

MFSA IOWA STATEWIDE GATHERING
Saturday, April 18 – 9:45AM

Walnut Hills United Methodist Church
12321 Hickman Road Urbandale, Iowa

Intersectional Justice

Bridget Cabrera
MFSA Executive Director



Plan to gather with your MFSA Iowa community on April 18 as we learn about/grow our intersectionality and get to know a new friend and MFSA leader, Bridget Cabrera.

Lunch will be served after the keynote, followed by a brief business meeting.

One of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's favorite passages was Amos 5:18-24 where the ancient prophet laments empty worship, but lifts up true worship which transforms hearts and lives so that justice "...rolls down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream..." Faithful people in the time of Amos knew the importance of water for life in their arid environment. Rivers form when waters gather from wide, often diverse geographical areas, mountain peaks or wide plains when rain or snow falls, flowing as gravity brings it eventually back to the sea.

Amos' audience correctly understood the waters/river as a spiritual source/force flowing from the heart of God, from the temple in Jerusalem to the entire world. (Ezekiel 36)(Rev. 22) The People of God, the new community of faith in God, comprise water which lives, springing up into eternal life with God as it brings true righteousness and justice to all. (John 4) This river of humanity draws from diverse geography, tradition, economic and political systems. It encompasses men and women, boys and girls, from around the world united in a common quest for human dignity and lives realizing full potential.

Bridget Cabrera is uniquely positioned to illustrate and advocate for intersectionality, the bringing together of multiple diverse groups of folk around a common vision and cause. Her leadership with RMN, Reconciling Ministries Network, is obvious. It is a network of Christians and other people of faith united around the need for justice and equality towards our brothers and sisters in the LGBTQ community as they struggle for full inclusion in the human community, the church and institutions with a history of less than full inclusion.

So, too, Bridget's leadership with United Methodist Women (UMW) in advocating for justice and equality for women and children around the world is itself a call for effective intersectionality.

The Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA) was formed over 100 years ago, called forth with a felt need to not only preach and teach about social justice, but to act, to protest and lobby and engage hands and feet as well as mouths and ears. Whether the cause of the moment was labor rights, freedom to unionize, equal pay for equal work, writing child labor laws, or engaging in boycotts for inhumane practices by corporate powers, MFSA was and is a positive force for change within and beyond the United Methodist Church.

Growing our intersectionality, our cooperation with other groups around particular issues is both wise and necessary as we seek to maximize our ability to shape social realities on the ground. Given the current rise of fear, xenophobia, hate and division in our culture, a coming together in resistance is ever more the Gospel imperative.

Our speaker: Bridget Cabrera, M.Div. (she, her, hers) is the Executive Director of Methodist Federation for Social Action, a 110-year-old justice-seeking network consisting of members in 25 annual conferences. Prior to MFSA she served as the Deputy Director of the Reconciling Ministries Network and a leader in the Love Your Neighbor Coalition. Bridget previously served as the Executive Secretary for National Ministries with United Methodist Women (UMW) and is experienced in campus, young adult, and camping ministry. She graduated from the University of Alabama with a B.S. in Music Education and from Emory University, Candler School of Theology with an M. Div. **Read Bridget's full biography on mfsaiowa.org**



Hospitality through Pronouns

You may have seen recently, on a nametag or in an email signature, a line that reads, “he/him/his” or “she/her/hers” or “they/them/theirs.” The practice of referring to pronouns is important in order to honor one another’s identity. Being aware of and using the correct pronouns is a way of being welcoming and hospitable. One good approach is to share our own pronouns when introducing ourselves either in groups or meetings or in individual conversations.

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) blog notes: “Normalizing this question [of what pronouns to use] makes it easier for the transgender and non-binary people in your life -- your friends, family members, classmates, co-workers or other community members -- to share their full selves with the world, knowing you have their backs. Ana Flores, HRC’s senior manager of inclusion, education and engagement, said that asking about pronouns goes a long way to a transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming person.” ([Link to HRC blog](#))

If this awareness and practice is new to you, please join us as we make the effort to adjust our language. One way we can do this is by adding pronouns to our nametags at future meetings. Another is to offer a gentle reminder as we learn to incorporate and become accustomed to using different pronouns. Such openness helps our community become more authentically helpful.

Annual Awards Event – June 5

Save the date for our annual awards dinner and event with Matt Russell, Executive Director of Iowa Interfaith Light and Power.

MFSA Social Action Award

Nominations are being accepted for MFSA’s Social Action Award to be given on Friday, June 5 at Annual Conference. Send your questions and/or nominations to Eloise at ecranke@mchsi.com

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. 11th St., Muscatine, IA 52761-3920 or via Paypal at mfsaiowa.org.



MFSA matches your Legislative Advocacy Ministry donations!

We want to support the volunteer Advocacy Team that works on our behalf to influence legislation on which the United Methodist Church has taken a position. **If you value the advocacy work we do together, send your check, made out to MFSA, with Legislative Advocacy Ministry in the memo line, to Mike Biklen, 515 East Eleventh Street, Muscatine, IA 52761. MFSA will match donations up to \$5,000. Let's make our voices heard!** Remember to sign up for Legislative Action Alerts. Email Brian Carter Briancar@dwx.com.

MFSA Intersectional Organizing Principle:

All experiences of marginalization and injustice are interconnected because the struggle for justice is tied to concepts of power and privilege. Intersectional organizing recognizes that injustice works on multiple and simultaneous levels. Practical intersectional organizing always focuses on collaboration and relationship building.

Experiences of injustice do not happen in a vacuum; therefore, it is imperative to:

- Develop the most effective strategies to create space for understanding privilege
- Organize in an intersectional framework led by marginalized communities
- Build effective systems of resistance and cooperation to take action for justice.

SQB – print & digital

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