

FREEDOM FROM RELIGION *foundation*

P.O. BOX 750 • MADISON, WI 53701 • (608) 256-8900 • WWW.FFRF.ORG

FFRF NATIONAL CONVENTION 2026 GUIDE

Dear FFRF convention-goer:

We look forward to seeing you soon at FFRF's 49th National Convention, Thursday, Oct. 15, through Sunday, Oct. 18, at the Baird Center, 400 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee.

All events take place at the Baird Center, apart from the Thursday Welcome Reception, taking place in the Crystal Ballroom at the official convention hotel, the Hilton Milwaukee. It is connected to the Baird Center by an indoor skywalk.

Please review and bring the enclosed materials, which will serve as your guide to the convention. For additional information and to view these materials on our website, visit ffrf.us/con26.

HOTEL SITES & PARKING

The Hilton Milwaukee is located at 509 W. Wisconsin Ave. in downtown Milwaukee. Phone: (414) 271-7250. Check-in: 3 p.m. Checkout: noon. Wi-Fi in guest rooms is complimentary. Discounted overnight self-parking is available for \$22 per vehicle, per day.

The Baird Center also offers parking at varying rates. Visit the Baird Center's parking page at ffrf.us/bairdparking for rates and additional details.

TRANSPORTATION

The convention site and hotel are connected by an indoor skywalk, and are approximately a 15-minute drive from Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport. Taxis, Uber and Lyft typically cost \$30–\$40. There is no shuttle service to or from the hotel. Transportation information can be found at ffrf.us/transportation26.

CONVENTION CHECK-IN AND REGISTRATION

Please note: Thursday workshops will take place from 1–4 p.m. in the Baird Center. (See enclosed program for presenters, times and topics.)

Preregistered attendee check-in will begin Thursday, Oct. 15 from 4–6 p.m. at the **Welcome Reception** with cash bar and appetizers. Dinner is on your own, then the opening keynote by Rep. Jared Huffman takes place in the Baird Center Grand Ballroom.

Registration will reopen at the **Baird Center Ballroom Foyer** and will remain open there for the remainder of the convention.

At check-in, you will receive:

- Your required name badge, including ribbons for Lifetime Members, State Representatives and other designations.
- Meal tickets, tucked inside your badge.
- A convention program.

Security protocol: A security guard will check that everyone is wearing a name badge for admittance to FFRF events. Please keep your name badge on throughout the convention! If you misplace your badge, visit the Help Desk near Registration for assistance.

MAY I BRING A LAST-MINUTE GUEST?

Yes, FFRF can accommodate registrations at the door, but no convention meals will be available for purchase.

IF YOU PRE-ORDERED A CONVENTION T-SHIRT...

Pre-ordered convention T-shirts will be available for pick-up at registration on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. A limited quantity of the convention T-shirts will be for sale during the convention inside the ballroom.

SCHEDULE INFORMATION

Please see the full schedule enclosed for the complete program, subject to minor changes.

MEALS

Tickets will be collected for the optional group Friday dinner, Saturday nonprayer breakfast and Saturday dinner. We offer a cash bar at each evening meal. We offer a Friday morning complimentary continental breakfast, coffee & tea and Friday evening dessert and hot beverage reception.

The Hilton Milwaukee Hotel offers five in-house restaurants for your convenience. A list of area restaurants is included in these materials.

SALES, 'CLEAN MONEY' AND QUILT DRAWINGS

Book and sales tables will open Friday morning at 8 a.m. and stay open through Saturday at 5 p.m.

Enter the "clean money" door prize drawing! It's FREE this year! You could win currency without the "In God We Trust" motto, including a \$100 top prize and lesser prizes of \$1, \$2, \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50. Stop by the clean money table run by volunteers extraordinaire Todd and Eric to register for the drawing. You may enter up to two tickets. The drawing will take place Saturday evening. No purchase or donation is required to enter this year.

Look for a chance to bid on a beautiful new handmade quilt kindly donated by FFRF member **Diane Chait** and two gorgeous quilts by **Lynn Simons**! Proceeds from the quilt silent auction benefit FFRF.

SUNDAY MEMBERSHIP/STATE REPS MEETINGS

Current, dues-paying FFRF members are invited to the **Membership Meeting at 9 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 18**, followed by the annual **State Representatives Meeting**, which will conclude by noon in the Grand Ballroom.

GENERAL CONVENTION INFORMATION

BAIRD CENTER AND HILTON ARE CASHLESS. Please plan to bring a credit or debit card for purchases at the convention, hotel meals, etc. Note: FFRF sales tables can accept cash, checks and debit/credit cards.

ADA/LISTENING DEVICES & CAPTIONING

Captioning will be provided on the video monitors for most of the conference. Attendees who are hard of hearing may borrow listening devices from the Registration Desk free of charge. For the best sound, sit near the front of the room. Captioning for most but not all speeches and events will appear on the projection screens.

If you have not previously contacted FFRF regarding any accommodations you need to fully participate in the convention, please email conventionliaison@ffrf.org as soon as possible. Let the hotel know directly if you need an ADA-accessible hotel room.

RECORDING POLICY

Individuals may not record speeches or presentations by audio or video. When speakers permit, FFRF records speeches and posts recordings on the FFRF website. Transcripts of convention speeches, as always, will be published in future issues of Freethought Today. Taking photographs is permitted unless otherwise specified.

DRESS

Come as you are or dress up! We recommend dressing in layers, as convention ballrooms can be chilly before the rooms fill up. Some attendees dress up for the dinners.

NO GODS, NO MASTERS, NO KINGS

A group photo will take place in front of a “No Kings” backdrop in the Grand Ballroom at 1:45 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 17. For a second year in a row, a march has been belatedly called for the same day as our annual convention, which was planned months ago. FFRF considers its conference to be its own “No Gods, No Masters, No Kings” event so we encourage you not to miss any part of it, including this group photo!

FFRF WELCOMES YOU!

We want you and all participants to feel comfortable, welcome and safe. If you have a problem or concern, please notify an FFRF staff member.

Also enclosed: Baird Center maps, Hilton Milwaukee maps, restaurant guide and current convention schedule.

Live post using #ffrfcon2026. Follow us @FFRF or at FFRF_official on Instagram.

THE HILTON RESTAURANTS

The Café

Monday – Friday | 6:30 AM – 11 AM
Saturday – Sunday | 6:30 AM – Noon

Starbucks

5:30 AM – 5:30 PM

Miller Time Pub

11 AM – 2 AM

Milwaukee ChopHouse

Tuesday – Saturday | 5 PM – 10 PM (closed Sunday & Monday)

Monarch Lounge

Monday | 5 PM – 9 PM
Tuesday – Thursday | 5 PM – 10 PM
Friday – Saturday | 4 PM – 11 PM
Sunday | 5 PM – 9 PM

Convention Schedule

Schedule is subject to change.
Final schedule will be in convention brochure.

» *All events occur in the Baird Center, apart from the Thursday Welcome Reception.*

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

1:00–4:00 PM Workshops

» *Rooms S101 and S102, Baird Center, 1st Floor*

1:00 PM “Ask an Attorney”

» *Room S101*

Legal Director Patrick Elliott, Deputy Legal Director
Liz Cavell, Staff Attorney Sammi Lawrence

1:00 “The True Opposite of Church”

» *Room S102*

Genetically Modified Skeptic Drew McCoy

2:00 “From Advocacy to Action: Secular Lobbying”

» *Room S102*

Director of Governmental Affairs Mark Dann,
Regional Governmental Affairs Manager/Okla. state
Rep. Mickey Dollens, Senior Policy Counsel Ryan Jayne

2:00 “Strengthening the Freethought Community: The Power of FFRF Chapters”

» *Room S102*

Chapter Leaders, FFRF Outreach and
Chapter Relations Coordinator Charis Hoard

3:00 (Repeat) “From Advocacy to Action: Secular Lobbying”

» *Room S101*

Director of Governmental Affairs Mark Dann,
Regional Governmental Affairs Manager/Okla. State
Rep. Mickey Dollens, Senior Policy Counsel Ryan Jayne

3:00 “The Next Generation of Humanism”

» *Room S102*

Genetically Modified Skeptic Drew McCoy

4:00–6:00 Registration opens

» *Hilton Hotel, Crystal Ballroom, 5th floor*

Welcome Reception

Cash Bar, Hors d’oeuvres

Dinner on your own

Evening Opening Keynote

» *Baird Center Grand Ballroom (ABC), 1st Floor*

7:30 “No Prophets: The Fight to Save Democracy from Christian Nationalism”

Rep. Jared Huffman

Book signing

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

» *Baird Center Grand Ballroom (ABC) & Foyer, 1st Floor*

8:00 AM Registration re-opens

Complimentary continental breakfast, coffee, tea

Sales tables open

9:00 Welcome

“Die Gedanken Sind Frei”

Dan Barker, Co-President

Roll Call of States

Sadie Pattinson, Events Manager

Chapter Welcome

Rob Moore, Kenosha Racine Atheists & Freethinkers (KRAft)

FFRF Highlights of Year

Dan Barker & Annie Laurie Gaylor, Co-Presidents

10:00 Civil Rights Heroine & Hero Awards

Gigi Cervantes, Johnnie Cotton

10:20 Hank Zumach Freedom From Religious Fundamentalist Award

Secular Coalition for America Education Fund
Steven Emmert, SCA Executive Director

10:40 Break

11:00 “What Does It Mean to Be Free from Religion?”

Kate Cohen, “We of Little Faith” author

11:30 Civil Rights Heroine Award

Maya Wiley, Executive Director, Leadership
Conference on Human and Civil Rights

Noon Book signings, » *Foyer*

Noon–2:00 PM Lunch on your own

Convention Schedule

2:00 PM Legal Highlights

» *Baird Center Grand Ballroom (ABC), 1st Floor*
Legal Director Patrick Elliott, Deputy Legal Director
Liz Cavell, Staff Attorney Sammi Lawrence

3:00 Legislative Highlights

Regional Governmental Affairs Manager Mickey
Dollens, Senior Policy Counsel Ryan Jayne

3:30–4:00 Break

4:00 “Why Fascists Fear Teachers”

Randi Weingarten, Executive Director, AFT
Book signing

5:00 Cash Bar opens » Grand Ballroom (D)

5:30 Dinner » Grand Ballroom (D) (ticketed, plated)

7:30 Godless Gospel Concert

Godless Gospel Singers, Andre Forbes, Director

8:00 Emperor Has No Clothes Award “I’ve Had it with Christian Nationalism” Jennifer Welch

9:00 Book signing, meet & greet » Foyer

Complimentary Dessert Reception » Foyer
Hot beverages

9:45 Debut: “Americacaste: The Cast Behind the Curtain” Jeremiah Camara’s new documentary » Baird Center Grand Ballroom (ABC), 1st Floor

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

» *Baird Center*

8:00 AM Non-Prayer Breakfast (ticketed, plated) “Moment of Bedlam” » Grand Ballroom D, 1st Floor

9:00 Grand Ballroom, sales tables re-open » Baird Center Ballroom (ABC), 1st Floor

9:30 Student Essay Winners Isaiah Lopez Ruiz, Nyla Woods

Student Activist Awardee
Ash Bu

10:00 Avijit Roy Courage Award Maryam Namazie on behalf of Itbissame “Betty” Lachgar

10:30 Clarence Darrow Award Peter Isely, SNAP Co-founder

11:00 Forward Award Jim Obergefell Book signing » Foyer

Noon–2 PM Lunch on your own

Chapter Leaders Lunch (by invite only) » Hilton Hotel ‘Walker’ room, 4th Floor

1:45 PM FFRF “No Kings” Group Photo

2:00 “Don’t Debate Dogma” Genetically Modified Skeptic Drew McCoy

2:30 “How to Teach Evolution to a Creationist” Forrest Valkai

3:15 Break

3:30 Emperor Has No Clothes Award Percival Everett, author of “James”

4:30 Book signing, » Foyer

5:30 Cash Bar opens » Grand Ballroom D, 1st Floor

6:00 Dinner (Ticketed) » Grand Ballroom D, 1st Floor

8:00 Drawing for Clean Money Litigation Attorney Sam Grover, Legal Office Manager Greta Martens & volunteers

8:30 “The Only Constant” Ron Reagan

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18

» *Baird Center, Grand Ballroom (ABC) 1st Floor*

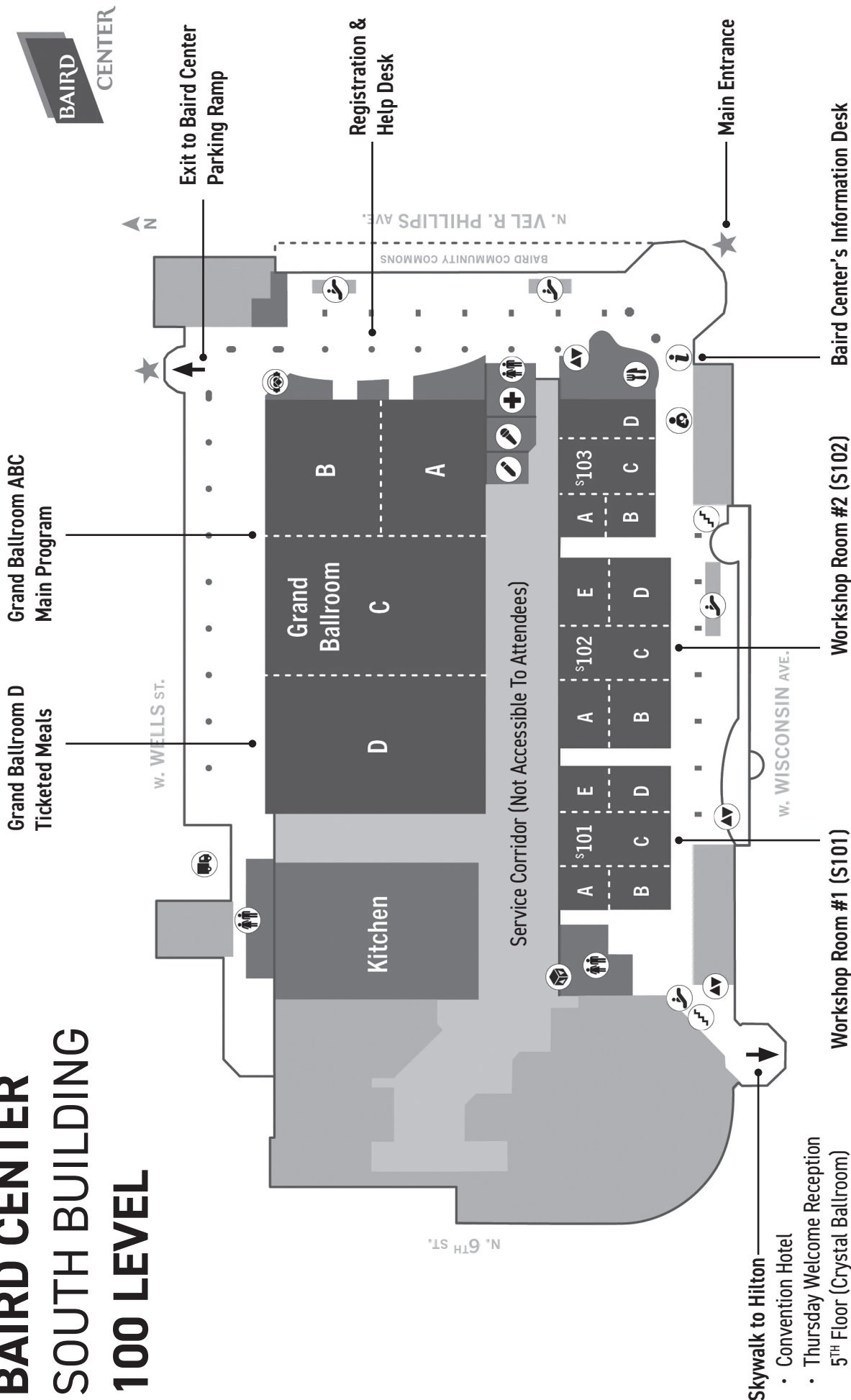
8:30 AM Coffee, tea & light breakfast for meeting attendees

9:00 Annual Membership Meeting

11ish Annual State Representatives Meeting

Adjourn by noon

BAIRD CENTER SOUTH BUILDING 100 LEVEL



MAP KEY

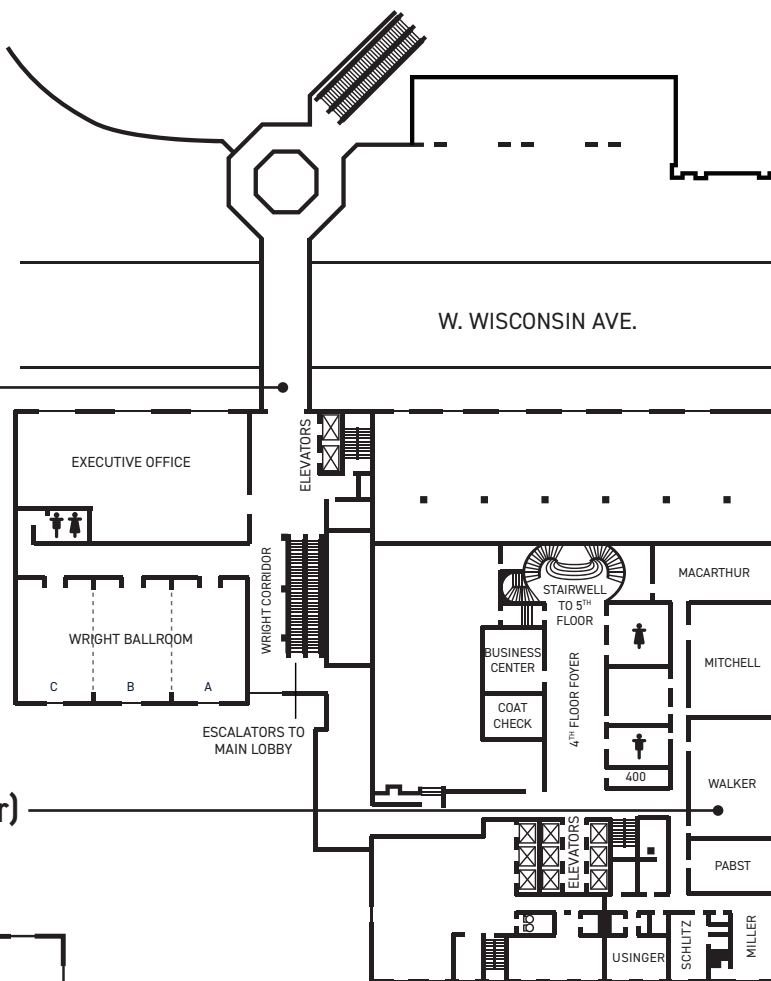
- Elevator
- Entrance
- Escalator
- First Aid
- Freight Elevator
- Green Room
- Information
- Loading Zone
- Nursing Mothers' Room
- Restrooms
- Sensory Room
- Show Office
- Stairs
- Vending

HILTON MILWAUKEE CITY CENTER

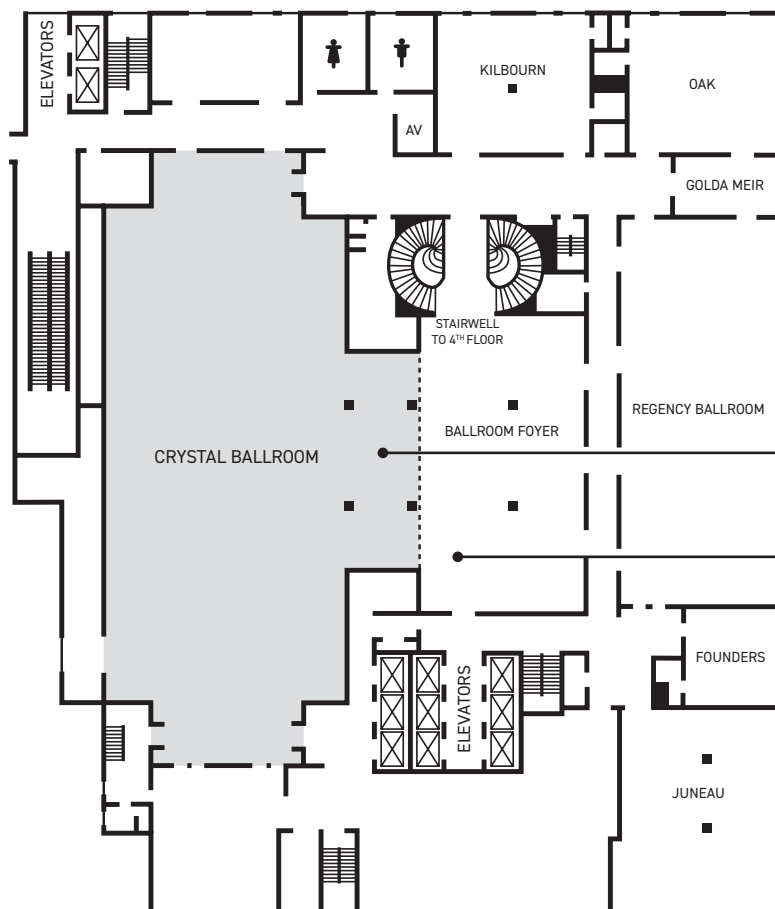
4TH FLOOR ➡

Skywalk to Baird Center
(Hilton 4TH Floor)

Chapter Leaders Lunch
'Walker' Room (Hilton 4TH Floor)



➡ 5TH FLOOR



Thursday Welcome Reception (4-6 PM)
Crystal Ballroom (Hilton 5TH Floor)

Registration & Help Desk

Note: Registration & Help Desk will move to Baird Center
Grand Ballroom Foyer after Welcome Reception