



## ***December 2013 Interfaith Center of New York E-Announcements***

Dear Friends,

This month, The Interfaith Center of New York will hold the 29th Annual Rabbi Marshall Meyer Retreat on Child Welfare and Foster Care thanks to generous grants from the Daniel and Joanna Rose Fund and the Casey Family Programs. The Retreat will include an address from Ronald Richter, Commissioner of the NYC Administration of Children's Services (ACS).

In addition, ICNY and Union Theological Seminary have been selected again by the National Endowment for the Humanities to run a 2014 Summer Institute "The Religious Worlds of New York: Teaching the Everyday Life of American Religious Diversity." ICNY is inviting K-12 Public, Private or Parochial school teachers to apply for this all-expenses paid three-week opportunity for ongoing education on how to teach religious diversity. Applications and more information are available [here](#). ICNY Education Director Henry Goldschmidt's newly published essay, "[Encountering Self and Other in Community-Based Education](#)" argues students need to meet and learn from their peers in diverse communities.

In conclusion, a memorial service for staff-member Annie Rawlings took place on Nov. 12th, 2013 and included a tremendous outpouring of respect and love for a dear departed family member, friend and colleague. The estimated 350 people in attendance give testimony to Annie's amazing ability to touch many people's lives. In addition to her family members who spoke, faith leaders from Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions made offerings of prayers, meditations, songs and reminiscences. To hear the Rev. Darren Ferguson perform "Amazing Grace," click [here](#). To hear memories of Annie offered by her father, Rev. Charles Rawlings, click [here](#).

Below we list programs offered by The Interfaith Center of New York in December. 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 of New York Events\*\*\*\*\***

**29th Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer Retreat For Social Justice:  
Child Welfare and Foster Care**

The Interfaith Center of New York Presents  
The 29th Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer Retreat for Social Justice:  
Child Welfare and Foster Care

The banner contains three main visual elements: on the left, a photograph of a young boy with the text "BE THE REASON HE FEELS LOVED" and a call to action; in the center, a pie chart titled "Case Goals of Children in Foster Care" showing various placement goals; on the right, a photograph of a woman and a young girl smiling together.

Wednesday, December 4, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm  
[Click here for more information](#)

Date: Wednesday, Dec. 4 (registration begins Oct. 1)

Time: 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Location: Interchurch Center, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115 (accessible by the #1 subway, 116th Street, Columbia University stop)

According to the Agency for Children's Services, nearly 13,000 children were receiving foster care services in New York City in May 2013, and nearly 30,000 children's families receiving services to prevent foster care placement in June 2013. As the City moves towards a community-based care approach for children, implementing strategies that seek to keep children connected with their home neighborhoods, schools, and extended families, religious leaders may have an important role to play as family advisors, counselors, and information brokers. Registration is now closed. For questions, please call (212) 870-3519.

**3rd Annual Debate in the Neighborhood Program**

Announcing Launch of 3rd Annual  
“Debate in the Neighborhood” Program



Helping Students Find Their Voices as Future Leaders of Their Communities

Announcing a free program for students at local congregations, faith-based organizations, and schools. With support from the Open Society Foundations and International Debate Education Association, ICNY is pleased to offer the third annual Debate in the Neighborhood program, starting in January 2014.

Students in the program will receive training in public speaking, critical thinking, and other debate skills, to help them find their voices as future leaders of their communities. They will participate in interfaith conversations, to foster mutual understanding across faith lines. And they will work with their peers in other faith communities to explore the limits, if any, of our right to free speech in a diverse society.

If you would like to offer Debate in the Neighborhood to young people in your community, contact ICNY’s Director of Education Programs, Henry Goldschmidt, at [hgoldschmidt@interfaithcenter.org](mailto:hgoldschmidt@interfaithcenter.org), or 212-870-3514.

**2014 NEH Summer Institute for School Teachers**

*Religious Worlds of New York  
Teaching the Everyday Life of American Religious Diversity*



2014 NEH summer institute for K-12 teachers

K-12 teachers at public, private, and faith-based schools are invited to apply for a three week summer institute, Religious Worlds of New York: Teaching the Everyday Life of American Religious Diversity. The institute is a project of the Interfaith Center of New York and Union Theological Seminary, with support from the

National Endowment for the Humanities. It will bring twenty-five teachers from throughout the United States to New York City in July 2014, to work with leading scholars of religion, meet with diverse religious leaders, visit local houses of worship, and conduct original field research. We hope you will apply! Past participants describe the institute as “my best professional development experience ever” and “one of the best learning experiences of my life.” All participants receive a \$2,700 stipend, to help pay travel and living expenses for the duration of the institute. Don’t miss this unique opportunity to explore the religious worlds of New York. For more information and application materials, please see [www.religiousworldsnyc.org](http://www.religiousworldsnyc.org).

**\*\*\*\*\* ICNY Co-Sponsored Events\*\*\*\*\***

**2014 Echoing Green Fellowships**



Are you working to solve some of the world’s biggest problems? Are you dedicated to improving the life outcomes of black men and boys in the U.S.? Are you the next-generation social entrepreneurs and committed to working on innovations in mitigation and adaptation to climate change? If so, Echoing Green wants to hear from you. Echoing Green Fellowship Programs identify promising social entrepreneurs and emerging leaders with bold ideas. Application will be open from December 3, 2013 to January 6, 2014. Be Bold. Think Big. Drive Change. For more information visit: <http://www.echoinggreen.org/fellowship>

**\*\*\*\*\* Additional Events that may be of Interest to You \*\*\*\*\***

**Interfaith Support for Syrian Refugees in Jordan**



As the largest refugee crisis over the past three decades continues to worsen, the humanitarian needs of Syrian refugees fleeing the horrors of their country’s civil war are profound and are leading to desperate conditions in host nations. We [diverse faith leaders from New York City] stand together as faith based organizations in our commitment to raise awareness of their plight and provide vital assistance to the 500,000+ Syrian Refugees in Jordan, an ever-growing population. We urge other people of faith, bound by the universal principle of

humanitarian action, to join us in our critical efforts to save lives and ease suffering. One way to support refugees is through the Jewish Coalition for Disaster Relief's Syrian relief campaign at: <http://www.jdc.org/jcdr/where-we-work/syrian-refugees-in-jordan.html>.

### Special Charity Concert for the Philippines



Date: Friday, Dec. 6

Time: 7:30 pm

Location: Hostos Community College, 475 Grand Concourse, Bronx NY 10451 (# 2, 4, 5 trains to East 149 St - and the Concourse).

There will be a special fund-raising concert for the Philippines with music from the college students, local bands and simulcast of music from the Philippines. Tickets are \$15 at the door. For more information contact, Padre Sheehan of Campus Ministry at 718-518-6873 or [jsheehan@hostos.cuny.edu](mailto:jsheehan@hostos.cuny.edu).

### "Tenet" Vocal Ensemble in an Early Music Holiday Celebration



Date: Saturday, December 14

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Arts at The Park: Park Avenue Christian Church, 1010 Park Avenue (southwest corner of 85th Street and Park Avenue), NY, NY 10028

TENET, one of New York City's preeminent vocal ensembles, celebrates the holiday season in a collaboration with Bach Collegium San Diego and Dark Horse Consort, a brass ensemble that specializes in works of the early 17th century. The three acclaimed ensembles join together to create a joyful noise performing works by Michael Praetorius and his contemporaries including *In dulci jubilo*, *Vom himmel hoch*, *Puer natus in Bethlehem*, and many more. Tickets can be purchased at: <http://www.showclix.com/event/praetorius-in-dulci-jubilo>.

### SONS OF ABRAHAM: A Candid Conversation about the Issues that Divide and Unite Jews and Muslims



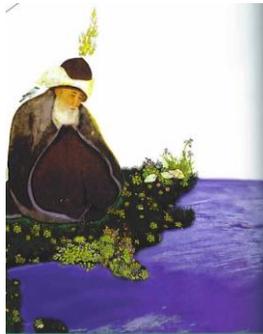
Date: Sunday, Dec. 15

Time: 2:00 pm

Location: Forest Hills Jewish Center, 106-06 Queens Boulevard in Forest Hills

At the 17th Annual “Author’s Café”: Rabbi Marc Schneier, the Orthodox scion of a distinguished rabbinical dynasty, and Imam Shamsi Ali, son of an Indonesian farmer, forged an unlikely friendship in the aftermath of 9/11. Candidly confronting the theological and political issues that frequently divide the two religions, these two orthodox leaders, Rabbi Schneier and Imam Ali, challenge Jews and Muslims to step out of their comfort zones, reconnect on common ground, and stand together to fight for a better world for all. Kosher desserts & coffee will be served. Minimum donation: \$15 in advance / \$20 at the door. For more info and tickets, [click here](#).

### **Celebrating Rumi: An Afternoon of Music & Poetry**



Date: Sunday, Dec. 15

Time: 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Location: Abode of the Message (Meditation Hall), 5 Abode Road, New Lebanon, NY 12125

In December, people from all over the world celebrate the spiritual wedding (passing) of the poet Rumi. To celebrate the occasion, the Abode of the Message will host Amir Vahab and his musicians, a treat for the heart of all music and poetry lovers. The ensemble will perform sacred songs selected from the poetry of Rumi and from Hafiz, another great Sufi Master. Tickets are \$20 (sliding scale between \$10 and \$20) and are available at the door. Tickets are available at the door and can be reserved in advance by calling 518-794-8095 or email [programsoffice@theabode.net](mailto:programsoffice@theabode.net). For more information visit: <http://www.theabode.org/visit/events>.

## Ring Out, Wild Bells: The Annual Park Avenue Christmas Gala



Date: Saturday, December 21

Time: 7:30 pm

Location: Arts at The Park: Park Avenue Christian Church, 1010 Park Avenue (southwest corner of 85th Street and Park Avenue), NY, NY 10028

Arts at The Park celebrates the holiday season with a festive program of choral and instrumental music featuring the church's choirs and ensembles, as well as The Riverside Ringers. This year's program, inspired by Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poem, "Ring Out Wild Bells," will feature works of J.S. Bach, David Conte, Benjamin Britten, and settings of traditional and lesser-known holiday tunes. We will also present the world premiere of a new piece by Nathan Davis, a featured composer in Lincoln Center's 2013 Mostly Mozart Festival whose music "deals deftly and poetically with timbre and sonority" (New York Times). The candlelight concert will include readings of seasonal poetry and a joyous Carol Sing for all. Free and Open to the Public. Donations gladly accepted. Click [here](#) for more information.

## Winter Renewal Retreat



Date: Saturday, Dec. 28 - Wednesday, Jan 1

Time: 5:30 pm - 12:00 pm

Location: Abode of the Message (Abode Main Campus), 5 Abode Road, New Lebanon, NY 12125

Aziza Scott returns with her popular Winter Renewal Retreat: A Silent, Guided Retreat in the Tradition of the Sufi Mystic, Hazrat Inayat Khan. The retreat process is a sacred pilgrimage towards the source of perfection and freedom of one's true Self. This retreat is recommended for anyone seeking beneficial changes in their

life through deep inner practice. It is a particular blessing to enter the New Year with new vision and purpose, cultivated within a close circle of friends. To register 518-794-8095 or email [programsoffice@theabode.net](mailto:programsoffice@theabode.net). For more information visit: <http://www.theabode.org/visit/events>.

**\*\*\*\*\* ADL Calendar of Observances for December 2013 \*\*\*\*\***

**DECEMBER 2013**

<b>December 1</b>	Saturday	<b>WORLD AIDS DAY</b> International day of action on HIV and AIDS.
<b>December 1</b>	Saturday	<b>ADVENT • Christian</b> Advent is a season of spiritual preparation in observance of the birth of Jesus. In Western Christianity, it starts on the fourth Sunday before Christmas. In Eastern Christianity, the season is longer and begins in the middle of November.
<b>December 3</b>	Tuesday	<b>INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DISABLED PERSONS</b> Raises awareness about persons with disabilities in order to improve their lives and provide them with equal opportunity.
<b>December 8</b>	Sunday	<b>BODHI DAY • Buddhist</b> Also known as Rohatsu, it observes the spiritual awakening (bodhi) of founder Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, ca. 596 BCE. Celebrated on the eighth day after of December or the 12th month of the lunar calendar.
<b>December 10</b>	Tuesday	<b>HUMAN RIGHTS DAY</b> On this day in 1948 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
<b>December 12</b>	Thursday	<b>OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE • Christian</b> Celebrates the apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary (by her title, Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Patroness of Mexico and the Americas) before Juan Diego, an indigenous convert to Roman Catholicism, on the Mexican hill of Tepeyac in 1531.
<b>December 15</b>	Sunday	<b>BILL OF RIGHTS DAY</b> Commemorates the signing into law of the ten original amendments of the United States Constitution in 1791.
<b>December 21</b>	Saturday	<b>WINTER SOLSTICE</b> In the northern hemisphere, the shortest day of the year. It marks the first day of the season of winter.
<b>December 25</b>	Wednesday	<b>CHRISTMAS • Western Christian</b> Commemorates the birth of Jesus.
<b>December 26– January 1, 2014</b>	Thursday– Tuesday	<b>KWANZAA</b> A seven-day celebration honoring African American heritage and its continued vitality. "Kwanzaa" means "first fruits (of the harvest)" in Swahili.
<b>December 29</b>	Sunday	<b>WOUNDED KNEE DAY</b> On December 29, 1890 more than 200 Lakota Sioux were massacred by U.S. troops at Wounded Knee in South Dakota.

The full ADL Calendar of Observances for 2013 is available [here](#).

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