



February 2017 Interfaith Center of New York Newsletter

Message from ICNY Executive Director

Dear Friends,

[Last Friday's Executive Order](#) introducing a temporary travel ban on people from 7 Muslim countries made an exception for an individual belonging to “a religious minority in [the] country of nationality facing religious persecution.” Christians fleeing persecution from Iraq and other conflict-ridden majority Muslim countries would receive entry. Muslims escaping those same places would not. The list of evangelical leaders who have spoken out against this is [here](#). The former Acting Attorney General's Letter refusing to enforce this order is [here](#); and National Security expert Juliette Kayyem puts it succinctly in an [interview with Slate](#) “if we want to convince someone that there is a holy war, this is the way to do it. This idea, that Christians are more worthy than the vast majority of other victims who are Muslims, just deepens the problem.”

At JFK this weekend, our partner the [New York Immigration Coalition](#) described some 52 people (as of Sunday night at 7pm) who suffered under this order:

- A 60-year-old father and 30-year-old brother of a United States Citizen cancer researcher (30 hours)
- A 65-year-old Sudanese woman with diabetes and a Green Card holder
- A father and son from Iran (33 hours)
- A group of six Iraqis, three men and three women were handcuffed and brought from room to room throughout their detention, including through public areas of the airport.

Whether you are a religious leader, a lawyer, or a concerned citizen, these are some resources and ways to get involved:

MuslimAdvocates.org: [Community Guidance: Restrictions on Muslim Entry to the U.S.](#)

MuslimAdvocates.org: [Fact Sheet: Executive Order Restricting Muslim Entry to the United States](#)

State of New York: [NYS hotline 1-888-769-7243 to protect refugees and report individuals believed to be missing or detained](#)

CLEAR @ CUNY Law School:

<http://www.law.cuny.edu/academics/clinics/immigration/clear.html>

The New York Immigration Coalition: <http://www.thenyic.org>

Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs: Call 1-800-354-0365 or 311 and say [ActionNYC](#)

AMAL- The Association of American Muslim

Lawyers: <http://www.theamal.org> amal@theamal.org

Muslim American Bar Association: <https://mubany.wildapricot.org/Airport-Assistance> mubanyinfo@gmail.com

Desis Rising Up and Moving: <http://www.drumnyc.org>

New York Civil Liberties Union: <http://www.nyclu.org>

You can help us to get the word out, sponsor actions with our partners and continue our educational and other programming by donating to support our mission:

[Donate Now Online](#)

You can also share (and voice) your support for ICNY and our work by connecting with us on social media:



And encourage your friends to [subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter](#).

On the home front, we welcome Vijay Wijesundera as the new Operations Manager in January.



*Vijay Wijesundera
ICNY's new Operations Manager*


Born in Sri Lanka, Vijay fled political persecution, and sought asylum in the US. He has been helping at many faith-based homeless shelters and charities in NYC, and is also an avid blood donor. He still is a refugee, but is planning to become a naturalized citizen this year, and we are proud to celebrate his many contributions to American civic life.

In celebration of the Black History Month, we as New Yorkers are blessed to have a packed schedule of events including lectures, readings, exhibitions, and dance and music performances across all 5 boroughs of the New York City. [Celebrate Black History Month at these 12 NYC Events.](#)

And, several city neighborhoods – including Manhattan's Chinatown, Flushing, Queens and Sunset Park, Brooklyn – offer authentic Lunar New Year celebrations; here's [a guide to parades and celebrations in New York City.](#)

Many thanks go to Dr. Henry Goldschmidt who has been Interim Director at the Interfaith Center since December as I have enjoyed a two-month sabbatical writing about Christian Peacemaking, Interfaith Activism, and Islamophobia.

Best Wishes,



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

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Religious Worlds of New York
K-12 Teachers Welcome to Apply for ICNY's next Summer Institute



K-12 teachers are invited to apply for the **Religious Worlds of New York** summer institute - a three-week program, with a generous stipend, that will help them teach about religious diversity. **Applications are due by March 1st.**

In today's climate of religious bigotry and extremism, public, private, and faith-based schools can help to promote interfaith understanding. The July 2017 *Religious Worlds* institute will give teachers the tools they need to help build a more inclusive society. Past participants have described the institute as "my best professional development experience ever" and "one of the best learning experiences of my life" ([click here for many more evaluations](#)). Don't miss this extraordinary opportunity to explore the religious worlds of New York.

The institute is sponsored by ICNY and Union Theological Seminary, with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities. It will meet from **July 10th to 28th** on the UTS campus, in the Manhattan neighborhood of Morningside Heights. All NEH summer scholars will receive a **\$2,700 stipend** to help pay travel, housing, and living expenses for the duration of the institute. Applications from teachers are due by March 1st. For detailed information and application instructions, please visit www.religiousworldsnyc.org.

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SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 5, 2017

The 33rd Marshall Meyer Retreat for Social Justice

***Hospitality in a Time of Hate:
Religious Leadership for an Inclusive City under the Trump Administration***



Religious and civic leaders in partnership at a past Marshall Meyer Retreat

On April 5th, ICNY will hold a full-day conference for the city's religious and civic leaders, exploring the emerging challenges for religious leadership under the presidency of Donald Trump. How, we will ask, can diverse New Yorkers best respond to the Trump administration's xenophobic rhetoric and policy agenda? What new opportunities for dialogue, collaboration, and community organizing might emerge, as faith leaders mobilize around the rising tides of racism, Islamophobia, and anti-Semitism? How can we advance an inclusive vision for the future of the city and country we love, in what may be a period of sustained attacks on our core values and communities?

As in our past Marshall Meyer Retreats, the *Hospitality in a Time of Hate* conference will include a keynote presentation, panel discussions, small group dialogues, interfaith prayer, and networking opportunities. Through these conversations, ICNY will help New York's religious and civic leaders respond to the rapidly changing, and increasingly troubling, landscape of American political life. Participation will be free for religious and civic leaders, thanks in part to a generous grant from the Fellowship in Prayer. We hope you can join us and your diverse colleagues on April 5th. Detailed program and registration info coming soon.

[Click here to receive email updates](#) on this and other ICNY events.

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SAVE THE DATE: MAY 10, 2017

Social Work and Religious Diversity: Religion, Spirituality, and Family Life



*Faith leaders and service providers in conversation
at the 2016 Social Work and Religious Diversity conference*

The Interfaith Center of New York and our partners are delighted to announce our next full-day continuing education conference for social service and mental health care providers. Please save the date for **Wednesday, May 10th**, when we will explore the intimate ties between religion, spirituality, and family life in diverse local faith communities. Detailed program and registration info coming soon.

The conference will be co-sponsored by ICNY, the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, and the Psychotherapy and Spirituality Institute. It will help service providers in a range of fields build their multifaith cultural competence,

while offering **seven continuing education credit hours** for New York State LMSWs and LCSWs.

[Click here to receive email updates](#) on this event.

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ICNY Co-Sponsored & Featured Events



Rally For Ramarley Graham

**ALL OUT FOR
#RamarleyGraham**
5 Year Anniversary Action

Demand police accountability!
#FireHaste

Feb. 2, 5pm, Foley Sq
Corner of Centre & Worth Streets

RiseUp4Ramarley.org bit.ly/RamarleyRally

Date: Thursday, February 2

Time: 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Location: [Foley Square, 111 Worth Street, NY 10013](#)

Thursday, February 2nd will mark 5 years since Ramarley Graham, an unarmed 18-year-old Bronx resident, was killed by the NYPD in his own home in front of his grandmother and 6-year-old brother. Officer Richard Haste and several other NYPD officers busted into the family's home without a warrant, killed Ramarley, and engaged in misconduct and abuses of his family. To date, not a single officer has been held accountable. Come out to stand with Ramarley's family on the 5 year anniversary. For additional information [click here](#).

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Yemeni American #MuslimBan Action



Date: Thursday, February 2
Time: 4:30 pm
Location: [Brooklyn Boro Hall](#)

Yemeni American merchants have declared a shutdown of their bodegas and grocery stores on Thursday from 12:00pm - 8:00pm to send the message that they and their families play a vital role in the economic and social fabric of our city. There are 4 - 6,000 bodegas and grocery stores owned by Yemeni Americans across the city. At 4:30 pm at Brooklyn Borough Hall, 209 Joralemon St. in the back of the building facing the plaza, the Yemeni American community will hold a rally where some merchants will share the impact the Ban has had on them and their loved ones. [#MyYemeniNeighbor](#).

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Emergency Town Hall on the Muslim Ban



Date: Saturday, February 4
Time: 4:30 pm - 7:00 pm
Location: Assembly Hall of Judson Memorial Church, [239 Thompson Street, NY 10012](#)

Join the [Muslim Community Network](#) for an emergency community meeting to learn about the current status of the Executive Orders and the legal and Constitutional implications, what is happening on the ground to mobilize communities and assist detainees, and the power and limitations members of Congress have to address the ban. The panel will be followed by an open opportunity to ask questions of the panelists. This workshop is open to all! Space is limited, so please [RSVP here](#).

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Generation Peace Fellowship



Date: Wednesday, February 15
Time: 5:00 pm
Location: Different houses of worship in NYC

Generation Peace is open to high school teens of all faith backgrounds living in New York City. They will learn important leadership skills, such as public speaking, media and storytelling, develop their confidence and identity as leaders, and will also be provided with seed grants to create their own Peace Projects. *Deadline is extended to February 15th.* For more information, [click here](#).

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Other Events



If you have an upcoming event that you think ICNY's audience might like to know about, please notify us by [filling out this event form](#). We will try to include events in future bulletins.

Stand With Me Discussion



Date: Sunday, February 5

Time: 2:00 pm

Location: [240 Mercer Avenue, New York, NY 10012](https://www.google.com/maps/place/240+Mercer+Av+New+York,+NY+10012)

How has the presidential election affected you? Why did you vote the way you did? How will you be changing your life? Stand With Me will be hosting small, safe discussions to encourage dialogue on these issues. Features a guided discussion where we unpack a topic related to the recent election and its impact on our lives. For additional information [click here](#).

St. Francis Prep Premiere of "The Sultan and the Saint"



Date: Thursday, February 9

Time: 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Location: The Bro. Ralph Clifford OSF Auditorium, St. Francis Preparatory School, [6100 Francis Lewis Boulevard, Fresh Meadows, NY 11365](https://www.google.com/maps/place/6100+Francis+Lewis+Boulevard,+Fresh+Meadows,+NY+11365)

Please join us for a viewing of this film about the historic meeting between St. Francis of Assisi and Sultan Malik al-Kamil during the Crusades. Their meeting became a great example of mutual respect and understanding. We hope to facilitate discussion after the film as well. For more info jcastellano@sfponline.org 718-423-8810 ext. 209

Rally Against Hate



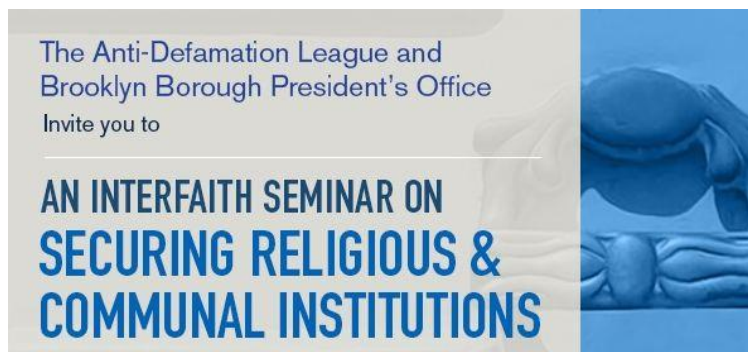
Date: Sunday, February 12

Time: 2:00 pm

Location: Society for the Advancement of Judaism, [15 W 86th Street, NY 10024](#)

Imam Shamsi Ali and Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov will be keynote speakers on Qu'ran and Torah with moderator Rabbi Herrman and Assemblyman David Weprin etc. Jews and Muslims will come together to protest hate crimes. For additional information, call 212-724-7000 or [click here](#).

Securing Religious & Communal Institutions



Date: Monday, February 13

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Location: Brooklyn Borough Hall, [209 Joralemon Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201](#)

In light of recent attack on the Quebec Mosque, and remembering ones before it such as the Charleston church shooting, Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams, along with partners, Anti-Defamation League, NYPD, FBI, and the US Attorney's Office, presents an Interfaith Seminar on Securing Religious and Communal Institutions.

This program is designed for those responsible for security at religious and community institutions on how to prepare against and react to an emergency situation. For more info: Melanie 212-885-7757. Seats are limited. [RSPV here](#).

"CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE" Gala Concert



Date: Monday, March 13th

Time: Doors open at 7pm, Concert 7:30pm-9pm

Location: TBA in March

International artists gift dance and musical performances celebrating Laureates of the Ralph J. Bunche International Medals (of which Dean Morton was one of two in 2016) on the opening night of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. FREE Gala hosted by the delegates of the IHRC Salem Peace Institute and Center Enterprises (SPICE). Reservations available from 14 Feb on Eventbrite, "Celebrating Excellence Gala". For more information, contact Wilda Spalding at 336-682-8397 or wspalding3@gmail.com.

Faith Leader Survey from the NYC Department of Youth & Community Development



The New York City Department of Youth & Community Development (DYCD) is seeking input from New York's religious leaders, to help them serve diverse local communities. DYCD's essential mission is to invest in a network of community-based organizations and programs that alleviate the effects of poverty, and provide opportunities for all New Yorkers to flourish. If you are a New York City clergy member or community leader, we hope you will [click here to take a brief survey](#). Please take a moment and tell DYCD about the programs and services your faith community needs, as well as the programs and services your congregation or organization provides. Thanks for helping DYCD help all New Yorkers! And please [click here for more information](#) about DYCD's important work.

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ADL Calendar of Observances



The complete ADL Calendar of Observances for 2017 is available [here](#).

FEBRUARY 2017

February	Full Month	BLACK HISTORY MONTH Celebrates Black History and African American culture in the United States.
February 1		NATIONAL FREEDOM DAY Commemorates the signing of the 13th Amendment, which abolished slavery in 1865.
February 11		TU B'SHVAT • Jewish New Year's Day for Trees, and traditionally the first of the year for tithing fruit of trees. Now a day for environmental awareness and action, such as tree planting.
February 14		VALENTINE'S DAY Celebrates the idea of romantic love.
February 14		RACE RELATIONS DAY The National Council of Churches in recognition of the importance of interracial relations and learning.
February 15		SUSAN B. ANTHONY DAY Birthday of Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906), a pioneer in the Women's Rights Movement.
February 15		NIRVANA DAY • Buddhist Celebrates the day when the historical Buddha achieved Parinirvana, or complete Nirvana, upon the death of his physical body. Sometimes celebrated on February 8.
February 20		PRESIDENTS' DAY Honors all past presidents of the United States of America.
February 25		MAHA SHIVARATRI • Hindu Also called <i>Shiva Ratri</i> , it is the Great Festival of Shiva.
February 26– March 1		AYYAM-I-HA OR INTERCALARY DAYS • Bahá'í The Ayyám-i-ha, or "Days of Ha" are devoted to spiritual preparation for the fast, celebrating, hospitality, charity and gift giving. They are celebrated the four days, five in leap year, before the last month of the Bahá'í year.
February 27		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.
February 28		SHROVE TUESDAY • Western Christian A day of penitence as well as the last chance to feast before Lent begins. Also known as Mardi Gras.

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