

Session 3: Building Bridges – Start Building the Bridge 3/18/09

Review of Session 2: Presentations/Discussion

Choose one organization, investigate how it is trying to build bridges, try to estimate how many people it is reaching.

<http://jewishmuslim.org/> (Zoey B., Jordan G., Evan P., Rachel S., Zack S.)

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INTERRELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS - An Opportunity for Dialogue and Networking

Sunday, March 15, 2009 - 2:00–8:30 p.m. - Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center - 100 Malcolm X Blvd. - Roxbury Crossing
Suggested donation: \$20 - Includes supper and materials

The greater Boston community can take pride in the work of numerous groups, both official and unofficial, that have been outspoken in their commitment to the furtherance of interreligious understanding between the three Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Whenever voices of bigotry have been raised or acts of violence and inflammatory characterizations directed at one faith or another, they have been met with determined responses.

Yet there have been few opportunities for the leadership of these groups, many unknown to one another, to come together to share ideas and hopes, as well as express fears and concerns and explore the potential for future networking and cooperation. To bridge that gap, the ICPL has arranged a gathering for an exchange of views on the perils and promises of interreligious dialogue and what participating groups should anticipate as they go forward. Invitations to participate have been extended to leaders of interreligious organizations throughout the Boston area. Those attending have been asked to bring with them examples of projects appropriate for inclusion in a program fair from which everyone can benefit.

In planning this event, it was felt that there would be no clearer illustration of the commitment to the ideal of interreligious understanding than to convene at the Islamic Society Cultural Center in Roxbury, which has graciously agreed to host the event.

Schedule

2:00 p.m. Tour of the Mosque and Cultural Center
3:00 Muslim Worship
Registration
3:30 Welcome: Why We Have Come Together
3:45 The Perils and Promises of Interreligious Relationships: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Perspectives - Moderator
Diane Kessler, Board of Trustees, Interreligious Center on Public Life - Keynote
Speakers - David Gordis, President Emeritus, Hebrew College - Nick Carter, President, Andover Newton Theological School - Mohamed Lazzouni, Visiting Scholar of Islamic Studies, Boston College
4:30 Questions and Discussion
5:00 Program Fair

5:30 Prayer and Meditation: Jewish, Christian, Muslim
6:15 Informal Buffet Supper
Breakout Sessions
Topics For Discussion: Recognizing nuances in interreligious exchanges that stereotype and offend the "other": What has worked and why, programmatically?; Establishing "response teams" to denounce messages of hate in the public arena; Internal challenges facing each faith community when engaging in interreligious conversation, including who actually speaks for the community.
7:45 Planning for Future Networking - David Dolev, Co-director, Center For Jewish-Muslim Relations
8:30 Benediction and Adjournalment
For more information - Rabbi Sandy Seltzer - sseltzer@hebrewcollege.edu - 617.559.8639

Other Examples:

[Facebook - Interfaith Council - religious organization - 111 members](#)
(<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?sid=8f3d6fc3aa67c213fb5076382b494001&gid=44584539154>)

[Facebook - Interfaith Inventions - religious organization - 298 members](#)
(<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?sid=be71349a3a4f6ea57e6e1baa14fb6797&gid=21238812230>)

[Facebook - Project Interfaith - cause - 195 members - \(http://www.facebook.com/pages/Project-Interfaith/9147697529\)](#)
[Project Interfaith \(http://www.projectinterfaithusa.org/\)](http://www.projectinterfaithusa.org/)

[Interfaith Alliance – 185,000 members - \(http://www.interfaithalliance.org/\)](#)

Network of Religious Communities <http://www.religiousnet.org/> - 1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209-2496 - Phone: (716) 882-4793 e-Mail: nrc@religiousnet.org - The Network of Religious Communities (NRC) is an interreligious/ecumenical organization of denominations, congregations, and religious organizations located in Western New York State, U.S.A. and the Niagara Peninsula of Southern Ontario, Canada. Co-Presidents (2008): Ms Marlene Glickman & Rev Dr Kenneth Neal. Our purpose is to: foster interreligious, ecumenical, and interracial understanding, dialogue, and cooperation; facilitate collaboration in areas of common concern and in response to the needs of the residents of our region; and promote justice, peace, and the common good — as expressed in the faith traditions of our members.

Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) Office of Interfaith and Community Alliances - <http://www.isna.net/interfaith/> - Through community outreach and interfaith programs, the ISNA Office for Interfaith and Community Alliances (IOICA) strengthens ties between ISNA and local grassroots organizations. The office also functions as an outreach resource for those engaged in politics and government. Such contacts allow ISNA to promote a positive image of Islam and Muslims to the nation's political leaders.

Tikkun - <http://www.tikkun.org/> - We seek to create that alternative. We are a community of people from many faiths and traditions, called together by TIKKUN magazine and its vision of healing and transforming our world. We include in this call both the outer transformation needed to achieve social justice, ecological sanity, and world peace, and the inner healing needed to foster loving relationships, a generous attitude toward the world and toward others unimpeded by the distortions of our egos. Our movement will encourage a habit of generosity and trust, and the ability to respond to the grandeur of creation with awe, wonder and radical amazement.

Bridges TV – <http://www.bridgestv.com/> - info@bridgestv.com - (716) 961-3140 – Time Warner Cable Ch. 270 - <http://www.youtube.com/user/BridgesTVdotcom>

Identification of Interfaith Friends
Rachel Siva's friend, Dr. Shibly's students

Group discussion: How can YOU use your personal beliefs, interests, or work to build bridges? What bridge can you commit to building TODAY?

Homework: Start building your "bridge"