



RISE UP RISE ABOVE

The power of peace to transform our politics
and preserve our democracy

A stylized mountain range background consisting of several layers of jagged peaks in shades of purple, blue, and dark blue, set against a gradient sky transitioning from yellow to pink to light blue.

MWEG

2024 SPRING CONFERENCE



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

9:00 **WELCOME**

Room 101B

9:15 **KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

Room 101B

Danielle Coke Balfour
The Tension of Peace: Changemaking in a Chaotic Culture

10:15 **WORKSHOP BLOCK 1**

Room 101A

Zakiya Jackson & Denise Grayson
The Beloved Community: A Guide for Building Zion Through Faith-Based Civic Engagement

Room 101B

Carlee Madsen
Collaborative Conflict Framework: Practical Tools for Navigating Conflict in Real-Time

Room 101C

Holly Richardson & Lauren Harper Pope
The Tired Majority: Can In-Party Moderates and Independents Work Together to Take Back Political Power?

11:15 **WORKSHOP BLOCK 2**

Room 101A

Maria J. Stephan
Women Power: How Nonviolent Action Can Build Just and Peaceful Democracies

Room 101B

Dr. Ashley Fraser
No More -ites: Heeding the Call to Become a Zion People

Room 101C

Anita Wells, Jazzalyn Livingston & Shima Baughman
"Seek the Peace of the City": How Can Our Faith Communities Uniquely Contribute to Civic Peace?

12:15 **LUNCH BREAK**

1:00

PLENARY SPEAKER

Room 101B

Dr. Melissa Inouye
IEYAH! The Latter-day Saint Woman's Peaceful Battle Cry, and Other Useful Acronyms

2:10

WORKSHOP BLOCK 3

Room 101A

Sarah Perkins & Brandyn Keating
Beyond Common Ground: Why Dialogue Matters Most When Compromise Feels Out of Reach

Room 101B

Julie Rose
No News Is NOT Good News: Why Our Nation Needs Women Who Are Willing to Stay Informed

Room 101C

Kaitlin LaCasse, Cindy Wilson, Jennifer Dresden & Chelsea Nunnenkamp
"We Want Them to Listen!" How Electoral Reform Can Build Accountable Politicians and a Fair Society

3:15

CLOSING REMARKS

Room 101B

Emma Petty Addams & Jennifer Walker Thomas

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Danielle Coke Balfour

*Artist, Advocate, Speaker, Entrepreneur,
Author, Founder of Oh Happy Dani*



Danielle Coke Balfour is a graphic designer turned artist, advocate, speaker, and entrepreneur. She's the founder of Oh Happy Dani, an illustration-based educational platform that uses artwork and resources to make complex ideas more accessible and help others seek justice while staying hopeful. Driven by her desire to encourage everyday advocates to do good daily in their spheres of influence using their passions and skills, she's fostered a community of over half a million people across social media. She's also the author of her debut book, "A Heart on Fire: 100 Meditations on Loving Your Neighbors Well."

Danielle has creatively partnered with brands like Target, Adobe, Dell, and Meta, and has opened a successful online shop where she sells her art and resources. Whether creating art, speaking in front of audiences, or running her business, Danielle hopes to inspire others to embody their values and live a life of sustainable activism by using what they have to impact the world around them.

Dr. Melissa Inouye

*Church Historian, Asian Studies Lecturer,
Author*



Melissa Wei-Tsing Inouye is a historian at the Church History Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She also holds the position of senior lecturer in Asian studies at the University of Auckland. Her first book, a history of Christianity in China, is titled "China and the True Jesus: Charisma and Organization in a Chinese Christian Church."

Dr. Inouye has written or edited multiple books at the intersection of faith and scholarship. Two books co-published by Deseret Book and the BYU Maxwell Institute include a memoir called "Crossings: A Bald Asian American Latter-day Saint Woman Scholar's Ventures Through Life, Death, Cancer, and Motherhood," and a collection of essays titled "Every Needful Thing: Essays on the Life of the Mind and Heart." Her most recent book, published by Deseret Book, is titled "Sacred Struggle: Seeking Christ on the Path of Most Resistance."

She is a senior fellow with the Foundation of Religious Diplomacy and has worked for years to facilitate sincere conversations about the things that divide people most deeply. She lives in Draper, Utah, with her husband, four kids, and hairy dog.

Zakiya Jackson

President of The Expectations Project

Zakiya Jackson is a dynamic and influential leader, currently serving as president of The Expectations Project, a national organization that seeks to eliminate educational inequality and mobilizes people of faith to demand excellent public schools for Black, Brown, and other marginalized children. Drawing from a wealth of wisdom and experience in schools, communities, faith groups, government entities, and advocacy organizations, Zakiya specializes in equipping faith communities, organizers, and activists to make meaningful impacts through strategic advocacy. Zakiya loves to help people grow, heal, and transform their pursuit of justice and equity. She believes in addressing deeply rooted problems individually and collectively for liberation. Born and based in Washington, D.C., Zakiya loves mindful long walks, supporting local businesses, laughing until it hurts, and dreaming in color.



Denise Grayson

Vice Chair of the Board of Directors, MWEG

V. Denise Furlough Grayson serves as the vice chair of the board of directors for Mormon Women for Ethical Government. Born in Oceanside, California, she has lived around the country and world. She is a graduate of Northeast Louisiana University with a B.S. in nursing. She has served in various leadership roles in nursing and owned a pharmacy for 25 years. After retiring, she and her husband were called to serve as mission leaders of the Georgia Macon Mission. Denise has loved being politically active through voting drives, canvassing for candidates, and other efforts. She now resides in San Antonio, Texas.



Carlee Madsen

Senior Consultant, Canfield Consulting

Carlee Madsen has devoted thousands of hours embracing the idea that there is beauty in conflict, and doing so has transformed her life and relationships. Carlee and her colleagues have developed a theory that creates a new mindset and language for approaching conflict, which can transform how relationships, businesses, and communities prosper and thrive when there is resistance, discord, or clashing values. This theory has shifted how thousands of individuals view and engage in conflict. Carlee has a master's degree in professional communication and degrees and certificates in mediation, psychology, leadership, and conflict management. She has taught conflict and communication courses throughout Utah and currently works for the Arbinger Institute. Carlee is a single mom who lives in Utah with her son. She loves pickleball, movie nights, and delicious food.



Holly Richardson

Editor of Utah Policy, Columnist at Deseret News

Holly Richardson loves to speak, teach, train and workshop solutions with others. She is the editor of Utah Policy, a newsletter that goes out every weekday. She also writes for the Deseret News and the Church News and has been a columnist for the Salt Lake Tribune and writer of an award-winning political blog. Holly has been a member of the Utah House of Representatives and has worked on multiple political campaigns. She is on the board of Utah Women Run, a nonpartisan organization focused on helping women run for political office — and win. After working as a registered nurse, childbirth educator, doula, and midwife, Holly earned degrees in public relations, professional communication, public administration, and international relations. Her research interests include emotional labor, burnout, deep self-care, grassroots international nongovernmental organization, volunteers, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding.



Lauren Harper Pope

Co-Founder of The Welcome Party

Lauren Harper Pope is co-founder of The Welcome Party and WelcomePAC, which work to grow a big-tent Democratic Party that wins by welcoming Republicans and Independent voters into the Democratic coalition. Lauren served as South Carolina state director for former Texas Rep. Beto O'Rourke's presidential campaign, as policy and communications advisor for Columbia (SC) Mayor Steve Benjamin, and as an aide to (SC) Sen. Mia McLeod. In the 2022 cycle, Lauren led coordinated PAC work for WelcomePAC with more than a dozen candidates in Ohio and California and served as coordinated campaign director for the Texas Democratic Party and Beto for Texas. Lauren is an alumna of the University of South Carolina. She lives in Austin, Texas.



Maria J. Stephan

Co-Lead and Chief Organizer of The Horizons Project

Maria J. Stephan is an author and organizer whose work in academic, public service, and nonprofit sectors has focused on the role of nonviolent action and peacebuilding in advancing human rights, democracy, and sustainable peace. She provides strategic direction and thought leadership for The Horizons Project. Stephan founded and directed the program on nonviolent action at the U.S. Institute of Peace and has taught courses on civil resistance and human rights at Georgetown University and American University. Stephan began her work in social justice at a transitional home for former prisoners and college students and has since dedicated her life to the proposition that ordinary people, when organized and inspired, can bring about extraordinary change. She enjoys running, reading fiction, and going for long ocean walks and hikes in the woods.



Dr. Ashley Fraser

Professor at the School of Family Life, Brigham Young University

Dr. Ashley Jimenez Fraser holds a PhD in family and human development from Arizona State University and is currently a professor in the School of Family Life at Brigham Young University. She has published her research in top academic journals and presented nationally and internationally on children's understanding of racism and discrimination, moral development across the lifespan, and youth hope and resilience. Ashley's passion comes from mentoring students, especially women and students of color, as they seek to find faith and belonging. As a first-generation college student and the granddaughter of Mexican and Filipino immigrants, she offers unique insight on navigating complex socio-economic and racial identities within a framework of faith. She lives in Provo, Utah, with her husband, four children, and her Canadian Sphynx cat.



Anita Wells

Senior Director of Faithful Root, MWEG

Anita Wells is the senior director of MWEG's faithful root. She grew up in the D.C. area, interning for Congress and working at the National Archives. Anita's love of scriptures led to a degree in Near Eastern studies and Biblical Hebrew from BYU, which, in turn, led to teaching early morning seminary for seven years while raising her four children. She pursued her genealogical passions with a master's in library science and archival studies from Drexel University and by volunteering at the Church History Library and presenting twice at RootsTech. She has authored several books and articles on scripture and family history topics. Anita and her husband live in Sandy, Utah, when not traveling.



Jazzalyn Livingston

National Program Director, One America Movement

Jazzalyn Livingston is the national program director at the One America Movement, an organization committed to dismantling toxic polarization in America by working with faith communities to bridge relationships across religious, political, and racial divides. Her focus is on initiatives that create avenues for communities to collaboratively address local issues and dismantle barriers to polarization. Previously, Jazzalyn co-founded a national nonprofit dedicated to nurturing the leadership skills of girls and women. She also served as the national program manager at the NAACP, where she oversaw programs spanning criminal justice, civic engagement, education reform, voting rights, environmental justice, and economic advancement. Jazzalyn finds joy in traveling, delving into thought-provoking literature, and sharing her passion for yoga. A proud native of South-Central L.A., she now happily calls Washington, D.C., her home.



Shima Baughman

Woodruff J. Deem Professor of Law, Brigham Young University

Shima Baradaran Baughman is a professor at BYU Law School and a distinguished fellow at the Wheatley Institute. She is one of the top-cited faculty in her field and a nationally recognized expert on bail, prosecutors, and police. Her scholarship examines criminal justice policy, forgiveness, prosecutors, bail, police reform, and how religious institutions impact criminal justice reform. Baughman graduated first in her class at BYU Law, served as editor-in-chief of the BYU Law Review, clerked in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, and worked as a litigator for religious freedom prison reform. She has published in the top law journals and been voted professor of the year at BYU Law. Baughman moved to the U.S. at age 7 as a refugee from Iran. She has four children and enjoys yoga, pickleball, and hiking.



Sarah Perkins

Writer and Filmmaker, Co-Director of The Abortion Talks

Sarah Perkins is a writer and filmmaker. Together with her husband, she co-directed “The Abortion Talks,” a film about six opposing leaders in the abortion debate who met in secret dialogues for more than six years in an effort to tame the rhetoric and find new ways of communicating to and about each other. She also worked as production manager and producer on “American Tragedy,” a documentary that was on one of Amazon Prime’s “top ten most watched” lists. Sarah is a doctoral student at Brandeis University, where she studies 20th century literature and theology, and she is the human behind For Little Saints, which is dedicated to teaching children about church topics honestly, gently, and peaceably. She lives in rural Idaho with her husband and two children.



Brandyn Keating

CEO, YOUNify

Brandyn Keating, YOUNify CEO, has a 20-year history of scaling relationship-based community building for social change as a political professional, trainer, coach, facilitator, and social entrepreneur. She has trained organizations and individuals on having values-based conversations across differences as well as on leadership, social change, and organization building. A civic engagement innovator, Brandyn has overseen dozens of experiments conducted with social scientists, including novel studies on the most effective ways to reduce polarization and change voter behavior. Keating has served in leadership roles for national nonprofits, on President Obama’s campaigns, and on countless issue and electoral campaigns. She served as executive director of the Criminal Justice Policy Coalition, on a working group for Mass. Governor Patrick’s transition team, and on the drug policy task force of the Massachusetts Bar Association.



Julie Rose

Radio Journalist, Top of Mind with Julie Rose

Julie Rose has been a radio journalist for 20 years. She spent a decade reporting for NPR stations in Salt Lake City and Charlotte, N.C., as well as for network shows including Morning Edition and All Things Considered. Her feature and news reporting won multiple national and regional awards. In 2015, Julie began hosting BYUradio's daily live radio show, Top of Mind, and went on to win a Gracie Award. After several years on the air daily, Julie began fighting the urge to avoid the news because of how anxious and angry it made her feel. She knew she couldn't be alone in that. So, in 2022, Top of Mind became the answer, switching to a weekly podcast that tackles tough topics in a way that's honest and probing but also leaves people feeling empathetic and empowered.



Kaitlin LaCasse

Senior Director of Programs and Campaigns, American Promise

Kaitlin LaCasse is the senior director of programs and campaigns at American Promise. She has worked on three campaigns for governor, serving as deputy campaign manager for two. Kaitlin also led the successful effort to pass semi-open primaries legislation in Maine, for which she designed and executed the campaign strategy, managed communications and press outreach, and enlisted and organized partner organizations, stakeholders, grass-top supporters and volunteers.. Most recently, Kaitlin served as the campaign manager for the Protect Maine Elections citizens initiative, a ballot measure that won with 86% of the vote — the largest margin of victory in Maine's history. Kaitlin lives in Maine with her husband and three children.



Cindy Wilson

Idaho Chapter Legislative Lead, MWEA

Cindy Wilson recently retired from a career in public education where she taught social science courses in both urban and rural school districts across Idaho, served on curriculum committees, and led professional development for teachers. Cindy was appointed by the governor to serve on the Idaho Education Reform Task Force and the Idaho Board of Correction. She has also worked on several state boards promoting civic education for young people. Cindy has received several local, state, and national awards for her work. Today, she mentors educators, trains teachers in democratic deliberation, and lobbies the legislature for good policy on behalf of Take Back Idaho and Idaho Children are Primary. Cindy enjoys traveling to new places and exploring the outdoors with her family.



Dr. Jennifer Dresden

Policy Strategist, Protect Democracy

Dr. Jennifer Dresden is a policy strategist at Protect Democracy, where she helps teams leverage leading social science research to inform their work in defense of democracy. She was previously a member of the faculty at Georgetown University and the associate director of the school's democracy and governance program. Jen has published and lectured on democratic and authoritarian politics for both academic and policy audiences and has conducted research in the U.S. and overseas. She holds a bachelor's from Harvard University, a master's from the University of St. Andrews, and a PhD from Georgetown University.



Chelsea Nunnenkamp

Chief of Staff, Unite America

Chelsea Nunnenkamp is chief of staff at Unite America, a philanthropic venture fund that advances nonpartisan election reform. She also serves as an elected city council member in Englewood, Colorado. Her background includes running independent expenditure campaigns for pro-democracy candidates, shaping policy and strategic initiatives in Colorado's energy sector, serving as legislative staff for the Colorado Senate majority leader, and teaching high school civics. A seventh-generation Coloradan, Chelsea sits on the Colorado Advisory Committee for the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition and serves various community organizations. She holds a bachelor's degree in political science and education from Metropolitan State University of Denver and a master's degree in global development from St. John's University.



Emma Petty Addams & Jennifer Walker Thomas

Co-Executive Directors, MWE

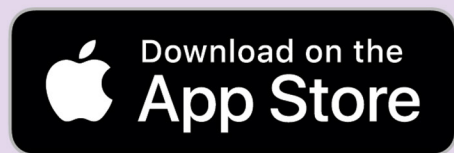
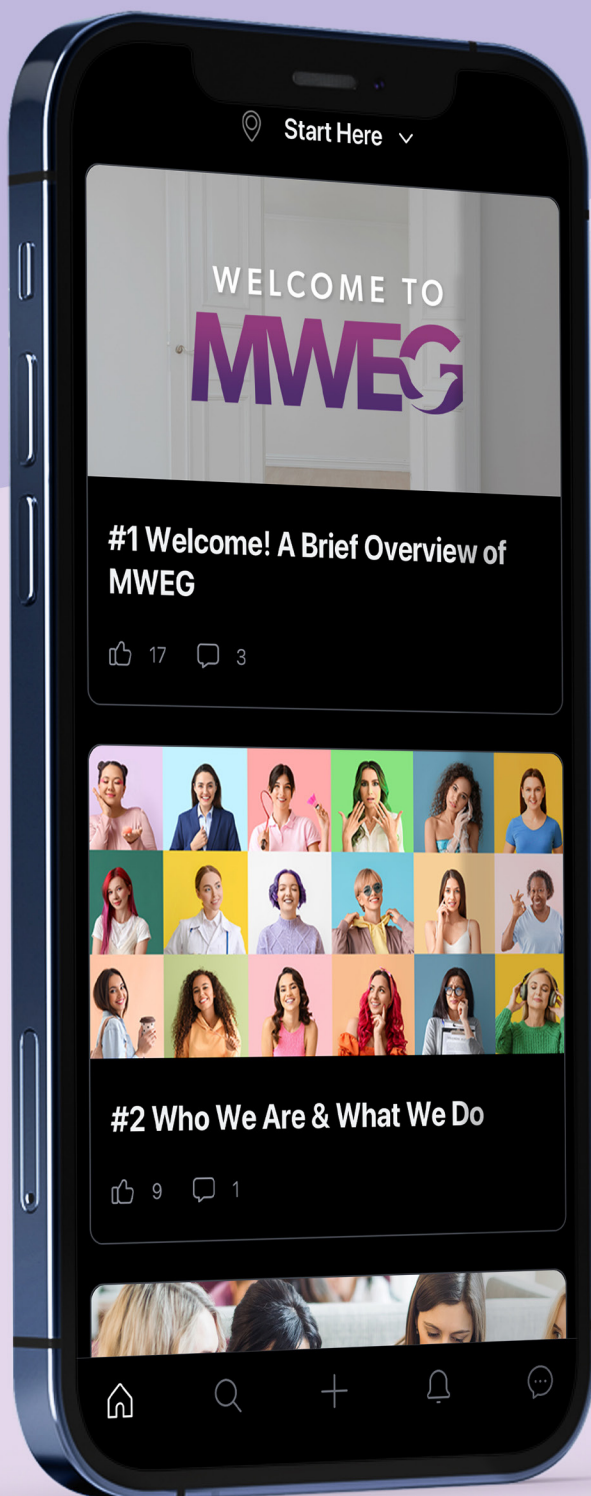
Emma received her bachelor's degree in piano performance at Stanford University and spent time in Boston and Silicon Valley working in contracts negotiation, corporate transactions and capitalization, and investor relations. In addition, she has built and run large piano studios in California, New Jersey, and now Omaha, Nebraska, where she resides with her husband and three sons.



Jennifer received her bachelor's degree in art history and Italian from BYU and went on to do graduate work in art history at NYU's Institute of Fine Arts. She has consulted for underperforming schools and worked in hospital event planning and major gift fundraising. She now serves as an elected member of the town government in Belmont, Massachusetts, where she lives with her husband and sons.

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NOTES & IDEAS



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KEY POINTS

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PRIORITY TASKS



QUOTES



NEXT STEPS

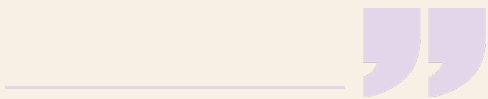
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NEXT STEPS

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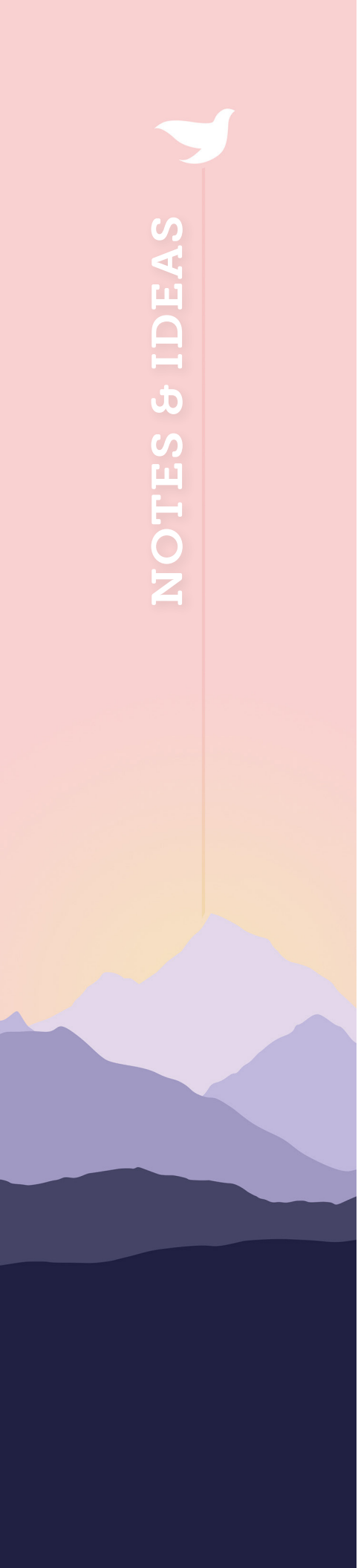


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PROCLAIM
PEACE

The Book of Mormon for Peacemakers

Join us as we explore *The Book of Mormon* as a resource for peacemaking.

On our podcast, we speak with guest experts who share their insights on how we can all create peace in an increasingly contentious world.

Each episode, you'll hear:

- ✓ Takeaways from specific scripture passages and stories
- ✓ Real-life applications and peacemaking tips
- ✓ Actionable steps to build more peace in your life, relationships, and community



a podcast by

MWEG



**Faith
Matters**