

**AKRON AREA
INTERFAITH
COUNCIL
NEWSLETTER
October 2023**

A RESPONSE TO THE ATTACK ON ISRAEL

Today marks another date in Jewish history that our celebrations of Shabbat and holidays have ceased because those who hate terrorize us.

The terror organization Hamas has carried out a horrific attack on our friends and family in Israel. The death toll and number of hostages continues to rise even as I write this email.

There will be a time in the near future to gather, to pray and to heal from yet another traumatic attack that touches our community personally.

I write tonight because we cannot wait even a day before we do something. In the midst of our sadness and anger, we must also speak up. Here are actions you can take:

Reach out to Israelis: If you have friends or family in Israel, I encourage you to reach out if you have not already. If you know Israelis living outside the state of Israel, reach out to them as well. We know from our own experiences with terror attacks that the pain travels fast and far.

Learn the story before it changes: Israel was in the midst of normalizing relations with Saudi Arabia, as she has with many neighboring Arab countries in recent years. In 2005, Israel unilaterally withdrew from Gaza and Hamas took control. This morning, during the celebration of Simchat Torah and Shabbat, Hamas carried out a coordinated attack on Israel to disturb the buds of peace and the celebrations of Jewish life. You can learn more about the events of today at this website.

Speak out and often: This war will be fought on the ground AND in the media. It is up to us to educate ourselves, our family and our friends. Do not be shy. Share your support for Israel on social media, in conversations with colleagues and most importantly, share it with our representatives. The American Jewish committee (AJC) has started a campaign "Support Israel, Cut off Funds for Hamas." I encourage you to repeat this message. [Click here](#) to send this message to your congressperson.

This morning we rolled our Torah back to the first words of Genesis which remind us that out of *tohu v'vohu*, "chaos", God worked on creating a beautiful world that was *tov*, "good".

May we be partners in re-creating this beautiful, life-filled, good world and may that work be present in Israel, where our sacred story began.

- Rabbi Joshua M. Brown





CRITICAL COVERSATIONS

The Social Justice Committee is moving forward with plans to bring other members of the faith community together for intentional conversations about issues that they hope the presumptive mayor, Shammias Malik, will prioritize once taking office, in January of 2024. Along with meeting and talking about these issues, the committee has tasked Round River Consulting with detailing actionable plans, so that members of the interfaith community can assist with helping Akron move forward on a variety of fronts.

Some of the key players planned to met, by Zoom, last week. You may recognize many of the names, as leaders who have a reputation for pushing for change.

- ◆ Pastor Deante Lavender (Remedy Church/Love & Justice Coalition)
- ◆ Bishop Joey Johnson (House of the Lord/Love & Justice Coalition)
- ◆ Daniel Blain (Jewish Community Board of Akron)
- ◆ Rabbi Josh Brown (Temple Israel/L&J)
- ◆ Fr. Norm Douglas (St Vincent)
- ◆ Kemp Boyd (Love Akron)
- ◆ Marty Belsky (AAIC/Temple Israel)
- ◆ Rev. Ron Shultz (Faith UMC & UMC Akron churches)
- ◆ Rev. Sandy Selby (Interfaith Justice Coalition)
- ◆ Tara Mosely (Councilwoman and convener of smaller Black churches in her ward & beyond)
- ◆ Min. Stephen Muhammad (Muhammad Mosque/Nation of Islam)
- ◆ Rev. Dr. Tom Bodie (Akron Children's Hospital/AAIC)
- ◆ Susan Gallagher (UUCA/AAIC)
- ◆ Rev. Nanette Pitt (First Congregational/AAIC/L&J)
- ◆ Pastor Robert DeJournett (St Ashworth COGIC/L&J)
- ◆ Kathy DuBose (Women in Spiritual Heritage—W.I.S.H)
- ◆ Rita Agarwal (Proyecto Raices)

We hope to have more information for you in the near future about what the next steps are, and how members of AAIC can be a part of helping the interfaith community move things forward in the Rubber City.

—Reesá Mathews

2023-2024 Social Justice Committee Calendar

The AAIC Social Justice Committee wants to hear your suggestions for planning future events. Come join them at the Compass Café, 647 E Market St, Akron, on October 30th. Grab a bite to eat or a cup of coffee at noon. Then share your ideas during a short meeting about events for the 2023-2024 calendar.

If you plan to come, please let Judy DiNardo (tdinardo@att.net) or Joyce Penfield (jpenfield2016@gmail.com—401-369-1514) know.



Be SMART

Saturday, October 21
3:00 - 5:00 pm,
Twisted Tomato Pizzeria
325 S. Main St., Akron

Firearms are the leading cause of death among children and teens in our country. Each of us can take one step to address this. Learn about *Be SMART*, an educational program that educates adults about why safe storage of guns can prevent unintentional shootings, suicides, and gun trafficking. Drop in and grab a bite to eat to learn more.

Sponsored by Moms Demand Action in Akron & Canton (momsdemandaction.org - FIND EVENTS - OHIO).

RSVP & Info - akronmoms22@gmail.com (Rev. Joyce Penfield)

MOMS
DEMAND
ACTION
FOR GUN SENSE IN AMERICA

BE
SMART

TWISTED
TOMATO
PIZZERIA



THE ANNUAL COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE

On Thanksgiving Day, November 23, 2023,
The Annual Community Thanksgiving
Service will be at the

Church of Our Savior,
471 Crosby Street, Akron, Ohio.

The service is 9:00 -10:00 a.m. and Rev.

Debra Bennett will be the Preacher with other local religious leaders participating. AAIC members, families and friends are invited to join together to begin this special day in prayer as an interfaith community.

AKRON CITY

SCHOOL BOARD

CANDIDATE FORUM

OCTOBER
10

Tuesday, October 10, 2023

5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

**Akron-Summit County Public Library
Auditorium**

60 S. High Street, Akron 44326

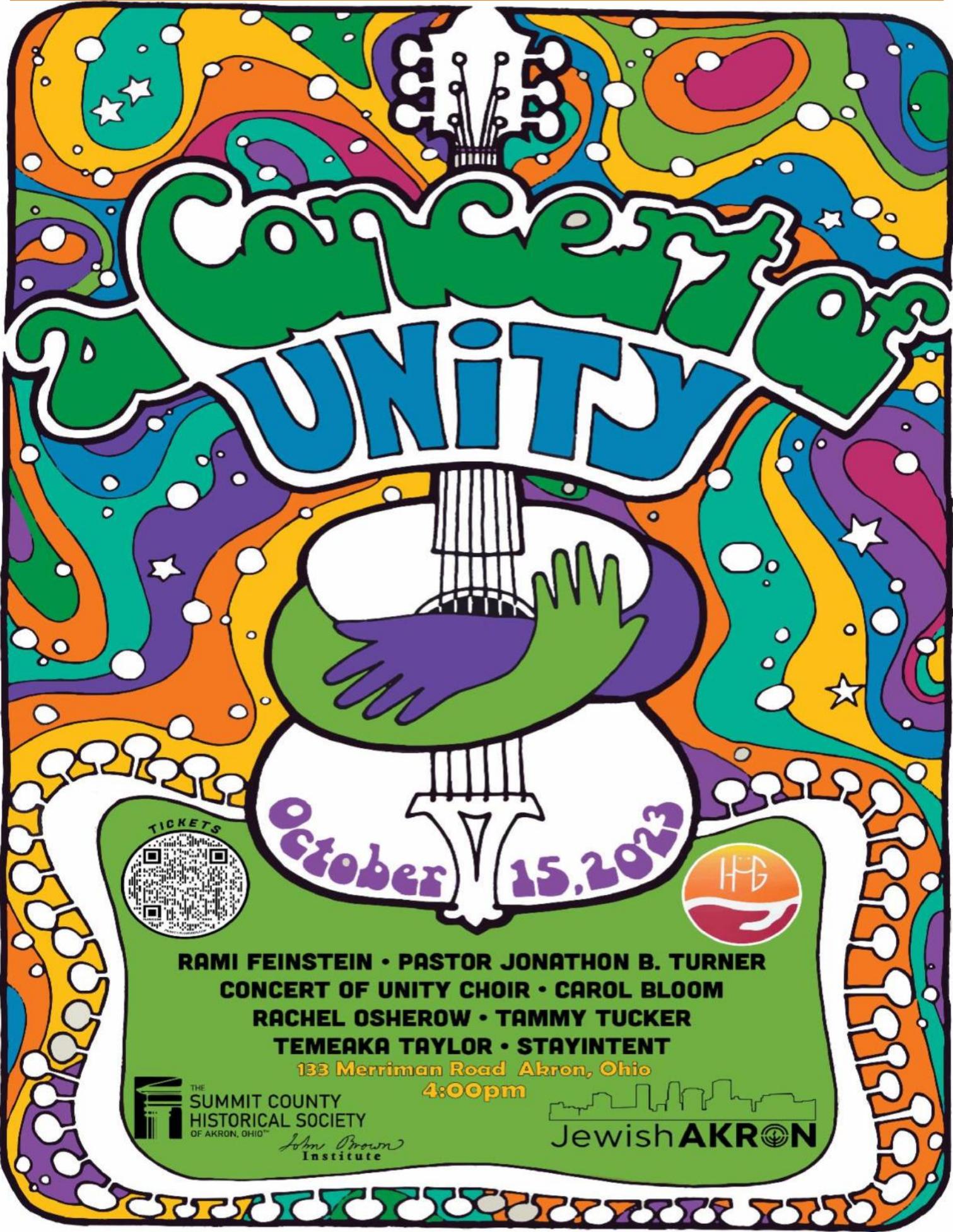
Meet the eight candidates running for three open positions on the Akron City School Board.

Audience members will have the opportunity to submit written questions during the event.

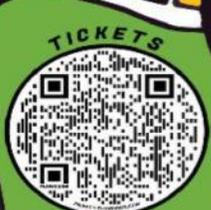
Sponsored by



LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
OF THE AKRON AREA



CONCERT OF UNITY



RAMI FEINSTEIN • PASTOR JONATHON B. TURNER
CONCERT OF UNITY CHOIR • CAROL BLOOM
RACHEL OSHEROW • TAMMY TUCKER
TEMEAKA TAYLOR • STAYINTENT

133 Merriman Road Akron, Ohio
4:00pm



THE SUMMIT COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF AKRON, OHIO™

John Brown
Institute



nAMI Walks Summit County

Volunteers Needed

Please Register to volunteer at NAMIWALKS.ORG/SUMMITCOUNTY
or email us at info@namisummit.org

We can't hold this event without your help!

We are expecting upwards of 550 people at the event,.

On Friday, October 13, at 6:00 PM, at the Stile Athletics Field House, (University of Akron), we need volunteers who will help set up, (which will entail moving tables, chairs, boxes, signs etc.)

There is moderate to heavy lifting involved.

October 14th Walk Day:

At 7:30 AM—check in at our volunteer table, at the Stile Field House, where you will receive your volunteer t-shirt and be assigned to a duty. We need volunteers to place signs, inflate balloons, attend to our kids table etc. If you have any physical restrictions that would cause you to be unable to complete any assigned task, please let us know upon check in, and we will reassign you. We will need you to stay through clean up. You should be finished approximately at 12 noon.



PARKING!

USE GPS ADDRESS

266 Spicer Street, Akron, OH 44304
The Stile Athletic Field House

Free Parking in Lot 10—266 Spicer Street

The address of the building is 289 S Union St, Akron, OH 44304
BUT parking is in the rear of the building in Lot 10 266 SPICER Street

Questions? Call or email us 330-252-1188 or info@namisummit.org



Currently, legislation is in committee in the Ohio Senate. It is hoped that when the legislature returns from summer recess the bill will be

moved out of committee and voted on by the full Ohio Senate and sent to the House. It is also anticipated that the Ohio House will have a similar bill introduced. The Catechism of the Catholic Church calls the death penalty "inadmissible" and Pope Francis has called for its worldwide abolition.

Upcoming Events

The Day of Prayer to End the Death Penalty is unlike any event Ohioans to Stop Executions has ever done. United with faith traditions across the state of Ohio, the No Death Penalty Ohio campaign is converging on the grounds of the Statehouse itself to pray continuously for 24 hours for an end to Ohio's death penalty. The Day of Prayer to End Ohio's Death Penalty starts at 5:00 p.m. on October 9 and ends October 10 at 5:00 p.m. Our sisters, Susan and Judy, are in Columbus for this event. Let us join all those attending the 24 hour vigil in prayer in our homes, school, work to **ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY.**

LEGISLATIVE HEARING FOR DEATH PENALTY REPEAL

Supporters of the bill to end Ohio's death penalty will testify in front of the House Finance Committee on Wednesday, October 11 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 313. This is thrilling news, especially since House Bill 259 had its first hearing earlier this week!

Help us **PACK THE ROOM!** We are asking you to show up, in person, on October 11 at 10:00 a.m. at the Statehouse. If you are traveling for Day of Prayer, consider spending the night and joining us for the hearing the next day.

It's time to end Ohio's Death Penalty

For every five people Ohio has executed, one person from death row has been exonerated.

Join the anti-death penalty movement by visiting nodeathpenaltyoh.com

Day of Prayer
To End the Death Penalty
Save the Date: October 9th -10th , 2023

Join us for Faith Week
Building to Day of Prayer
To End the Death Penalty

All communities of faith are invited to join a week of interfaith prayer and action to help end the death penalty!

Learn more here:
<https://NoDeathPenaltyOH.com>

Oct. 2nd - Oct. 10th

Susan, Judy, Kathy, Tom, Nancy, Ken, Merrylou, Jacqueline, Mary, John, Elizabeth, Steve, Alan, Marty, Ann, Sheri, Jen, and all other AAIC Zoomers,

I want to thank you for all the leadership and support that you have provided to me in my AAIC work! You all are the best 'Leadership Team' ever. It is all the work, both obvious and undercover, that makes an organization like AAIC provide the presence in the Akron area communities. As you know from yesterday's October 3 agenda, there are several important projects, i.e., Community Conversation Program, Moms Demand Action, abolition of the death penalty, reducing gun violence, the reading crisis, the development of the AAIC newsletter into an effective communication tool, and the other community liaison reports, etc, etc. that are AAIC projects at this time. WOW, what a group of interfaith leaders that you are to be so involved in these essential community issues!

So, as I munched some delicious chocolate cake and smelled the beautiful rose in a Don Drumm vase, I was grateful to all of you. But I know that "suddenly you just know it's time to start something new and trust the magic of beginnings!" The new beginnings with Susan, Tom, Marty, Judy, and me (with my pencil/notebook!) will continue with you as the Akron Area Interfaith Council begins the next chapter.

Peace,
Conni





AKRON INTERFAITH IMMIGRATION ADVOCATES ANNUAL CHRISTMAS COLLECTION

For North Hill Immigrant Families

Help us supply their essentials by giving

1. Long-grain white rice (large bag)
2. Black and/or Pinto Beans (large bag)

no cans please

3. Toothpaste
4. Bars of soap

or

\$25 gift cards to:

Dollar General, Aldi, or Walmart

Please, drop donations off at:

New Covenant Community Church

1587 W. Exchange St., Akron

By 11/30

(NCCC Office hours:

Mon.-Thurs. 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.)



MISSION

The Akron Area Interfaith Council (AAIC) exists to initiate, coordinate and enable effective inter-faith 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 NONE's).]
- 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