Please sign up at MFSA's Display Booth, if you need this service

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

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

Following evening sessions on June 10 & 11

1041 8th St., Des Moines, IA 50314

(Corner of 8th & Day - west of Holiday Inn)