



AAIC

**AKRON AREA
INTERFAITH
COUNCIL
NEWSLETTER**

AUGUST 2023

Below is a form to nominate someone to an AAIC officer position. You can either print and mail it to Conni Dubick or email her your suggested names of potential leaders!

Please contact the person you plan to nominate to determine the willingness to serve. Since AAIC is such a prestigious, essential, dedicated, faith-based, community organization, who would hesitate to offer their skills or insights to keep us moving forward? But, seriously, we are a "team based" leadership structure, so all officers assist one another and reach out to members to join in activities and projects. So please take a few moments to offer the names of potential officers, asap.

We are forming a Nominating Committee to implement the election process, so do also let me know if you wish to serve on that Committee.

Peace,
Conni

AAIC NOMINATION FORM FOR 2023-2024

Officer Positions: **President, President Elect, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer**

A **Nominating Committee** will be formed to conduct the nomination/election process.



To Nominating Committee:

Please contact this person to determine if she/he is willing to be nominated for an officer position for the Akron Area Interfaith Council for the September 2023-September 2024.

NAME

OFFICER POSITION

NOMINEE CONTACT INFORMATION

Please submit form by **AUGUST 15, 2023** to: **CONNIE DUBICK**

cdubick@kent.edu OR Conni Dubick 262 Delaware Place, Akron OH 44303

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

At the August 2023 AAIC Monthly meeting the Spiritual Development Committee moved that AAIC sponsor an event in Akron that would bring the faith community together in conversation to develop an action plan that would help to inform the implementation agenda for the Akron's Presumptive Mayor, Shammias Malik. A proposal written by Round River Consulting LLC to produce such an event was reviewed. After some discussion, it was agreed that such an event would do a lot to effect positive change in Akron, generate more involvement of AAIC with the Black faith community and shed a positive light on AAIC. It was also agreed that an event of this magnitude would require a consultant who will work with a team to develop questions for discussion, lead the discussion on the day of the event, and as a result of the discussion, write a report listing specific recommendations for action to be presented to The Shammias Malik transition team, and be implemented on day one of his administration.



The cost for hiring a consultant is \$2,500 (some of which will hopefully be raised through donations). It was felt that this was a good use of monies currently held in the AAIC account.

The motion for hiring Round River Consulting LLC and moving forward with this project was unanimously approved. It will be an exciting and huge project for our organization. If you have any questions, comments, or want to get involved, contact Tom Bodie, tbodie@akronchildrens.org or Marty Belsky, belsky@uakron.edu

Together we will make it happen.

Peace,

Susan Gallagher

JOIN US IN UPHOLDING WOMEN'S WISDOM, FREEDOM, & HUMAN RIGHTS

THE WOMEN'S ASSEMBLY

Women are once again making women's history at the 2023 Parliament of the World's Religions! Women's wisdom, spirituality and empowerment take center stage at The Women's Assembly, Programming, Village and Sacred Space. Join us as we advance the Call to Conscience for women's dignity, bodily autonomy, and human rights, and experience countless opportunities for inspiration, soul nourishment and world-changing relationship building.

The Women's Task Force of the Parliament presents the 2023 Women's Assembly at 10:00 a.m. CT on Tuesday, August 15th. Outstanding women activists of the world's faith and spiritual traditions will speak to the Parliament's urgent theme, sharing women's diverse, energized, and inspired resistance to authoritarianism and its disproportionate impact on women and girls.

[Register for the
2023 Parliament](#)

LET RELIGION UNITE, NOT DIVIDE |

VOICES OF FAITH

"None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." —Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), Sahih Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 2, Number 15.

As a Muslim (believer of Islam), the words of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), a leader for Muslims and the spreader of Islam, deeply resonates within me. As a person who has been stereotyped to be a terrorist or of a religion that promotes violence, these words reflect the true essence of Islam — a peaceful religion that promotes understanding and compassion. I strive to embrace my Muslim identity by reflecting these values and the beauty of Islam through my character and actions.

Throughout my life, revealing my Muslim identity to others often resulted in negative responses. Even at the young age of 11, a friend made a hurtful comment associating me with ISIS.

Although I am now a proud Muslim, that wasn't always the case. I often felt left out and had religious doubts because of the comments people would make. The power words can have can be detrimental when used negatively.

Now, as a visible symbol of Islam wearing the hijab (headscarf), I frequently face stares or looks of disgust solely based on my appearance and religion. Despite these challenges, I remain committed to proudly embracing my identity and advocating for love and compassion towards others, just as I would wish for myself.

Unfortunately, people of many religions face prejudice, including the recent surge in anti-Semitism. Though religions may differ in their beliefs, practices, and rituals, most share fundamental principles and values. Acknowledging these similarities is crucial, especially when there are some people who have lost their humanity.



Currently, there are times when hardship are inflicted on others due to differences. Whether it's Islamophobia, anti-Semitism or another form of prejudice, we should embrace our different religions rather than discriminate against them.

Regardless of our individual religious beliefs, we all share a human need for guidance and direction in life. Religions provide valuable teachings to fulfill that need.

Many of us grew up reading or are currently reading religious scriptures or stories, some of which have similarities, such as the teachings of Adam and Eve, Noah's Ark and the life of Moses in the Abrahamic faiths. Religions provide spaces and opportunities for individuals to come together, to develop a sense of community and shared purpose.

Despite our religious differences, we are bound by a common longing for connection and the shared experiences that unite us as human beings.

I instantly feel connected with another Muslim (even a stranger) solely based on sharing the same faith. By embracing this shared desire, we can work toward creating inclusive communities that celebrate diversity, form meaningful relationships and promote a sense of belonging not just in our communities, but for all faiths to live peacefully among one another and respect each other.

Recognizing the similarities among religions is important for promoting interfaith understanding, respect and peace. At the end of the day, *(Let Religion continued on page 5)*

(Let Religion continued from page 4) we are all trying to be the best religious and moral people we can be. Regardless of what faith, God(s), or scriptures you believe in, we are all human and that is reason enough to be kind to each other. In today's diverse world, it is crucial to obtain religious peace to stop religious hatred and build a better society for the new generation. Let's work together and let religion unite us, not divide us.

Youssra Abdrabou is a public relations intern for Islamic Society of Akron and Kent.



SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

Each month our Community and Congregational Network members meet virtually to share resources, problem-solve, and reflect on the work of addressing anti-Muslim discrimination. Our monthly call is an

opportunity to convene and connect with interfaith and community organizations and leaders throughout the country who are, in some capacity, addressing anti-Muslim discrimination in the U.S.

The notes from our monthly meeting are shared with members, and an abbreviated version is shared online for the entire community, which includes you! The public notes are a selection of resources, grant opportunities, job announcements, and events collected from network members and our various partners and friends in the field.

Here are some highlights from this month's Resource Roundup:

—**August 10th**—Bystander Intervention Training in Public Spaces—This virtual training is provided by Right to Be in collaboration with The Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign | This interactive training will teach you Right To Be's 5Ds of bystander intervention methodology. We'll start by talking about the types of disrespect that Muslims and those who are perceived to be Muslim are facing right now—from microaggressions to violence—using a tool we call the “spectrum of disrespect.” You'll learn what to look for and the positive impact that bystander intervention has on individuals and communities. We'll talk through five strategies for intervention: distract, delegate, document, delay, and direct, and how to prioritize your safety while intervening. We'll have time in the end for practice, and you'll leave feeling more confident countering Anti-Muslim and Xenophobic -Based harassment [Register Here](#).

—AmeriCorps, **September 11, 2023**: Each year, AmeriCorps works with 9/11Day.org, grantees and partners, faith-based, local, and national organizations to expand volunteering to honor the sacrifice of the families affected by September 11, 2001. This year, the 9/11 Day of Service is Sunday, September 11. You and your partners are encouraged to engage in service on this day and the days surrounding. AmeriCorps is calling upon organizations to become [9/11 Day Champions](#)—promoting this national day of service as an opportunity to unite individuals, faiths and communities. If you are spearheading a service project in your community, multi-faith or other, we invite you to become a 9/11 Day Champion and then [register](#) your project so that others may be inspired by your example and join your efforts. Still need ideas for projects, check out the resources and webinars on our 9/11 Day site.

Freedom Forum's [Guide to Teaching About Religion](#)—This guide delves into the importance of religious studies while providing a civic framework for teaching about religion. Freedom Forum highlights a plethora of resources for educators, such as lesson plans, training modules, and guidelines.

Submitted by Kathy Ress

THE CENTER FOR CONSTITUTIONAL LAW AT AKRON

Constitution Day Lecture

Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023 @ 12:15pm
The University of Akron School of Law (Law 180)
followed by Book Signing

*Book Talk, Judgment & Mercy:
The Turbulent Life & Times of the
Judge Who Condemned the Rosenbergs*
Martin J. Siegel



"[A] meticulous and unsentimental inquiry aimed at solving the mystery at the heart of Kaufman's career," Linda Greenhouse, NY Review of Books

"scrupulously fair and continually fascinating," Floyd Abrams, First Amendment lawyer, author of The Soul of the First Amendment

"intellectually honest and relentless...captures Kaufman to a tee," Burt Neuborne, former Nat'l Legal Director ACLU, founder Brennan Center for Justice, NYU Law

Judgment and Mercy brings to life a complex man by turns tyrannical and warm, paranoid and altruistic, while revealing intramural Jewish battles over assimilation, class, and patriotism. Siegel, who served as Kaufman's last law clerk on the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York, traces the evolution of American law and politics in the twentieth century and shows how a judge unable to summon mercy for the Rosenbergs nonetheless helped expand freedom for all.

2023 PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS



CHICAGO, USA

Parliament of the World's Religions

A Call to Conscience:
Defending Freedom &
Human Rights

SUNDAY

Aug. 13

MONDAY

Aug. 14

TUESDAY

Aug. 15

WEDNESDAY

Aug. 16

THURSDAY

Aug. 17

FRIDAY

Aug. 18

Registration

7:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Parallel Sessions

8:00 AM - 9:30 AM

OPENING CEREMONY

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

WOMEN'S ASSEMBLY

Parallel Sessions
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

CONSCIENCE PLENARY

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

COMMUNITY PLENARY

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

CLIMATE ASSEMBLY II

Parallel Sessions
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Lunch

GLOBAL ETHIC ASSEMBLY

Parallel Sessions
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

CRISIS PLENARY

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Parallel Sessions

1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

PARADE OF FAITHS:

A Pre-Parliament Event
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Parallel Sessions

3:00 PM - 4:30 PM

CLOSING CEREMONY

3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

CLIMATE ASSEMBLY I

Parallel Sessions
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Parallel Session

5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

COMMUNITY SERVICE

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Community Activities

6:30 PM - 9:00 PM

SACRED MUSIC NIGHT

6:30 PM - 9:00 PM



MISSION

The Akron Area Interfaith Council (AAIC) exists to initiate, coordinate and enable effective interfaith responses to the social, moral, ethical and cultural issues of our community and to promote freedom of religion, equality and understanding.

VISION

We envision a strong network of faith communities that collaborate to make our city a haven for all.

GUIDEPOSTS

- Diversity is a blessing and enriches us all; the diversities of all peoples, languages, cultures, and colors must be cherished and celebrated.
- We are responsible for each other's welfare.
- Because of the importance of individual's faith traditions in developing underlying values, faith communities can contribute to the development of a more just, humane, and ecologically responsible society. [We refer here to "faith traditions" vs. "religion" as AAIC is interested in reaching not only congregations but also those who are searching and may not have a specific faith affiliation (such as the NONEs).]
- Members of AAIC oppose any and all forms of discrimination, especially those based on faith, gender, race, heritage, nationality and sexuality
- Advocacy and Social Justice: AAIC has consistently put issues of social justice at the forefront. Our past history shows a deep concern for inclusiveness. The group has been focused on the issues faced by the immigrant populations in Akron, ongoing issues of racism in the community, hunger, as well as xenophobia.

TO JOIN AAIC

Please visit our website for information on yearly dues:

Individual membership— \$30.00/yr., Institutional— \$50.00/yr.

Send your check or donation to:

Akron Area Interfaith Council
3300 Morewood Rd.
Akron, Ohio 44333

or send a membership fee via the following link: <https://donate.fundhero.io/aaic/aaicmembership>.

Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month. We are meeting in person and via Zoom.

Website: Akroninterfaith.org

Facebook Group: Facebook.com/AAICOH