



The Interfaith Center of New York connect educate learn change manage participate tolerate interact

March 2014 Interfaith Center of New York E-Announcements

Dear Friends,

March is Women's History Month. Please find below programs relating to women, religion and human rights for the 58th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. This conference connects local struggles for women's rights to those around the world.

In addition, this month we're pleased to launch a new feature of the e-bulletin: a blog called "ICNY's Interfaith Matters." In this monthly blog, members of our staff (plus an occasional guest writer) will share their thoughts and experiences on interfaith work. We hope you'll enjoy it, and that it will help convey the value of and need for ICNY's many programs. Our first blog is "**Interfaith Women Discuss Creation Stories and 'Journey of the Universe' Film,**" written by Dr. Sarah Sayeed, ICNY's Director of Community Partnerships.

Finally, ICNY is hiring! We are looking to fill two positions. First, a [Program Director for Religion and Civic Connections](#); and second, a paid [Database Intern](#). Thank you for your help.

Best Wishes,

Rev. Chloe Breyer
Executive Director
The Interfaith Center of New York



By Dr. Sarah Sayeed
ICNY Director of Community Partnerships
[Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer Retreats for Social Justice](#)
[Muslim-Catholic Initiatives](#)

Interfaith Women Discuss Creation Stories and “Journey of the Universe” Film

You might be surprised to learn that ICNY runs a women’s interfaith dialogue group. Initially formed in 2010, the group is an offshoot of our Catholic-Muslim Social Action Partnership; the Catholic and Muslim women who came together initially wanted to expand to include Jewish women. The group meets roughly once a month (taking a break for summer and for religious observances), and has discussed a range of topics, including spiritual journeys, health, and forgiveness. Anywhere from 8-15 women attend the meetings. More recently, the group has been using the [Scriptural Reasoning](#) (SR) approach to discuss the story of creation according to Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

SR is an interfaith dialogue methodology that brings together people to read and reflect on sacred texts. There are various groups in New York City that have recently been established using SR, and there are also online groups. Through these discussions, participants are able to better understand one another’s religious beliefs and practices. SR does not expect participants to agree with one another’s texts; rather, the goal is to develop mutual respect and deepen friendships based on a reading of texts that are important to participants. While participants can bring their own selection of texts, SR has also assembled [text bundles](#) to guide people’s discussions. The women’s group has so far discussed the bundles “Encountering God,” “Wisdom,” “Beginnings 1” and “Beginnings 2-Human Beings.”

The text-based discussions led ultimately to a question about our individual and collective responsibility towards the earth, which is shared ground across many of the world’s religions. The participants noted that we need to develop a better vocabulary to identify the nature of our responsibility. Earlier, people thought of human beings as “masters,” and more recently as “stewards.” More recently, Pope Francis identified people as “protectors” of the earth, and our responsibility to “care for creation,” ideas that find echo in the teachings of Judaism as well as Islam. The women also spoke about the nature and cycle of human life, and human beings’ interference in the natural order, which ultimately contributes to wasting natural resources and destruction of the environment. According to religious teachings, what distinguishes human beings however, is knowledge and choice to do

good, and the women spoke about the importance of raising awareness about environmental issues.

Following these themes, participants recently watched and discussed [Journey of the Universe](#), a film that brings together science, humanities, and religion to “narrate the 14 billion year story of the universe’s development, from the great flaring forth at the universe’s inception to the emergence of simple molecules and atoms to the evolution of galaxies, stars, solar systems, and planetary life of greater complexity and consciousness.” Ultimately, as we concluded, all of the universe is interconnected, and as noted in the film, “humans are the microcosm of the macrocosm - they are the mind and heart of the vast evolving universe.” When it comes to human responsibility for the earth, religious teachings are increasingly converging with the latest scientific discoveries. Sr. Carol D’Angelo of Sisters of Charity shared the film with participants, and the group’s last two meetings have been held at The Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood and St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church. The women have a range of affiliations, including Sisterhood of Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood; Sisters of Charity; Little Sisters of the Assumption; Franciscan Handmaids of the Most Pure Heart of Mary; B’nai Jeshurun; and Temple Beth Emeth.

Below we list programs offered by The Interfaith Center of New York in March. 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*******

**2014 NEH Summer Institute for School Teachers -
Application Deadline Approaching!**



The deadline for applications is coming up on March 4th -- act now if you want to enrich your teaching on religious diversity!

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.

2014 Social Work and Religious Diversity Course



Announcing the Interfaith Center’s 2014 *Social Work and Religious Diversity* course -- beginning on Friday, February 21st. The Interfaith Center of New York and our partners invite all social work students and practitioners to join us for a free course on Social Work and Religious Diversity. This free course helps mental health and social service professionals develop the multicultural, multi-faith competence they need to work effectively with clients and colleagues from diverse religious communities. For this winter’s course, we’re planning a series of interfaith conversations among religious leaders and social service providers, exploring faith-based perspectives on social and clinical issues. All sessions meet on Fridays from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, with lunch served at noon, at the offices of UJA-Federation of NY, 130 E. 59th Street, 7th Floor. For more information and registration, email socialwork@interfaithcenter.org. A flyer for this event is [here](#).

Interfaith Youth Attitude Survey



ICNY is reaching out to youth to measure their attitudes about interfaith

cooperation. The survey primarily targets Christian and Muslim youth and is part of ICNY's Catholic-Muslim social action partnership. However, some questions apply to youth of all faiths. Please share [this link](#) with youth and encourage them to fill out the survey. Though the survey is geared to youth ages 13-22, we welcome responses from people of all ages. If you have questions about the survey, please contact Dr. Sarah Sayeed at ssayeed@interfaithcenter.org.

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

A Screening and Symposium on Military Sex Trafficking



Date: Saturday, Mar 15 (RSVP by March 11)

Time: 11:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Location: Fordham Law School, 140 West 62nd Street, New York, NY 10023

SAVE THE DATE! The International Institute on Peace Education and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders invite you to "Singers in the Band" - A Screening and Symposium on Military Sex Trafficking. The screening will be followed by a panel of peace and human rights experts to open a general, participatory discussion on civil society responses to address and eradicate this egregious violation of the human rights of women. For more info and to RSVP contact dominique.gnwp@gmail.com.

Save the Date: Harlem Reentry Graduation



Date: Thursday, Mar 27

Time: 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Location: Harlem Community Justice Center, 170 E. 121st Street, New York, NY 10035

Want to be inspired? Stop by the Harlem Community Justice Center's "Reentry Court" Graduation. For more information and to RSVP, contact Anisah Sabur at asabur@courts.state.ny.us

Webinar: Growing Interfaith Community Through Exodus Conversations



Date: Monday, March 31

Time: 3:30 pm EST

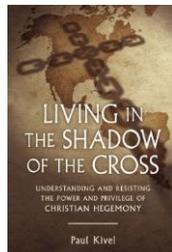
Location: Online (see below)

The Parliament of the World's Religions with co-sponsor Interfaith Center of New York invite everyone to advance their interfaith savvy through a webinar featuring the Convener and Abrahamic panelists of the social website, Exodus Conversations. Published on the web, Exodus Conversations is intended to encourage an international dialogue, featuring side by side presentations of the story of the Exodus as presented in the Qur'an and in the Book of Exodus. This is augmented by the traditional Passover service with a notable difference. At sixteen junctures, Jewish, Christian and Muslim scholars discuss issues which arise from the text, offering their individual responses based on their experiences within their respective communities. This webinar will model the website through discussion around its weekly questions, such as "It is a good idea to believe that God is on our side?" and "Who are the strangers among us and how do we define them?"

The webinar features a presentation from website convener Ruth Abram, a demonstration of the weekly theme from panelists Muhammed Shafiq, Mary C. Boys, and David Arnow, open conversation with the presenters, instruction on site navigation, and a wider question and answer around the strategy to engage online communities in discussions of faith and society. Kevin Childress, Social Media Coordinator to Exodus Conversations, and Molly Horan, Senior Communications Associate for the Parliament of the World's Religions, will co-moderate discussion.

Space is limited. [Click here](#) to reserve your Webinar seat now. After registering you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Webinar.

Book Talk & Brown Bag Lunch: Living in the Shadow of the Cross: Understanding and Resisting the Power and Privilege of Christian Hegemony



Date: April 9, 2014

Time: Noon

Location: 475 Riverside Drive, 4th Floor (New York Theological Seminary) New York, NY 10115

Author Paul Kivel will talk about his new book *Living in the Shadow of the Cross: Understanding and Resisting the Power and Privilege of Christian Hegemony*. For those of who do Interfaith work and organizing, the author addresses this reality and is an excellent resource for education and conversation. See

www.christianhegemony.org. For questions or more info, contact The Rev. Chloe Breyer, (212) 870-3510 or The Rev. Dr. Peter Heltzel (212) 870-1252.

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

Good Deeds Day NYC



Date: March 5, 2014

Time: 10:15 am - 7:30 pm

Location: Times Square (44th & Broadway), then hopping on the Good Deeds Day Bus

Good Deeds Day is an annual global day celebrating good deeds. March 5th is Good Deeds Day in NYC, and there are plenty of ways for you to lend a hand and do some good that improves the lives of others and positively change the world. Volunteers from throughout the city will gather in Times Square for a kick-off event to launch the Good Deeds Day bus, then hopping on the bus for a day of fun and inspirational activities (reading stories, designing pillow cases, and much more). The day will end with a celebration at Planet Hollywood where we will also hear from the Mayor's Commissioner to Combat Domestic Violence. Giveaways, t-shirts and food and drinks will be provided! For more information and to RSVP, click [here](#) or email Dave Rosenthal at gooddeedsny@gmail.com.

NYC Clergy Roundtable Conference: United We Stand, Divided We Perish



Date: March 7 - March 9

Times & Locations: see link

The NYC Clergy Roundtable will host a conference calling faith leaders to greater unity and engagement as they serve the community and speak to power. Speakers like Rev. Dr. James Forbes and Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr. will address themes of racial and economic justice, as we work together toward a “more perfect Union.” For more info and to RSVP [click here](#).

The Prophetic Role of the Church in the de Blasio Era



Date: March 10

Time: 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Location: The Latino Pastoral Action Center, 14 West 170th St., Bronx, New York

Join the Citywide Clergy Organizations at the Latino Pastoral Action Center to hear a presentations and discuss “The Prophetic Role of the Church in the de Blasio Era.” For more info and to RSVP email Rose Mercado at rmercado172@gmail.com or Deacon Julio Rivera at juliorivera507@aol.com or (718) 681-2361, ext: 105.

National Day of Unplugging



Date: Friday, Mar 7 - Saturday, Mar 8

Time: sundown - sundown

Unplugging solo? With friends? Your community? No matter what, Digital Detox, Camp Grounded and Reboot invite you to join them for your best National Day of Unplugging yet. Please help spread the word and consider forwarding this email to a friend, colleague, community leader or someone passionate about unplugging. Want to join in? Have a National Day of Unplugging event that you want to share? Email dina@rebooters.net with your questions and comments. For more information visit: <http://nationaldayofunplugging.com/events/>

Network Launch



Date: Tuesday, Mar 11
Time: 11 am or 12 pm
Location: On-line

Idealist will launch a new network—online and on the ground—that will help people everywhere connect and take action on any issue that concerns them, locally or globally, online and in person. We'll start with a live online presentation, take your questions, and then start building this network with you. Join this new international network for change and action! For more information and to sign up click [here](#).

**Panel Discussion at the 58th Commission on the Status of Women:
Involving Religious Leaders in Women's Rights Work:
Innovative Practices and Challenges from the Field**



Date: Tuesday, March 11
Time: 2:00 pm - 3:15 pm (doors open at 1:45 pm)
Location: Permanent Mission of the Netherlands (NYC), 666 Third Avenue, 19th floor, (btwn 42nd & 43rd St.)

A Panel Discussion jointly organized by the Women Peacemakers Program, The City College of New York, Ecumenical Women's Initiative, ABAAD - Resource Centre for Gender Equality, and Cordaid, hosted by the Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the UN in New York. Speakers include The Rev. Patricia Ackerman, Isabelle Geuskens, Carolyn Boyd Tomasovic and more. Opening speech by Minister Ploumen, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, The Netherlands. Space is limited. RSVP (required) to: nyv-rsvp@minbuza.nl.

2014-15 Changemaker Fellowship Program



Pacific School of Religion is now accepting applications for the 2014-15 Changemaker Fellowship program. This Fellowship provides a full-tuition scholarship for the new Certificate of Spirituality and Social Change, an immersive course of study, integrating theological reflection and spiritual formation with leadership for social change. It also covers expenses for exciting immersion opportunities, leadership retreats, spiritual formation, and faculty mentoring. Changemaker Fellows are talented individuals who have demonstrated their skills to lead justice-driven change in churches, organizations, communities, and individual lives. The deadline for applications is Saturday, March 15, 2014. For more information visit: <http://psr.edu/changemakers>.

Clergy Partnership Breakfast and Caregiving Discussion



Date: Friday, March 21

Time: 9:00 am - 11:00 pm

Location: Emblem Health Neighborhood Care, 215 W.125th St., 2nd FL (btwn 7th & 8th Ave.)

Meet the staff and take part in a lively discussion about the diverse spectrum of caregiving. For more information and to RSVP contact Christa Hill, Community Liaison at (347) 978-5754 or email Christa at chill2@emblemhealth.com.

2014 Russell Berrie Fellowship



The Russell Berrie Foundation
Making A Difference

On behalf of the Russell Berrie Foundation, IIE is pleased to announce the 2014 Russell Berrie Fellowship Program, a timely initiative at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum). Along with the establishment of an Annual Lecture

Series on Interreligious Studies, the goal of the Fellowship Program is to build bridges between Christian, Jewish, and other religious traditions by providing the next generation of religious leaders with a comprehensive understanding of and dedication to interfaith issues. The deadline for applications is Friday, March 21, 2014. For more information visit: <http://www.iie.org/Programs/Russell-Berrie-Fellowship-in-Interreligious-Studies>.

Building an Interfaith Community: Geneva, Switzerland



Date: Monday, Aug 4 - Friday, August 22 (Application Deadline, March 31)

Location: The Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, near Geneva in Switzerland

Three week course for young Jewish, Christian and Muslim people (age 18-35) to live, study and work together to explore how we can work interreligiously on such issues as climate change. Scholarship support available. For more info and questions [click here](#) or contact clare.amos@wcc-coe.org.

******* ADL Calendar of Observances for March 2014 *******

MARCH 2014

March	Full Month	NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH Honors women as significant agents of historical change.
March 2–March 20	Sunday–Thursday	NINETEEN-DAY FAST • Bahá'í Baha'is between 15 and 70 years of age do not eat or drink from sunrise to sunset and set aside time for prayer and meditation.
March 3	Monday	CLEAN MONDAY • Eastern Christian The beginning of <i>Great Lent</i> for Eastern Christian churches, which starts 40 days before Orthodox Easter (Pascha), counting Sundays.
March 4	Tuesday	SHROVE TUESDAY • Western Christian A day of penitence as well as the last chance to feast before Lent begins. Also known as Mardi Gras.
March 5	Wednesday	ASH WEDNESDAY • Western Christian The first day of Lent for Western Christian churches, a 40-day period of spiritual preparation for Easter, not counting Sundays.
March 8	Saturday	INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY Celebration of the economic, political and social achievements of women worldwide.
March 16	Sunday	MAGHA PUJA • Buddhist Also known as <i>Sangha Day</i> , it commemorates the spontaneous assembly of 1,250 arahants, completely enlightened monks, in the historical Buddha's presence.
March 16	Sunday	PURIM • Jewish The "Feast of Lots" marks the salvation of the Jews of ancient Persia from extermination.
March 17	Monday	HOLI • Hindu Also called <i>Holaka</i> or <i>Phagwa</i> , this festival celebrates spring and commemorates various events in Hindu mythology.
March 17	Monday	ST. PATRICK'S DAY • Christian Feast day of the patron saint of Ireland. In the U.S., a secular version is celebrated by people of all faiths through appreciation of all things Irish.
March 20	Thursday	VERNAL EQUINOX The date when night and day are nearly the same length. It marks the first day of the season of spring.
March 21	Friday	INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION Call to action to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination worldwide.
March 21	Friday	NOWRUZ • Zoroastrian A traditional ancient Iranian festival celebrating the first day of Spring and the Iranian New Year. Also celebrated as New Year's Day in Baha'i tradition (Naw-Ruz).
March 31	Monday	CESAR CHAVEZ DAY Honors Mexican American farm worker, labor leader and activist Cesar Chavez (1927–1993) who was a nationally respected voice for social justice.

The full ADL Calendar of Observances for 2014 is available [here](#).

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