



**SQB**  
FALL 2019  
[www.mfsaiowa.org](http://www.mfsaiowa.org)

## **MFSA Iowa Statewide Gathering Immigrants at the Border**

### **– Immigrants in Iowa**

**Ann Naffier, Managing Attorney**

**Iowa Justice for Our Neighbors**

**Saturday, November 2 – 9:45AM**

**Trinity Las Americas United Methodist Church**

**1548 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Des Moines 50312**

### **Immigrants at the Border – Immigrants in Iowa**

This presentation will address the current situation for immigrants at the U.S.-Mexico border. It will include an explanation of the reasons immigrants are coming, the asylum process, conditions on the border, and the ever-narrowing legal options of immigrants there. It will also address the situation of immigrants in Iowa, both recent arrivals who have gotten here from the border, as well as people who have been in Iowa for years but still have immigration processes to complete. Finally, the presentation will describe the work of Iowa Justice For Our Neighbors (“JFON”), which is a non-profit organization and a ministry of the Iowa Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

JFON’s mission is to welcome immigrants into our churches and communities in Iowa by providing free high-quality legal services, education about immigration, and advocacy for more just and compassionate immigration laws.



### **Our Speaker – Ann Naffier**

Ann serves as a managing attorney with Iowa Justice For Our Neighbors. Iowa JFON is a non-profit organization that provides free immigration legal counsel and representation to low-income people throughout Iowa in their immigration matters. Iowa JFON has monthly immigration law clinics in Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Ottumwa, Columbus Junction, Marshalltown, and Storm Lake, and quarterly in Decorah.

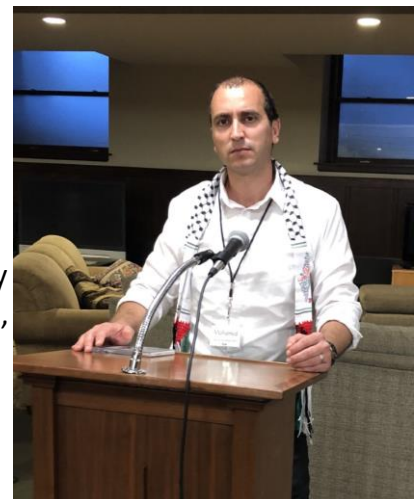
Prior to JFON, Ann was in private practice at the Davis Brown Law Firm in Des Moines, also practicing immigration law. Ann graduated from Drake University Law School with highest honors in 2011. Before law school, Ann practiced immigration law as a Board of Immigration Appeals Accredited Representative in Des Moines for almost 12 years with the American Friends Service Committee, a non-profit.

Before coming to Iowa, Ann lived in El Paso, Texas for three years, working and living with Central American refugees on the border at Annunciation House. She was able to return to El Paso for 10 days in September 2018 as a temporary volunteer to screen and represent asylum-seekers there. Ann is licensed to practice law in Iowa, and is fluent in Spanish.

### **Palestine- Through a Grandma’s Tears and a Child’s Plea For Peace**

The Middle East Peace Education Coalition (MEPEC) hosted a fundraising dinner to support our efforts to bring the Palestinian narrative into public view. “An Evening of Palestinian Food and Music” was a beautiful celebration of Palestinian food (prepared by our Palestinian and Syrian neighbors), music, and community as people from diverse backgrounds, religions, and ethnicities worked together to celebrate Palestine and Palestinians, and to tell an important story.

Mohamed Ali, a member of MEPECm (pictured right), took us on a brief journey to a refugee camp in Lebanon where his grandma has lived for 71 years. His grandma, along with her family was driven out of her home in Shaab in Palestine by Jewish militia as they seized the land to make way for a Jewish state. “My grandma, pregnant with my dad, escaped fearing for their lives after they heard the Zionists groups were attacking their towns and kicking people out of their homes. In some cases people were executed and many massacres occurred at that time.”



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## Palestine- Through a Grandma's Tears..

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According to international law his grandma should be allowed to return to Palestine but Israel prohibits the return of refugees. Mohamed explained that he is himself a Palestinian refugee born to his mom in the same Lebanese refugee camp to which his family was forced to flee seven decades ago. Though he now lives in the U.S. he returns regularly to the camp to see his family.

The camps suffer from "poverty, overcrowding, poor housing conditions, unemployment, ... a lack of electricity, water, and basic construction supplies. The sewer lines roll between the houses and electric lines are dropping between the tiny passes which caused many deaths in the past." Palestinians in refugee camps still hope and work toward the day when their legally mandated "right of return" will be honored.

Mohamed relayed a recent experience with his grandma. Noting she is old and forgets much Mohamed said his grandma repeatedly asked him where his wife is or if he is married. "She forgets so much" Mohamed said, "but she does not forget Palestine." When asked her if she'd like to return he reports tears came to her eyes and she said "today before tomorrow...but they took it!!"

Christine Anders, MEPEC co-coordinator, noted MEPEC's work to tell the Palestinian narrative. We are committed to educating through film and speakers, advocating with policy makers through congressional office visits and petitions, and raising visibility with programs at your churches and with street demonstrations.

**MEPEC sponsors Palestinian farmer, Daoud Nassar, to speak at Drake University, November 10 at 3:00 p.m. Nassar will share the story of his struggle to hold onto the farm that has been in his family since the days of the Ottoman Empire.**

Follow Middle East Peace Education Coalition on Facebook for updates on programs and campaigns.

Pastor Edgar Solis (First UMC) wrapped up our evening with a poem by a 9-year-old Palestinian.

*So sing, sing the songs of peace  
And it'll come to us and never cease  
No longer just a dream  
No longer just a dream  
Peace will come to us and never cease.*

Lyris (adapted) by Doran Zazon,  
music by Osvaldo D. Vena



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### **\*Loved and Liberated Proclamation\***

Following the Our Movement Forward Summit in May, UM-Forward.org released "Loved and Liberated," a proclamation that names the vision, values, non-negotiables, and commitments that guide a growing movement for liberation that centers the lives and voices of People of Color and Queer and Trans people (POC+Q+T).

Since May, over 1100 individuals and organizations have signed on to the "Loved and Liberated" proclamation, indicating their support for its vision and a readiness to be held accountable to its principles. At our fall statewide gathering, MFSA will discuss the proclamation.

Please take some time to read "Loved and Liberated" and consider whether you are ready to commit to this liberation movement. Read more: [umcsetfree.org](http://umcsetfree.org).



### **We Refuse to Be Enemies: Midwest Tour**

Daoud Nassar, Palestinian Christian Farmer and Director of the Tent of Nations.

#### **[Link to flyer and info](#)**

- November 7, 7:00 PM**, Luther College in Decorah
- November 8, 5:00 – 7:00 PM**, Warburg College in Waverly
- November 9, 9:30 AM**, Bethesda Lutheran Church in Ames
- November 10, 9:00 AM**, St. John's Lutheran Church, Des Moines
- November 10, 3:00 PM**, Drake University, Des Moines
- November 11, 7:00 PM**, St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, Omaha, NE
- November 12, 7:00 PM**, Morningside College, Sioux City
- November 13, 7:00 PM**, Waldorf University, Forest City
- November 14, 7:00 PM**, St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Iowa City
- November 15, 10:00 AM**, Augustana College, Rock Island



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### **Freedom Bus Tour:**

The annual Freedom Bus Tour, sponsored by the Waterloo Commission on Human Rights & MLK New Jerusalem is scheduled for the week of **November 11-15**. Sites in Memphis, Birmingham, Montgomery and Selma include the new Lynching Memorial and Legacy Museum. Cost is \$350, which includes bus ride and hotel accommodations. For more information, please contact Rev. Abraham Funchess at: [ABRAHAM.FUNCHESS@WATERLOO-IA.ORG](mailto:ABRAHAM.FUNCHESS@WATERLOO-IA.ORG).

### **"Foolish Weekend" Conference – Ames from November 15-17**

This Conference is built around the book, *Foolish Church*, by Lee Roorda Schott. Led by **Rev. Lee Roorda Schott, Richard Bruxvoort Colligan and Rev. Paul Witmer**. Cost is \$79.00. Info and registration: <https://www.icef.com/foolish-church-conference.cfm>

### **MFSA Iowa Membership and Support:**

Membership includes membership with National MFSA & SQB newsletter subscription. To join, contact membership secretary Mike Biklen. Please support MFSA Iowa through any or all of these three funds:

- **Organizer Fund:** Supports the work of our coordinator Eloise Cranke.
- **General Fund:** operating budget expenses.
- **Memorial Fund:** Gifts given /designated Donate by mailing a check to MFSA Iowa  
c/o Mike Biklen 515 E. 11<sup>th</sup> St., Muscatine, IA 52761-3920 or via Paypal at [mfsaiowa.org](http://mfsaiowa.org).

### **Methodist Federation for Social Action: At Your Church!?**

Does your congregation know **MFSA** was largely responsible for our **Social Principles** over a century ago? If there is interest in becoming better informed and more active in promoting social justice, our Coordinator, Eloise Cranke, is available to present MFSA during worship, Sunday School or other meetings. Email or call to arrange a visit:

[ecranke@mchsi.com](mailto:ecranke@mchsi.com) / PH: 515-262-5974

### ***SQB – print & digital***

We'd like to reduce the number of printed SQB's mailed to our hundreds of subscribers. If you'd consent to receive a digital SQB, email [ecranke@mchsi.com](mailto:ecranke@mchsi.com)

- **MFSA Iowa Chapter Coordinator:**  
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