



The Interfaith Center of New York connect educate learn change manage participate tolerate interact

Dear Friends,

This summer has been unusually busy for the Interfaith Center. In July, we ran a very successful program on religious diversity for nearly 25 teachers from New York and other states. Rev. Chloe Breyer also recently participated in a trip to Haiti with the Micah Institute; watch her video recording "[Faith in Society After the Earthquake: Haiti Update.](#)"

The Interfaith Center has joined other faith partners to proactively address controversies that have overtaken three mosque initiatives, in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Staten Island; Rev. Chloe Breyer was quoted in an NBC story, "[Fighting Mad About Mosques,](#)" on the eve of the Peace Walk through Sheepshead Bay. Recently, the Interfaith Center wrote a letter to [thank Mayor Bloomberg](#) for his leadership in supporting religious freedom and the building of a mosque and community center at Park Place in Lower Manhattan.



Along with other interfaith leaders, we also stood in support of Mayor Bloomberg as he delivered [his speech](#) on Governor's Island, asking New Yorkers to cherish and be true to the American tradition of religious tolerance. Board member Rev. T. K. Nakagaki, representing the Buddhist community, and Program Director Matt Weiner are featured in the photo at left. We encourage religious leaders to write letters of thanks to Mayor Bloomberg for his leadership in protecting the right of religious groups to establish houses of worship in New York City.

We are gratified that our work will be recognized later this month by Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer at the Third Annual Iftar Dinner, and we welcome you to join us (see below for details).

Below we list upcoming events that may be of interest to religious leaders in New York. A listing does not imply endorsement.

- **INTERFAITH CENTER BEING HONORED**

Date: Tuesday, August 17, 2010, 6:30pm

Location: The Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center, 3940 Broadway (between 165th and 166th Streets)

In honor of the blessed month of Ramadan, Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer cordially invites you to the Third Annual Iftar Dinner. Honoring: **Ibrahim Abdul-Matin**, Author, "Green Deen: What Islam Teaches about Protecting the Planet", **Maryum Khwaja**, Director of Social Services, New York City University Islamic Center, **Alioune Niass**, Senegalese Muslim vendor, Steward of Public Safety, **Interfaith Center of New York**, A

secular nonprofit that promotes cooperation among New York's diverse faith communities, **Muslim Education and Converts Center of America (M.E.C.C.A)**, A nonprofit that provides Islamic education in New York City. Co-sponsors: Council of African Imams; Council of Peoples Organization; Council on American-Islamic Relations-NY; Dalia Mahmoud; Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood; Muslim Consultative Network; Muslim Day Parade; Muslim Public Affairs Council-NY; Shabazz Center; Women in Islam Inc; X Café. **RSVP** to 212 669 4465 or receptions@manhattanbp.org

- **CONGREGATIONS: TAKE A PLEDGE TO FIGHT DIABETES AND SIGN UP FOR FAITH FIGHTS DIABETES!**

Did you know that diabetes is the fourth leading cause of death in New York City? As a religious leader, you can make a difference: Faith Leaders can sign the "I Will Fight Diabetes" Pledge and the Listserv and pledge to fight the Diabetes epidemic in New York City. Over 1.8 million New Yorkers have been diagnosed with the disease with over 730,000 people who have yet to be diagnosed. Go to: <http://www.faithfightsdiabetes.org/join/index.php> to sign the pledge now! We also invite your congregation to complete a one-page survey to assess their risk for diabetes. To request surveys or learn more, please contact Sarah Sayeed at ssayeed@interfaithcenter.org or 212-870-3519

- **SAVE THE DATE: 9/11 FLOATING LANTERN CEREMONY**

Location: Pier 40

The NY Buddhist Church along with many interfaith co-sponsors, including the United Sikhs and the Interfaith Center of NY commemorates 9/11 with floating lanterns at sunset.

- **SAVE THE DATE: 10TH ANNUAL INTERFAITH CELEBRATION OF RAMADAN**

Date: Monday, September 13, 2011, 6:00pm

Location: Union Seminary

Each year, the Interfaith Center of New York partners with Union Seminary, Muslim Consultative Network, and Columbia University Muslim Students to host an interfaith iftar (breaking of the fast) during Ramadan. This year, Ramadan, in accordance with the lunar calendar, begins in early August and continues until early September, while Union and Columbia students are still in their summer break. In the next few years, Ramadan will continue to move up in the calendar year, eventually cycling back into Spring and Winter. However, we will continue to get together to have an interfaith celebration of Ramadan, but instead of breaking the fast, we will celebrate the end of Ramadan together. More details will be sent in September, but we hope you'll join us again this year! Our focus theme will be Hunger in New York City.

*******ADDITIONAL EVENTS IN THE NEW YORK AREA*******

- **BLACKS, IMMIGRATION AND HEALTHCARE: A PRE-RAMADAN FUNDRAISER**

Date: Thursday, August 5, 2010, 5-9pm

Location: 1985 Fulton Street, 5th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11233

Masjid Al Hamdulillah and House of Peace invite you to a pre-Ramadan gathering to discuss blacks, immigration and health care. There will also be presentations on domestic violence and HIV/AIDS. Admission: \$10 dollars for adults, and \$5 for children. There will be Halaal and vegetarian food.

- **LIVING WAGE NYC COALITION MEETING**

Date: Wednesday, August 11th, 6 PM

Location: 30 East 29th Street- Between Park and Madison, 5th Floor Conference Room
(R,6 Trains to 28th Street)

The Living Wage NYC Campaign is one of the local initiatives of Micah Challenge US which works to meet the global Millennial Development Goals to cut poverty in half by 2015 through events and activities in partnership with the Micah Institute at New York Theological Seminary. Help plan our campaign strategy for the fall including: Sept. 15th City-wide Clergy Breakfast; 10-10-10 Living Wage Weekend: Dozens of congregations, city-wide will hold worship services for living wages; Community forums; Actions at Malls (or poverty wage centers as we call them); Meetings with city council members. Tell your fellow congregants, organizers, activists and community leaders! Please RSVP to Ava Farkas: afarkas@rwdsu.org

- **DOCUMENTARY "LOCAL FAITH COMMUNITIES" AVAILABLE ONLINE**

At one time the Lower East Side was the most densely populated and diverse spot on the planet.... meet a few of the people behind 10 of our local faith institutions carrying this history forward. It's about community, local, personal. It's another tiny attempt to lower the need for vast military spending around the globe, decreasing some of the fear and prejudice around religions. The documentary is available at www.LocalFaithCommunities.org Please share this with any community you think is struggling with or would just appreciate a supportive example of faith diversity and building beyond "tolerance". Direct contacts of interested groups or especially high schools, etc. are most welcome. A DVD can also be requested by emailing antoned@aol.com

- **MICAH LIVING WAGE CLERGY BREAKFAST**

Date: Wednesday, September 15, 9 AM

Location: Park Avenue Christian Church, 1010 Park Avenue at 85th Street

Join religious leaders from around the city for a Micah Living Wage Clergy Breakfast. At this gathering we will introduce the Living Wage NYC campaign which aims to end taxpayer-subsidized poverty wages and to create living wage jobs through setting wage standards on city

economic development projects. The Living Wage NYC Campaign is one of the local initiatives of Micah Challenge US which works to meet the global Millennium Development Goals to cut poverty in half by 2015 through events and activities in partnership with the Micah Institute at New York Theological Seminary. A key constituency in winning this grass-roots economic justice campaign will be the interfaith community, with its moral leadership and social witness, and with its active membership and institutional resources. The breakfast is the first gathering building toward a citywide interfaith "Micah Living Wage Weekend" to be held on October 8-10 to promote preaching, teaching and prayer services about reducing poverty in communities of faith across the city. Resources for the weekend will be available at the breakfast. Please RSVP with Janet Martin janethmartin@gmail.com. Directions: 4,5 and 6 Trains to the 86th Street Station.

- **A MILLION MINUTES FOR PEACE: PLEDGE TO PRAY FOR PEACE AT NOON**

Date, September 21, 2010, United Nations International Day of Peace

Join Odyssey's "A Million Minutes for Peace" and pledge to pray for peace at noon on September 21, the United Nations International Day of Peace. Thousands of people from diverse faiths and spiritual traditions in over 114 countries will join you on that day. Please go to www.AMillionMinutesforPeace.org and pledge your one minute for peace. As a peace pledger, your name will be added to a list that will be presented to Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon just after he rings the Peace Bell at the United Nations on the International Day of Peace.

- **ALTERNATIVE GIFTS INTERNATIONAL (AGI)**

AGI is a social justice non-profit headquartered in Wichita, Kansas. Each year hundreds of inspired interfaith congregations, schools, and colleges throughout the United States and Canada host *Alternative Gift Markets* where the local community comes to buy gifts of meaning, non-traditional gifts, gifts that bring aid to the world's poor and help sustain the environment. *Gifts Inspiring Change!* In our 24th year, we inspire support for humanitarian and environmental causes by offering donors the option to designate charitable gifts in the name of their relatives, friends, and associates. Our Kansas team is uniquely interfaith (Muslim, Sikh, Christian, Buddhist, and New Thought). In our own way, the diversity of our team is our proof that compassion comes from all faiths and we can unite and work together for a greater cause. If you feel there is a purpose for Alternative Gifts International in your life, school, or faith community please call 800-842-2243, or email tony@alternativegifts.org. To learn more or to request catalogs please visit www.alternativegifts.org.

- **CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY**

Date: Starting September 21, 2010

The Citizen Police Academy offers community members the opportunity to experience similar training to that of police recruits at the police academy. This fifteen-week course covers topics such as police science, law, and state of the art policing strategies currently employed by the

NYPD. The Academy seeks applications from all NY communities. The application includes a warrant check and individuals must have a valid ID. Applicants are accepted on a first come, first serve basis. To apply, email: First and last name, (MUST include middle initial); Address; Date of Birth; Telephone home and cell; email address to Sgt. Villafane at LIZBETH.VILLAFANE@nypd.org. Sgt. Villafane is Commanding Officer of the New Immigrant Outreach Unit and has previously presented at the Interfaith Center's Rabbi Marshall Meyer Retreat on Hate Crimes.