



August 2012 Interfaith Center of New York E-Announcements

Dear Friends,

Reentry Family and Faith Circles of Support - a neighborhood vision

Six months into the development of this important collaboration between The Interfaith Center of New York and the Harlem Community Justice Center, a broad network of houses of worship and prayer -- churches and mosques -- is developing. This network's goal is to support young adult parolees, and their families, whose journey from prison home to Harlem takes them through the Justice Center's Reentry Court. We are putting in place a "Landing Strip" initiative of accompaniment home, services of hospitality for the parolees, and support groups for parolees and family members -- all made possible by volunteers who are people of faith. In addition to creating new programs, we are also learning from, and connecting with, experienced partners. Along the way, we are interlinking a web of reentry support that we think will benefit *anyone* coming home from prison to Harlem, and their families. A neighborhood-wide vision is emerging.

Harlem Faith Community: Two Things You Can Do Right Away

1. Pledge to be a welcoming place to people coming home from incarceration and their families. Identify at least two people whom formerly incarcerated persons can ask for upon visiting your faith community for major services of prayer or worship. The identified persons can offer a warm word of welcome, and tell the formerly incarcerated visitors and/or family members about the life of the community.
2. Let us know about programs run by your house of worship or prayer that are open to the broader community. We are creating a guide that will chart faith-located resources that could be helpful to people rebuilding their lives after incarceration. Some come home to family systems. Some come home with little more than the clothes on their backs and marginal housing. If your congregation or community has a food pantry or clothing closet; or offers support classes (e.g. GED prep, resume writing or interview practice), sports, or some kind of entertainment....PLEASE tell us about it!

CONTACT: Rev. Darren Ferguson, Reentry Circles of Support Outreach Coordinator, Interfaith Center of New York, darren@interfaithcenter.org; 212-870-3513.

One Christian's Ramadan Fast

Lisa Sharon Harper, mobilizing director at Sourjourners (a national Christian organization committed to faith in action for social justice) is blogging about her experiences fasting for the month of Ramadan. <http://sojo.net/blogs/2012/07/25/ramadan-karim-poor-will-be-fed>.

Hurricane Preparedness

Did you know that the greatest potential for hurricanes in New York City occurs from August to October? New York City Office of Emergency Management offers a free guide on hurricane preparedness for New Yorkers. The guide, in 11 languages or an English audio format, can be obtained [here](#).

Below we list programs offered by The Interfaith Center of New York in August. We also list additional upcoming events that may be of interest to religious leaders in New York. A listing does not imply endorsement.

***** *Upcoming Interfaith Center Events* *****

"Women in Religion" A Roundtable

Date: Monday, August 6

Time: 5:30 – 7:00 pm

Location: The Interchurch Center Robing Room, 61 Claremont Ave. (between Broadway and Riverside Drive).

This discussion will be a heart-to-heart conversation among people of faith about how we as women find our place in our faith traditions. We come at this from the angle of women interacting with religious traditions that are for the most part designed by men. Men are largely responsible for passing down the sacred texts, determining customs, conducting worship, and serving as official leadership in most of the world's religious traditions. Where do women fit in, especially those who seek a position of leadership or authority? Some women have pushed to become pastors and rabbis; some serve as "unofficial" leaders and teachers in communities, or as the "first lady" to community leaders; and many, especially younger women, leave religion altogether in the face of what they see as unacceptable social customs. And in the modern world, where women increasingly expect equality with men in many areas (in education, the workforce, marriage, social life, even high-level professional leadership), how do the younger generations deal with religious traditions that are largely *unequal* in the opportunities they present to the genders in worship, service, and leadership? To RSVP or for more information, please write to allegra@interfaithcenter.org.

Moderator: Annie Rawlings (ICNY)

Panelists:

Sister Aisha al-Adawiya (Women in Islam)

Anindita Bhaumik (CONNECT)

Tejpreet Kaur (Sikh Coalition)

Rev. Jeanne Person (General Theological Seminary)
Sister Susan Wilcox (St. Joseph College)

***** *Additional Events in the New York Area* *****

Opportunity for Congregations to hear from Palestinian and Israeli Girls

Creativity for Peace, an organization that brings together Palestinian and Israeli girls 15-17 years old for a three-week camp each year, is looking for houses of worship and schools to host a speaking engagement for three member girls from this program to present their experiences. The young peace leaders will be in NYC from Oct. 17-21, 2012. The girls work intensively over three weeks to come to understand and listen to "the enemy" in very deep ways that commit them to peace activism in their communities when they return home, where they also receive leadership training. See more at www.creativityforpeace.com. These students will be accompanied and introduced by Dottie Indyke, the Executive Director of Creativity for Peace. If you would like to host them at your house of worship or school please contact Professor Lois Rudnick by email at lois.rudnick@umb.edu. The program asks that you offer a small honorarium to the girls and also be able to guarantee an audience.

Hosting an International Fellow - Community Solutions Program

Date: August to December, 2012

Time: 4 months

Location: US-based host organizations

IREX seeks U.S. community-based organizations and government offices that actively engage in community development projects to host, mentor and guide international community leaders from July to December of 2012 as part of the U.S. State Department-funded Community Solutions Program. Community Solutions leaders are among the best and brightest global community leaders working in Transparency & Accountability, Tolerance & Conflict Resolution, Environmental Issues, and Women's Issues. This year participants are coming from 32 different countries. For more information about hosting a leader please contact communitysolutions@irex.org no later than June 8, 2012. To hear what past hosts have to say about the program visit our website. Contact Information for questions or more info: communitysolutions@irex.org, 202-628-8188 ext. 201

Temple Twilight Tour with UN Ambassador to Sri Lanka

Date: Saturday, August 4

Time: 6:30 pm

Location: The New Jersey Buddhist Vihara and Meditation Center, 4299 Route 27, Princeton NJ 08540

Join us for a twilight tour of the future Meditation Center, guided by the Permanent Ambassador to the United Nations of Sri Lanka, Dr. Palitha Kohona. Meditate under the 30 foot samadhi Buddha, illuminated at night, or walk the meditation trail along the meandering stream on the

Temple's 10 acres. Join the Board for traditional Sri Lankan food following the tour. For more information, contact njmcinfo@gmail.com.

Ring Bells Around the World For Peace & A World Without War

Date: Sunday, Aug. 5

Time: 6:00 – 7:30 pm (Peace bell ceremony at 7:15 pm)

Location: Strawberry Fields, Central Park (enter West 72nd Street)

Join A Peal for Peace Bell Ringing Project wherever you are and Ring Bells Around the World For Peace & A World Without War to COMMEMORATE the 67th ANNIVERSARY of the BOMBINGS of HIROSHIMA and NAGASAKI. Beginning at 6PM, the public is invited to participate in sharing their visions of Peace with poetry and songs. At 7:15PM, there will be a Bell Ringing Ceremony featuring a large bell from Shohola Bells and a Peace Pole from The World Peace Prayer Society, with the words, “May Peace Prevail on Earth,” in English, Japanese, French and Spanish. Everyone is invited to bring their own bells to join in. Afterwards, John Lennon’s song, “Imagine,” will be sung.

Let the Bells of Peace Ring – Hiroshima and Nagasaki Annual Memorial Interfaith Gathering

Date: Sunday, August 5

Time: 4:00 – 7:30 pm

Location: Cathedral of St. John the Divine, 1047 Amsterdam Avenue at 112th Street

4:00 pm – Cathedral Evensong Service – all are welcome.

5:00 pm – Visit the Exhibitions VOICES FROM JAPAN: Despair and Hope from Disaster. Photography from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, 1945 (supported by the Nagasaki Prefecture Government).

5:30 Memorial Interfaith Ceremony. Special guests: Shinji Harada, Kaoru Watanabe, New York Men’s Glee Club, Tomiko Morimoto West (Hibakusha).

7:15 Ringing of the Bells (8:15 am, August 6 in Japan, precisely the time the atomic bomb fell on Hiroshima).

For more information: Reverend TK Nakagaki (646) 797-7982, www.voices-from-japan.org or www.stjohndivine.org.

Volunteer Development Program - Cultural Institutions Before, During, and After Emergencies

Date: Tuesday, August 7, 2012

Time: 6:30 - 8:30 PM

Location: NYC Office of Emergency Management, 165 Cadman Plaza East, Brooklyn

Sponsored by the NYC Citizen Corps Council and the NYC Office of Emergency Management's Public-Private Initiatives, this workshop will discuss the planning challenges and impact disasters have on cultural institutions and their collections. Brianna Hertzler from the NYC

Office of Emergency Management and Becky Fifield from the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Chair of the NYC chapter of the Alliance for Response will present. Registration is required. For additional information and to register, visit www.NYC.gov/citizencorps or contact citizencorps@oem.nyc.gov.

You Are What You Eat

Date: Tuesday, August 7

Time: 1 pm

Location: Center of Spiritual Light, 930 Grand Concourse, #9D, Bronx, NY 10451

Join Center of Spiritual Light as we try to empower you on another level. Interact with Guramrit Khalsa, health coach in training and have your health, fitness, wellness questions answered. Please join the [Center of Spiritual Light](#)'s FaceBook group to participate.

NOTICE OF NYC DISTRICTING COMMISSION HEARINGS

See below for dates, times and locations

The NYC Districting Commission will hold five public hearings from August 13, 2012 to August 23, 2012. These hearings are open to the public. The purpose of these hearings is for the NYC Districting Commission to hear testimony from the public concerning the initial phases of its work in drafting a new districting plan for the New York City Council. Individuals wishing to pre-register for speaking time or to submit written testimony in advance may do so by signing up online at <http://www.nyc.gov/districting>. Individuals wishing to speak at any hearing will be provided up to three minutes of speaking time.

BROOKLYN

Monday, August 13th

5PM-9PM

Brooklyn Borough Hall

209 Joralemon Street

New York, NY 11209

MANHATTAN

Thursday, August 16th

5PM-9PM

New York Law School

185 West Broadway

New York, NY 10013

STATEN ISLAND

Monday, August 20th

5PM-9PM

Staten Island Borough Hall

10 Richmond Terrace

Staten Island, NY 10301

QUEENS

Tuesday, August 21st

5PM-9PM

Queens Library at Flushing

41-17 Main Street

Flushing, NY 11355

BRONX

Thursday, August 23rd

5PM-9PM

Lehman College

250 Bedford Park Boulevard West

East Dining Room, Music Building

Bronx, NY 10468

Prior to the hearings, you may submit written comments to the NYC Districting Commission by mail to:

NYC Districting Commission

Attn: Jonathan Ettricks

253 Broadway, 7th Fl.

New York, NY 10007

or by email to: hearings@districting.nyc.gov on or before 5:00 P.M. on the date of the hearing. Please indicate in your correspondence the date of the hearing for which you are submitting your comments.

ILERA's Interfaith Sexuality Discussion Series

Date: Friday, August 17

Time: 7pm to 9pm

Location: Center of Spiritual Light, 930 Grand Concourse, #9D, Bronx, NY 10451

You're invited to join ILERA founder, Interfaith Minister & Therapist, DeShannon Bowens, MSto explore questions about spirituality and sexuality in a safe, loving and nurturing environment at the Center for Spiritual Light. Whether you identify as a Spiritual Seeker, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Agnostic, follow an Indigenous Path or simply would like to explore how Religion & Spirituality influence Sexuality, we welcome you with open arms. RSVPs are appreciated but not required. For more information email info@ilera.com or see <http://g.virbcdn.com/f/files/c8/FileItem-260442-IleraSexualitySummerMeetups.pdf>.

MPANZI Engaging Rural Africa: Storytelling Gathering

Date: Friday, Aug. 24

Time: 10:00 am – 12:30 pm

Location: 777 United Nations Plaza, 10th Floor, East 44th Street at the corner of 1st Ave.

MPANZI, a newly formed non-profit organization dedicated to engaging rural communities in Kenya for peace and development, is pleased to invite you to a storytelling gathering. Lunch will be served. RSVP today to jogega@mpanzi.org and let us share stories of hope and transformation.

ARISE NY! A workshop dedicated to youth by youth to stomp out bullying and hate crimes

Date: Sunday, August 26

Time: 1:30 – 5:00 pm

Location: 34 Howard Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY (Between Crosby & Broadway)

Directions: A, C, E, N,Q, R, J, or Z to Canal St.

Turning Point for Women and Families collaborates with DRUM (Desis Rising Up & Moving) to present ARISE NY! Our goal is to raise awareness about bullying, stereotyping and hate crimes targeting youth and to equip youth with the tools and action they need to prevent bullying and promote peaceful coexistence. So if you are between the ages of 13 to 19, boys and girls, bring your friends and participate! Meet other young leaders and make new friends! Help us end this cycle of hate! FREE Refreshments & Giveaways! RSVP required by August 21, 2012. Please email Maha Akhtar at makhtar@turningpoint-ny.org or call (718) 883-9400.

Practical Peacebuilding: Skills and Spiritual Practices for Conflict Transformation

Date: January 9 - 12, 2013

Time: All Day

Location: Desmond Tutu Center, General Theological Seminary, 440 W. 21st Street, New York

Cost: \$495

Conflict is simmering within congregations and communities, yet it can be the catalyst for positive change. General Theological Seminary and Candler School of Theology are co-offering Practical Peacebuilding, a four-day program in January 2013 that will teach you how to engage conflict constructively, strengthen your skills to facilitate a conflict transformation process, and guide you in spiritual practices and resources vital to sustaining this work. Continuing Education Units are available. To learn more and register, click [here](#).

***** *ADL Calendar of Observances for August 2012* *****

August 2 - Thursday - RAKSHA BANDHAN • Hindu

Also called Rakhi, this festival celebrates the protective relationship between brothers and their sisters.

August 9 - Thursday - INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Celebrates the richness of indigenous cultures and recognizes the challenges indigenous peoples face today, ranging from poverty and disease to dispossession, discrimination and denial of basic human rights.

August 10 - Friday - KRISHNA JAYANTI • Hindu

Celebrates Krishna's birthday, Vishnu's eighth incarnation on earth.

August 12 - Sunday - INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY

Celebrates young people and the integral role they play in helping to create a world fit for children.

August 14 - Tuesday - LAILA AL-QADR • Islamic

"The Night of Power" marks the night in which God first revealed the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad. Often fixed as the 27th day of the Islamic month of Ramadan, Sunnis may also observe it on the 21st, 23rd, 25th or 29th. Shi'ites observe it on the 19th, 21st or 23rd of Ramadan.

August 15 - Wednesday - OBON • Buddhist

Also known as Bon, the Japanese Buddhist festival honors the spirits of past ancestors.

August 19 - Sunday - EID AL-FITR • Islamic

The "Feast of the Breaking of the Fast" marks the end of Ramadan, the holy month of fasting from dawn until dusk.

August 23 - Thursday - INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE REMEMBRANCE OF THE SLAVE TRADE AND ITS ABOLITION

Memorializes the tragedy of the transatlantic slave trade, coinciding with the anniversary of the uprising in Santo Domingo (today Haiti and the Dominican Republic) that initiated its abolition.