

Communal Studies Association Annual Conference Amana Colonies October 9 – 11, 2025

Wednesday, October 8

Preconference Tour - Amana Today. By reservation only. 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Lunch as a group is part of this tour). We will meet at the Hotel Millwright.

Thursday, October 9

CSA Board meeting at the Amana Church

Afternoon – Amana Historical Sites Tour. By reservation only. 1:30 – 4 p.m. We will meet at the Amana Heritage Museum.

4 – 5 p.m. Registration open at the Amana Heritage Museum

Welcome to Amana - Social Hour - 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

On the grounds of Amana Heritage Museum, Amana

Dinner at 6 p.m. at the Hotel Millwright, Merino Loft “Dinner and a Movie”

Brief Introductions and a Welcome

Following dinner at the Hotel Millwright, Merino Loft, we will be screening, *“Far Out: Life On and After the Commune,”* from Bullfrog Films about Packer Corners and other communes in the Vermont-Massachusetts area, from their founding to the present. About 90 minutes. Archival footage and interviews of communal members past and present.

We’ll take a short break (15 minutes) between dinner and the movie.

Hospitality room open at Hotel Millwright after banquet, during and after movie

Friday, October 10

8 a.m. Registration open at the Amana Church.

- Please bring auction items to the Amana Church for the auction Friday evening at the Ox Yoke Inn.
- Sign up for Amana village walking tours on Friday and Saturday 4:45 p.m.

8 – 10 a.m. Complimentary coffee, beverages, fruit, yogurt,

At the Amana Church

8:30 a.m. Session 1 - Plenary

Session 1 Plenary “Choosing the Way” Amana community members share challenges the community faces today. **Amana Church, center meeting.** Moderator, Emilie Hoppe. Panel members: Betsy Momany, Elder Amana Church, Historic Preservation Commission trustee, Howard

Hagen, past president Amana Society, Mike Shoup, Elder Amana Church, Amana Society board, John Zuber, Amana Heritage Society president, conservation committee member, Lyndsey McCarty, ACCVB tourism chair and business manager.

10 a.m. Break – refreshments available the Amana Church

10:30 a.m. Sessions 2 and 3

Session 2 Shakers Stirred Amana Church, west side

Cheryl Coulthard, moderator.

Becky Soules, Pleasant Hill Shaker Village, *"Not Worth Bringing Back": Backsliders Among the Pleasant Hill Shakers*

Misha DeBoef-Misyuk, University of Iowa, *Liberation in Church Doors: Women and LGBTQ+ Experiences in the Shaker Community*

Session 3 Roads to Success or Failure Amana Church, east side.

Dan McKanan, moderator.

Monica Bhatia, Washington State University, *Successes and Challenges in Fighting Inequality in Cooperatives*

Greg Brown, University of Southern Indiana, *Loose–Tight Coupling as a Path to Community Vitality*

Aleta Toure, Parable of the Sower Healing Center, *Pathways to Self-Determined Blueprints: Expelling Anti-Blackness, Resistance of Divine Feminine and the Grassroots Working Class in Our Movement*

Noon – Lunch on your own.

1:30 p.m. Sessions 4, 5, 6

Session 4 Paved with Good Intentions: Workers Rights, Forest Preservation, Amana Heritage Museum, auditorium

Greg Brown, moderator.

Cheryl Coulthard, CSA, *Paved with Good Intentions: Frances Wright and Worker's Rights*

Dan McKanan, Harvard Divinity School, *Sylvester Baxter's Path from Communalism to Forest Preservation*

Thomas Guiler, Oneida Community Mansion House, *Ruins as Refuge: Will Price's Rose Valley Arts and Crafts Community*

Session 5 20th & 21st Century Communities Chart Their Course
Amana Church, west side

Etta Madden, moderator.

Lyda Jackson, Jesus People USA, *It's All About the Circles: After a Half Century, Jesus People USA Finds a New Path*

Nicholas Chiaia, general counsel for UCI, a District of Columbia religious nonprofit corporation associated with Dr. Hyun Jin Preston Moon, USA,
Fiscal accountability dynamics in the UM

Session 6. Why Him? Why Here? How are we related?
Amana Church, east side

Peter Hoehnle, moderator.

Janet Zuber, Amana Church Society, *Considering Christian Metz Today*

Elise Heitman, Amana Heritage Society, *"I am the Vine You are the Branches" The Amana Family Tree Project*

Emilie Hoppe, Amana Church Society, *Why Amana? The Idea that Made it Happen*

3 p.m. Break. Coffee and homemade cake (baked by Amana Church bakers) at the Amana Church.

3:30 p.m. Session 7, 8 and 9

Session 7 "Cooking in Community" Cookbooks Produced By and Used by Communal Societies. With Tom Guiller, Emilie Hoppe, Heather Van Wormer, Susanna Pyatt, Stephanie Carpenter and Cheryl Coulthard. Amana Church, west side

A panel presentation with time for discussion.

Session 8 Did We Intend for Visitors?
Amana Church, east side

Zach Rubin, moderator.

Megan Andress, University of Iowa, *Influencing the History of Communal Societies through Tourism in the United States*

Jennifer Greene, University of Southern Indiana, *Signs of Community*

William C. Kostlevy, Asbury Theological Seminary, *Coming to Terms with Uninvited Guests: The Burning Bush Encounter with Waukesha*

Session 9 Individual Crossroads and Community
Amana Heritage Museum auditorium

Peter Hoehnle, moderator.

Jeff Bach, Young Center, Elizabethtown College, *Pietists, Prophets and Celibates, Oh My! Christ's Assembly's Ohio Congregation at the Intersecting of Old and New Paths*

Tom Kendig, Old Economy Village, *Could Wagon Trains be Considered a Communal Group?*

Rick Marshall, University of Indianapolis, *Shakers: Mindless Automats or Autonomous Individuals?*

4:45 p.m. Walking Tour of the Village of Amana. Meets at the Amana Heritage Museum. Lasts about 1 hour. Sign up for tour at the morning registration desk at the Amana Church.

6:30 p.m. Ox Yoke Inn – Dinner

Auction for the Benefit of the CSA at the Ox Yoke Inn. Please bring auction items to Friday morning registration at the Amana Church. They will be taken to the Ox Yoke Inn.

Hospitality Room at Hotel Millwright open after dinner.

Saturday – Oct. 11

8 - 8:30 a.m. Registration is open Amana Church. Walking tour sign up.

8 – 10 Coffee etc. Amana Church

8:30 a.m. Saturday, Sessions 10, 11 and 12

Session 10 War and Community **Amana Heritage Museum auditorium**

Jennifer Greene, moderator.

Zachary Rubin, Lander University, *Military Veterans and Intentional Communities*

Jon Childers, Amana Heritage Society, *Minnie Dickel Setzer's War – One Amana Pacifist's Response to WWI*

Session 11 Individual Health and Community Wellbeing

Amana Church, west side

Etta Madden, moderator.

Savannah Flanagan, Baylor University, *Women's Health in Utopia: Reimagining and Challenging Reproductive Medicine in 19th-Century Religious Communities*

Doug Hamilton, nonaffiliated scholar, *Communal TM Morbidity (Fairfield, Iowa)*

Session 12 The Methods We Use and the Questions We Ask

Amana Church, east side

Deborah Altus, moderator.

Warner Woodworth, University of Utah, *Survival, Not Utopia: Three Decades of Ouelessebouyou Communal Methodologies in Mali, West Africa*

Timothy Miller, University of Kansas, *Against Generalization*

10 a.m. Break. Refreshments at the Amana Church

10:30 a.m. Saturday Sessions 13, 14, 15

Session 13: The Hutterite Journey and Building Mary's City of David

Amana Heritage Museum, auditorium

Christian Goodwillie, moderator.

Sibylle Becker Kilian, Kilian Architekten, Dresden Germany, *From Cloistered Courts to Prairie Colonies: The Hutterites Five Centuries of Communal Architecture*

Evelyn Sterne, University of Rhode Island, *"Everyone is Pulling Together:" Building Mary's City of David*

**Session 14 Fictional Communities plus Reflections on the TM Movement
Church, east side**

Amana

Stephanie Carpenter, moderator.

Luke Felix, University of Iowa, *Olga Tokarczuk's The Books of Jacob – Frankist Narrative*

Etta Madden, Missouri State University, *Pathfinding in a Fictional French Anarchist Commune: A Review of Rachel Kushner's Creation Lake (2024)*

John Estep, Maharishi International University, *Maharishi's Error: A Neurophilosophical Reflection on Left-Hemisphere Bias in the Transcendental Meditation Movement*

**Session 15 Community on the Frontlines Plus a Look at the Campbell Folk School
Amana Church, west side**

Greg Brown, moderator.

Jasper Lydon, independent scholar, *Grass Roof Homes as Grassroots Hubs: Sustainability Frontlines*

Susanna Pyatt, John C. Campbell Folk School, *Economic Cooperatives and the Early Jason Stahl, Hutterite Way Pilgrimage Project, Retracing the Hutterite Way: Embodied Pilgrimage as Communal Historiography*

Sadie Trichler, Harvard Divinity School, *Unintentional Community: Pathfinding in the Imaginal Field. Apple Farm.*

Noon – Indoor/ Outdoor Box Lunch Picnic at the Amana Church with cookie buffet from the Amana Church bakers.

1:30 p.m. Saturday Sessions 16, 17 and 18

Session 16 The Evolution of Communities Amana Church, east side

Evelyn Sterne, moderator.

Brian Carroll, House of David, *One Island, Two Communities: The House of David and the Anishinaabe on High Island, 1912-1928*

Carista Davis, Missouri State University, *The Evolution from Seventh-Day Adventists to the Branch Davidians of Waco*

Michael Strezewski, University of Southern Indiana *Harmonie for Sale: The Harmony Society's Stores on the Indiana Frontier, 1824-1831*

Session 17 “Batter – Up!” Amana Heritage Museum auditorium

Kathleen Fernandez, moderator.

Monys Hagen, Metropolitan State University of Denver, *The Worldly Game in Amana*

Brandon Dean, University of Iowa, *Fields of Utopian Dreams: Baseball in the Amana Colonies and the House of David*

Jayson Otto, Michigan State University, *"Everybody Liked the Man," The Complicated Legacy of the Israelite House of David's Tom Dewhirst*

Session 18 Shaker Spiritual Force, Innovation and One Man's Feelings
Amana Church, west side

Thomas Guiler, moderator.

Christian Goodwillie, Hamilton College, *Perverted Spiritualistic Forces: William Hepworth Dixon's Accounts of the Shakers and Oneida Perfectionists*

Carol Medlicott, Northern Kentucky University, *"This is the new creation" Spiritual and Social Innovations among the Western Shakers.*

Tommy Hines, South Union Shaker Village, *"The Feelings of a Northern Man on Going South" Giles Avery's 1862 Visit to South Union*

3:30 p.m. Saturday Session 19

Session 19 2nd Plenary Utopia! The Second Annual Communal Studies Game Show
Amana Church, large meeting room center
Deborah Altus and Tim Miller

4:45 p.m. Walking tour of Amana. Meets at Amana Heritage Museum - lasts about 1 hour. Please sign up at morning registration.

6:30 p.m. CSA Dinner at the Amana Colonies Golf Club – ¼ mile north of the village of Middle Amana.

Those that have cars please offer rides to those who do not.

CSA Awards Presentation

Hospitality Room at Hotel Millwright open afterward.