



I am my brother's keeper:

Confronting Islamophobia

May 6-7th, 2011

Saint Mark's Cathedral

1245 Tenth Avenue East, Seattle



Conference Schedule

Friday May 6,

- 7:30 pm Music by Abráce, sweets with tea and book-signing
- 8:00 – 9:30pm Maghrib (Muslim) prayer
Keynote address
***What's Right with Islam Is What's Right with America* - Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf**

Saturday May 7

- 8:30-9:30am Registration and gathering
(Cathedral Sanctuary)
- 9:30-10:00am **Welcome**
The Rev. David Mesenbring ~ Pastor for Church in the World Ministries, Saint Mark's Cathedral.
Moderator Phil Ginsberg
(Cathedral Sanctuary)
- 10:10–10:30am **Lecture**
***Getting to the Heart of Islam* - Imam Jamal Rahman**
(Cathedral Sanctuary)
- 10:30–11:00am **Lecture**
***Islam and the West: The Burden of the Past and the Challenge of the Future* - Yvonne Haddad PhD**
(Cathedral Sanctuary)
- 11:00–11:15am **Coffee break**
- 11:15am–12:15pm **Workshops / Seminars / Panels** (choose one)

***The New Fault Line in Encounter Between Muslims and the West* - Yvonne Haddad**

This workshop will review the changing dynamics in Christian-Muslim relations due to the growing presence of Muslims in the West (France, United Kingdom and the United States) and the vulnerability of Christians living in Muslim countries (Egypt, Iraq and Pakistan). It will focus primarily on the post 9/11 period with special emphasis on youth. (Skinner Theater)

***Three Cups of Tea* - Jamal Rahman and Ted Falcon**

The Qur'an says God created diversity out of a divine design so that "you might get to know the other". A Rabbi and an Imam, whose friendship spans ten years, share ways they practice "three cups of tea " with the other as they learn to "listen, respect and connect." The group will join in this sharing, to experience the ways in which learning more about The Other can help us learn more about ourselves as well. (Bloedel Hall)

***Myths about Islam* - panel led by Arsalan Burkari**

Islam is perhaps our most widely misunderstood faith. Society has spotlighted Muslims and their beliefs, ironically creating more inaccurate illustrations of Islam rather than shedding light on one of the world's largest religions. Conspiracy theories about mainstream American Muslim individuals and institutions have become mainstream.

Join us as a panel of six local Muslims from very diverse backgrounds answer your questions and eradicate these misconceptions, and provide data from empirical research that provides a clear idea of the beliefs and activities of American Muslims. To emphasize that this is a forum to ask questions, there are also prizes offered to those who ask the three toughest questions. The session is also designed to equip you with tools to use to respond to myths about Islam and Muslims. (Conference room)

***Jesus Christ and His Mother Mary: A Muslim Point of View* - Alaa Badr**

Often the Muslims perspective on the personality and message of Jesus (Peace be Upon Him) is not known; nor is it clear how Muslims regard saviorship through the "Jesus Lens". This session seeks to clarify the Muslims' perspective and belief in Jesus Christ and his Mother Mary, sharing the Qur'an's version of his story and message. It further seeks to enhance dialog and understanding of Muslim-Christian faith through the common teachings of Mohammed (Peace be Upon Him) and Jesus (Peace be Upon Him). (Leffler Living Room)

12:15–1:15pm **Lunch**

12:30pm **Katherine Green Gaudette** will be available in the sanctuary to talk about her new photos from Muslim countries including Turkey, Egypt and Jordan.

1:00pm **Dhohr (Muslim) prayer in the chapel**

1:15– 1:45pm **Lecture**

Islamophobia as Attack on Core American Values - Richard Silverstein
(Cathedral Sanctuary)

2:00–2:50pm **Workshops / Seminars / Panels** (choose one)

Islamophobia in U.S. Middle East Policy - Kathleen Christison

Islamophobia has a powerful effect on U.S. policy in the Middle East, whether policymakers are fully aware of this or not. Because it is part of the public discourse, it inevitably becomes part of policymaking. Suspicion of the “other”, prejudice against dark-eyed people and, perhaps most particularly, an affinity for Israel and for its own negative attitudes toward Islam all govern the thinking of policymakers, just as these attitudes govern the thinking of ordinary citizens. Islamophobia in policy circles, or at least some level of discomfort with Islam, is intensified by the actions and propaganda of Israel and Israeli sympathizers who actively promote hostility to Islam.

(Bloedel Hall)

Love of God and Neighbor: The Islamic Perspective. Prophet Mohammad's Legacy of Compassionate Justice Toward Muslims and Non-Muslims - Mohammad Fani, Shirley Gazori, Hameed Afssari, Esmaeel Naeemi

This workshop examines the nature of the message of Islam as shown through the teachings of the Qur'an and the traditions of Prophet Mohammad. These reveal a kind, loving and compassionate code of conduct for life.

Unfortunately, in recent years these same teachings and traditions have been misused. This difference is the focus of our exploration today.

(Skinner Theater)

Building Alliances Across Faith Communities to Protect Civil Liberties - Arsalan Burkari, Marilyn Mayers, Doug Honig

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's "Building Bridges" program is designed to build connections between Unitarians and Muslims through a focus on civil liberties. The program will be reviewed as a model for any faith community to use to discuss areas of common concerns: court cases and federal/state policies which threaten basic constitutional rights, militarization of the border, detention & travel procedures, etc.

After briefly reviewing how UUSC has framed and responded to such issues, the presenters will facilitate discussion among participants through a breakout session to identify actions non-Muslim faith-based organizations may want to consider.

(Conference room)

The Revolution Will Be on the Web: Hate Propagation on the Internet and How to Respond - Abigail Stahl

CAIR Washington Community Outreach Coordinator, Abigail Stahl, will introduce some of the main anti-Islam hate-mongers in the digital realm, including Pam Geller, Robert Spencer, and Daniel Pipes. Participants of the workshop will identify key strategies bloggers and anti-Muslim groups use to promote, legitimize, and spread Islamophobia on the internet. Through interactive activities, tools will be provided to help participants analyze and keep a critical eye to increasing anti-Muslim bias in even the most mainstream sources. Finally, participants will learn concrete steps that can be taken to respond to hate on the internet including the use of Facebook, Twitter, blogs, commentary, and news sources.

(Lefler Living Room)

2:50–3:10pm **Coffee break**



3:10–4:15pm **Workshops / Seminars / Panels** (choose one)

What Does it Mean to be an American Muslim? - panel led by **Jennifer Gist**

Though the diverse panelists of this workshop come from different cultural backgrounds and hold differing beliefs, one common thread unites them: they are all American Muslims. Addressing the question of what it means to be an American Muslim, panelists will share their own experiences of the joys and perils of being Muslim in the United States today. Attendees are encouraged to come with questions. Following the panel, CAIR-Washington's Civil Rights Coordinator, Jennifer Gist, will address strategies when one encounters discrimination and brainstorm additional strategies with workshop participants.

(Skinner Theater)

Sharia, Canon law, and the Constitution - **Salah Dandan, Jim Brooks, Jim Mirel**

Sharia is getting a great deal of media attention. In this workshop Salah Dandan, lawyer, will introduce Sharia and discuss its impact on the lives of Muslims in the US. We will then look at it in the context of systems we have lived with and worked with for over two centuries, including Catholic Canon law and Jewish Halacha. The format will be a short presentation by each panel member followed by questions and discussion.

The idea is not to debate the merits or particulars of each system but to look at ways we try to allow for the practice of different faiths within the framework of a constitution that is about religious freedom and equal rights for all. And to respond to some of the myths currently circulating about Sharia.

(Bloedel Hall)

Islam and the Environment: a Broad Overview of How Islam Approaches the Fragility of the Earth - **Alaa Badr**

With the fragility of our planet becoming more and more apparent, especially in light of the Tsunami in Japan and the Gulf Oil Disaster, one rarely hears about a particular religious point of view on these events. The purpose of this session is to clarify the Islamic perspective on the environment and our being stewards of the Earth.

(Conference Room)

The Common Word – The Qur'an and the Bible - **Andy Larsen**

This seminar will tell the stories of the journey between Muslims and Evangelicals engaged in dialogue through Bridges of Faith, the official Evangelical–Muslim dialogue group of the Common Word Initiative, and other, Seattle based relationships and activities that have been very positive and constructive in recent years. In contrast to an often toxic environment portrayed by the press of extreme voices trying to represent each other in negative light, we have proactively sought to follow God's word to love our neighbor as ourselves. Respect and trust now characterize many of these relationships, leading to the ability to discuss differences with civility and to build deep appreciation and understanding for our common values to love God and neighbor, as instructed by our sacred scriptures.

(Leffler Living Room)

Student Debriefing - **Jean Pollack, Sabrene Odeh**

Students will gather to share insights and experiences from the day, as well as thoughts about being young people within their faith.

(Leffler Board Room)

4:30–5:30pm

Interfaith service

led by **Imam Fazal Hassan, Rabbi James Mirel** and **Bishop Greg Rickel**

Music by **Abráce**

(Cathedral Sanctuary)

6:00pm

Dinner and social time at local mosques

AbuBakr/Tukwila, Masjid Omar al-Farooq, Mountlake Terrace, Bellevue Mosque, MAPS, Redmond, ZAINAB Center, Lynwood and IMAM Center, Kirkland. (See your folder for which mosque you have been ticketed. Feel free to trade tickets with another conference attendee.)



Honorary Co-Chair

The Rt. Rev. Greg Rickel, Bishop of the Diocese of Olympia

William J Cate, Ph.D, Former president and executive director of the Church Council of Greater Seattle

Rabbi James L. Mirel, President of the Washington Association of Rabbis

The Rt. Rev. Chris Boerger, Bishop of the Northwest Washington Synod

The Rt. Rev. Grant Hagiya, Pacific Northwest Conference, United Methodist Church

The Very Reverend Michael G Ryan, Pastor Saint James Cathedral

Keynote Speakers

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf is an American Sufi, imam, author, and activist whose goal is to improve relations between the Muslim world and the West. Since 1983, he has been Imam of Masjid al-Farah, a mosque in New York City. In 2010, Imam Abdul received national attention for his plans to build The Cordoba Center/Park51, an Islamic community center, two blocks away from Ground Zero in Lower Manhattan and has been in demand as a speaker globally. His most recent book is

Yvonne Haddad PhD is Professor of the History of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations at the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University. Professor Haddad's fields of expertise include twentieth-century Islam, intellectual, social and political history in the Arab world, and Islam in North America and the West. Currently, Professor Haddad is conducting research on Muslims in the West and on Islamic Revolutionary Movements. She also teaches courses on Muslim-Christian Relations and Arab Intellectuals. Recent books include
and

Imam Jamal Rahman is a Muslim Sufi minister originally from Bangladesh. He is co-founder and co-minister at Interfaith Community Church in Seattle, Washington, co-host of Interfaith Talk Radio, and adjunct faculty at Seattle University. Sheik Jamal travels often, teaching classes, workshops, and retreats locally, nationally, and internationally. He is the author of

Interfaith Service Leaders

Rabbi James L. Mirel is Senior rabbi of Temple B'nai Torah in Bellevue. He is President of the Washington State Coalition of Rabbis. Rabbi Mirel is the author of _____ and a frequent lecturer at colleges and churches throughout the state. He may be contacted at rabbi@templebnaitorah.org

Imam Fazal Hassan grew up in apartheid South Africa before going to India to study theology from 1978-85. He returned to teach and serve as dean of Islamic Studies at the Johannesburg Muslim School until 2001. Since then has served as the imam of the Islamic Center of Eastside, Bellevue.

The Right Rev. Gregory H. Rickel comes to the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia from Austin, Texas, where he served as rector of St. James' Episcopal Church, "an inclusive, multicultural community," from 2001-2007. Rickel is a trained presenter for the Climate Project and was the Episcopal representative to the Earth Charter discussions in Geneva, Switzerland in the late 1990s. He has been an outspoken advocate of environmental issues for years and has a passion for the issues of our youth.

Workshop Leaders

Hameed Afsari was born in Iran and raised in Kuwait. He has been in the US for the past 22 years. He is a computer software engineer at Microsoft. In his personal time, he works with Muslim youth and children as the principal of Sunday school to teach and preserve the Islamic tradition and culture. In addition he is interested in participating in events, workshops, and conferences that build bridges among people of different faiths.

Alaa Badr is an activist in the areas of Islamic Education and outreach programs for interfaith dialog. An engineer by background, he spends about 50% of his time traveling to different countries. He is also a major proponent of Social Media and Open Source one of the engines for growth for the software industry in emerging economies.

Jim Brooks M.Div. has been involved with the Matrimonial Tribunal for the Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle for 30 years, the past 15 years as Collegial judge. He has an M.Div. from the former St. Thomas School of Theology, Kenmore, Washington, dealing with Dogmatic & Moral Theology, and Canon Law; and a M.ED in counseling from Seattle University. In addition to serving as a judge for the Archdiocese of Seattle, he is a Judge on the Appeals Court for the Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon, for the two Dioceses of Alaska, and the Dioceses of Yakima and Spokane, Wash.

Arsalan Bukhari has been a Seattle area resident since 1990, Arsalan holds a B.A. degree in Business Finance from Seattle University. In 2009, Arsalan became the Executive Director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) of Washington State, the largest national grassroots organization dedicated to presenting an Islamic perspective on issues of importance to the American public.

Kathleen Christison is a former CIA political analyst and the author of three books:

her late husband Bill Christison,

on the Palestinian issue since leaving the CIA in 1979 and writes often for the web newsletter

and, co-authored with

. She has written

Salah Dandan JD is a lawyer with a practice in the Seattle area and is Of Counsel to a Saudi Arabia based law firm servicing highly successful GCC businesses as well as multinational corporations doing business in the Gulf. In the course of his practice, Salah also advises multinational corporations on Saudi law and Shariah issues. Previously, he was Director of Intellectual Property Ventures at Microsoft Corporation, based at its corporate headquarters in the Seattle area. Salah has a Juris Doctor degree from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law and a B.A. in Political Science from the University of California, San Diego. He also has a postgraduate Diploma in Shariah Law and Practice from the International Islamic University Malaysia, where he also taught law school courses on Contracts, and Intellectual Property.

Tarek Dawoud is a student of Quran, a husband, a father, a software engineer and a computer nerd. Originally from Egypt, Tarek has been living in the Northwest for the past ten years. He has been a speaker and presenter about Islam for the past nine and is a founding member of the Islamic Speakers' Bureau of Seattle. He is currently the president of CAIR-Washington.

Rabbi Ted Falcon is a popular teacher of Jewish traditions of meditation and spirituality who explores the frontier of interfaith spirituality. In 1975, he earned a doctorate in Professional Psychology, with research focused on the nature of meditative and mystical states of consciousness. Now retired from Bet Alef Meditative Synagogue which he founded in 1993, he is the co-author with Imam Jamal Rahman and Pastor Don Mackenzie of books on the interfaith journey, and he is author of

Mohammad Fani MS is a native of Iran who immigrated to the US in 1978. He is the interfaith committee chair at Islamic Educational center of Seattle as well as director of interfaith at OneWorld2011. Mohammad has been engaged in interfaith dialogue for more than a decade. He believes that the purpose of interfaith/inter-religious dialogue is not to resolve theological differences or to minimize them but rather it is about raising awareness about the dignity of difference. He holds a MS degree in Electrical Engineering and worked in the Computer Industries during the 80's. Currently, he is business manager of FMF40, LLC.

Jennifer Gist graduated from Seattle Pacific University in 2010 with a B.A. in Sociology and Psychology and minors in Women's Studies and Global and Urban Ministries before joining CAIR-Washington as the Civil Rights Coordinator. During her time at SPU, Jennifer co-led a feminist group, traveled in Nepal, volunteered at ROOTS young adult shelter, and completed an honors thesis addressing the relationship between religious beliefs/activities and attitudes toward gender.

Shirley Gazori is a retired teacher with an M.A. Ed from Heritage University with a focus in ESL/Bilingual education. She has been teaching Sunday school at IMAN for seven years.

Yvonne Haddad – see keynote speakers

Doug Honig MA has been Communications Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Washington since 1990 and has spoken widely about civil liberties issues to community groups and in the media. He is coauthor of , a history of the ACLU in Washington, and hosted the ACLU-WA's monthly TV show, . Previously he was an award-winning journalist and documentary producer. He received an MA in American History from Stanford University.

Andrew Larsen D.Min has been serving with the Evangelical Covenant Church in a new role with the Mosaics Project since 2006, fostering opportunities to engage Muslims in the spirit of Christ. In Seattle, Andy is building bridges into the local Muslim community. He also serves as a resource to local churches across the country to engage Muslims in friendship and dialogue. He has been involved in training and ministry in Spain, Jordan, Turkey, Morocco, Finland, Sweden, Israel, the West Bank, Canada, Argentina and the US. Andy completed his D. Min. in missional spirituality.

Marilyn Mayers is a former teacher with a Ph.D. in Modern Near Eastern Studies and an active member of the Peace Ministry team at East Shore Unitarian Church in Bellevue.

Esmaeel Naeemi PhD is an Iranian who came to the U.S. in 1977. He is an organic chemist by trade and teaches chemistry at Seattle Central Community College . He is also active in research in the field of biomaterial and nano-technology. In his personal time, he works with the Muslim community in the Seattle area for the better understanding of Islam and educating the youth on moral and ethical issues. He is member and elected president of the Islamic Educational Center of Seattle (IECS), a non profit Muslim organization established in 1997.

Sabrene Odeh a 16 year old Palestinian girl living here in Seattle. She has been an activist since the age of 4, participating in protests with her dad, Amin Odeh, and is a prize winning poet. In her free time, she likes helping others, hanging out with her friends and playing volleyball. Life after 9/11 has been more challenging as a Muslim Arab American, something she is looking forward to discussing with other students.

Jean Pollock MLS, is a retired King County Librarian whose work as a children's librarian led her to a commitment to work with the Muslim community, an interest that broadened to include social justice work for Palestinians.

Jamal Rahman – see speakers

Jafar Siddiqui MSIE is a leader with American Muslims of Puget Sound, a civil rights activist, writer, political analyst, commentator and speaker. He coordinates and leads actions of local Muslims for better consideration of their civil rights.

Richard Silverstein PhD is a freelance journalist who writes the progressive political blog, Tikun Olam, about Israeli-Arab peace and Muslim-Jewish relations. He has contributed to Ha'aretz, Jewish Forward, Los Angeles Times, the Guardian's Comment Is Free, Al Jazeera English, and Alternet. His work has also been in the Seattle Times, American Conservative Magazine, Beliefnet and Tikun Magazine, where he is on the advisory board.

Abigail Stahl is the Community Outreach Coordinator for CAIR-WA where she works to forge mutually beneficial partnerships with a diverse array of organizations, universities, and government entities, as well as engage and recruit volunteers. Prior to joining CAIR WA, Abigail taught English abroad in Turkey and the Czech Republic. She graduated from Seattle Pacific University (SPU) with a degree in Sociology and a minor in Women's Studies. At SPU, Abigail worked as the Intercultural Director for the Associated Students of Seattle Pacific, led the gender equality club, Sophia, and studied abroad in South Africa.

Music

Abráce Founded in 2003 by Brazilian music specialist, Samia Panni, and singer/author, Joyce Yarrow, Abráce soon added percussionist Denny Stern. In 2005 Rebeqa Rivers added her vocals to the mix and recently singers Angie Bolton and Makayla Romero joined, building the satisfying 5 part harmonies Abráce is well known for in the Northwest. Singing in 20 languages, including Hebrew, Arabic, Swahili, Ladino, Bulgarian, and Portuguese, Abráce entertains and informs audiences with a high-energy, rhythmical jaunt around the globe. The group is dedicated to building inter-cultural understanding through music.

Lunches

Boondockers was a Lake Stevens landmark for many years. The Bala family has owned it since 1994, first in Lake Stevens and now in Marysville. The Bala's are Muslims from Pakistan. Shabbir came to the U.S. in 1970 with a few dollars in his pocket. He put himself through school and earned an Engineering degree. He married Ruqayya in 1984 and the two of them run the restaurant. Their son, Faraz is a Captain in the US Army, a graduate of West Point Military Academy. Their daughter Sahar is a Collegiate Div. I Athlete who will be graduating from University of San Francisco this year, majoring in International Studies. Boondockers is located at 1008 Cedar Avenue in Marysville at exit 199 off Interstate 5.

The Bengal Tiger's Cuisine of India Restaurant has been residing on 6510 Roosevelt Way NE for 15 years where Chef Muhammad Uddin uses only natural ingredients and the freshest spices to attract a loyal following. Now The Tiger is about to leap across the street to a new and even more welcoming dining room with a larger state of the art kitchen where Chef Uddin will add new north, east and west Indian dishes. Our conference convener has been a fan since Bengal Tiger first opened. Chef Uddin is providing halal lunches.



Steering Committee

Phil Ginsberg LLB is a lawyer with Stokes Lawrence who has a lifelong passion for social justice, from heading up the legal aid clinic at the University of Chicago in the late 1960's to directing the King County Public Defender Association in the mid-1970's, to his current work with Save Darfur-Washington. He is the recipient of CAIR's Humanitarian of the Year award. He received a BA in history, Magna cum Laude, from Princeton in 1961 and graduated from Harvard Law School in 1964.

Jafar Siddiqui, see workshop leaders

Richard Silverstein – see workshop leaders

Arsalan Bukhari - see workshop leaders

Randolph Urmston LLB is a lawyer in Seattle with Hendricks & Lewis. His previous military experience and help in settling Vietnamese has made him sensitive to refugees in Palestine. With an engineering background, he also has a special interest in water issues that severely threaten Israel/Palestine peace. He is a former Senior Warden of St. Mark's Cathedral and is currently on the Mid East Focus Ministry and a member of the Episcopal Bishop's Committee for Israel/Palestine. Randy has a BS in Civil Engineering from V.M.I .and an LLB University of Virginia

Mike Jackson MBE,CD,M.Th was a chief press officer for the Canadian government while an officer in the Canadian Army. He coordinated national media coverage of VIP visits (Kennedy, de Gaulle, Queen Elizabeth, etc.) and is an honorary member of the National Press Club of Canada. Later ordained as an Episcopal priest, now retired, he was press officer for the Northwest Sabeel conference in Seattle, 2010.

Sima Kahn MD is a Seattle physician and president of the board of Kadima Reconstructionist Community who recently returned from a fact finding trip to Palestine galvanized to do even more to promote a just peace. Kadima has been active in Middle East peace and justice work for all of its 30 plus years, and has sponsored a Middle East Peace Camp for Arab and Jewish children for the past ten years.

John Berg MA has been engaged in intercultural advocacy and diversity work focused on the peoples of the Middle East since 1971. He worked in Lebanon for two years, earned an MA in cross-cultural studies, then worked a year in London and seven years in Cairo, Egypt. In late 2009 John formed Middle East Peace Builders to continue his work helping connect the American community with the peoples of the Middle East and broader global community.

Mark Eichinger-Wiese spent most of his working career in media production looking through the lens of a camera. He taught photography and graphic design as a visiting professor. He worked as a trainer in law enforcement from which he retired. He is the co-convenor of the Saint Mark's Mideast Focus Ministry where he also serves on the Vestry. He is a member of the Episcopal Bishop's Committee for Israel/Palestine, and has been active in Mideast peace and justice issues for 35 years.

Brenda Bentz MSW is a retired psychotherapist and former dean of graduate studies at Antioch, Seattle. In the 1970s she founded Seattle Citizens for Education to help integrate Seattle Schools without a court order as well as the first Adult Day Health Program in the country. She combines an almost lifelong concern for social justice with a love of adult education and an interest in all forms of human behavior. She is co-convenor of the Mid East Focus Ministry at Saint Mark's Cathedral and convenor of this conference.

With tremendous help from:

Eliza Davidson, registration; Liz Gruchala-Gilbert and Richard Gilbert, hospitality; Steve Moen, ushers; Alexandra Eichinger-Wiese, Brenda's runner; Betsy Mayfield, video, and her team Mike McCormick, Todd Boyle and Sr. Mahin; Jean Pollock, student volunteers: Bess Sullivan, sound and light: and Moira Fulton, lunch service

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Why Islam - Seattle Chapter
The Muslim Forum of Pacific North West (MFPNW)
Caravan-Serai
and others.