



ICNY
Interfaith Center of New York

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Fr. Gary Graf, priest in the Archdiocese of Chicago has walked from the childhood home of Pope Leo XIV in Dolton, IL to the Statue of Liberty to raise awareness about immigrant rights. Join us for Fr. Graf's arrival in Manhattan on Dec. 2nd at 2 PM at 55 Broadway. For more information see below.

Dear Friend,

On Dec. 10th, 1948 the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stating that "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." Each year during the

month of December — the same month that so many of our faith traditions help us find light amidst the darkness — we commemorate Human Rights Day and with its promise of a better world.

This year, December 10th offers the chance to shine a spotlight on the [Trump Administration's religious freedom violation of people in detention](#). In November, [Roman Catholic clergy filed a lawsuit](#) against the government for blocking their attempts to administer the sacraments at Broadview detention center near Chicago. Right here in New York and New Jersey, ICE facilities like Delaney Hall Detention Center in NJ do not allow regular access for spiritual care. [You can read in this op-ed](#) about the Rt. Rev. Matt Heyd, Bishop of New York, Drew University Chaplain Imam Saffet Catovic and my visit with a Bard College student, an Imam from the Bronx, and two vendors who were picked up on Canal Street.

Also on December 10th, we hope that you will join us for **Rikers Island: An Affront to Human Rights at 475 Riverside Dr.** This interfaith event will be an opportunity to hear directly from faith leaders, organizers, and impacted individuals about the plan to Close Rikers Jails by 2027. [Learn more here and join us.](#)

Finally, for those wondering **what we can do in the face of a possible increase of Federal Law Enforcement**, ICNY invites you and your congregation or community group to sign up with [Hands Off NYC to host an event Dec 12-14th](#). Events during this Community Weekend of Action will include Know Your Rights card distribution, crafting circles, rallies, tabling events, and interfaith services in solidarity with our neighbors. It is not too late to sign the ["New York City Says Hands Off"](#) pledge or sign up for [Hands Off NYC alerts](#). Stay tuned for faith community resources specifically.

Sincerely,

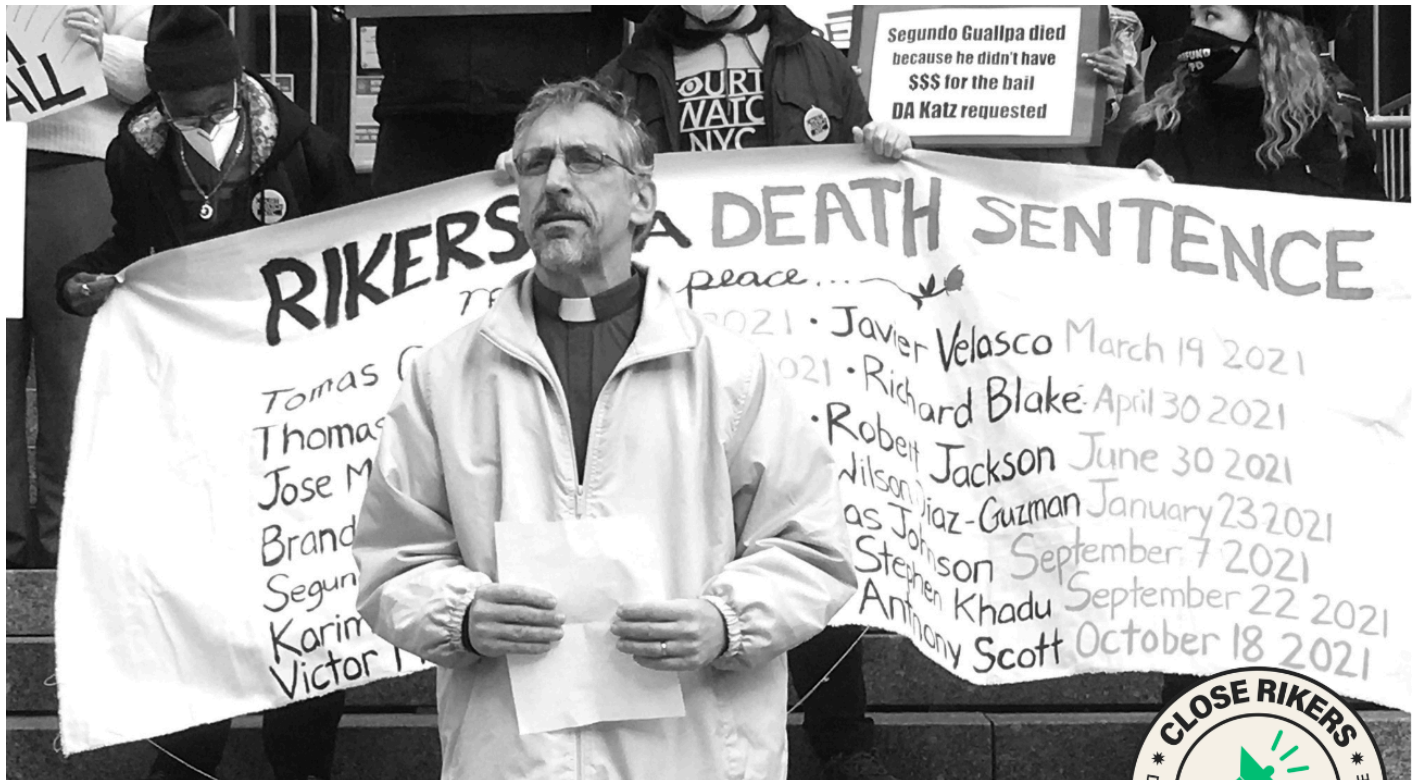
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chloe Breyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chloe" and last name "Breyer" clearly distinguishable.

The Rev. Dr. Chloe Breyer
ICNY Executive Director

P.S **Religious Resistance to Authoritarianism** will take place *this* Thursday, December 4, 2025 at 475 Riverside Drive. Registration is now closed, but you can [sign up for the waitlist here](#).

[Donate](#)

ICNY PROGRAMS & EVENTS



RIKERS ISLAND: AN AFFRONT TO HUMAN RIGHTS

INTERFAITH WITNESS AND ACTION TO CLOSE RIKERS

Join interfaith leaders and organizers on International Human Rights Day to learn about the Campaign to Close Rikers, and next steps toward erasing this moral stain on our city. *Mayor-Elect Mamdani is an invited guest.*

WHEN:

DECEMBER 10, 2025
3:30 PM - 5:00 PM

LOCATION:

REGISTER



**THE INTERCHURCH CENTER
475 RIVERSIDE DRIVE
NEW YORK, NY 10115**

bit.ly/closerikerspanel



Interfaith Witness and Action to Close Rikers

Rikers Island: An Affront to Human Rights

Wednesday, December 10th, 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm

At the Interchurch Center, 475 Riverside Drive New York, NY 10115

Join the Interfaith Center of New York, Union Theological Seminary, the Campaign to Close Rikers, and faith leaders for an interfaith prayer service and panel that demonstrates witness and action to close Rikers. Hear directly from faith leaders, organizers, and people directly impacted by Rikers about the urgent moral and human rights crisis at hand — and learn about the Campaign to Close Rikers and the next steps toward erasing this moral stain on our city.

In response to years of grassroots organizing, New York City passed a historic plan in 2019 to close the Rikers Island jails — a critical step toward ending mass incarceration, advancing racial justice, reinvesting in communities, and building new approaches to safety and accountability.

Yet despite both the moral imperative and the legal requirement to close the Rikers jails by 2027, the plan has faced delays and resistance. Since its passage, more than 60 people have died in New York City jails or immediately following their release. Join us to stand in solidarity, deepen your understanding, and take part in the collective effort to move this work forward.

We have invited Mayor-Elect Mamdani to join us.

The program will feature reflections from Rev. Dr. Chloe Breyer (Interfaith Center of New York), Rev. Fred Davie (Union Theological Seminary), Sunita Viswanath (Hindus for Human Rights), Rabbi Hilly Haber (Central Synagogue), Selina Fulford (Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood), and Rev. Scott Blumenthal.

Our panel will be moderated by Rev. Dr. Rashad Moore (First Baptist Church of Crown Heights) and will include Darren Mack (Freedom Agenda) and Helen Skipper (NYC Peer Justice Initiative). Additional speakers will be announced as confirmed.

[Register Here](#)



A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Join us for a Christmas Carol

Interfaith Talkback at PAC NYC: A Christmas Carol

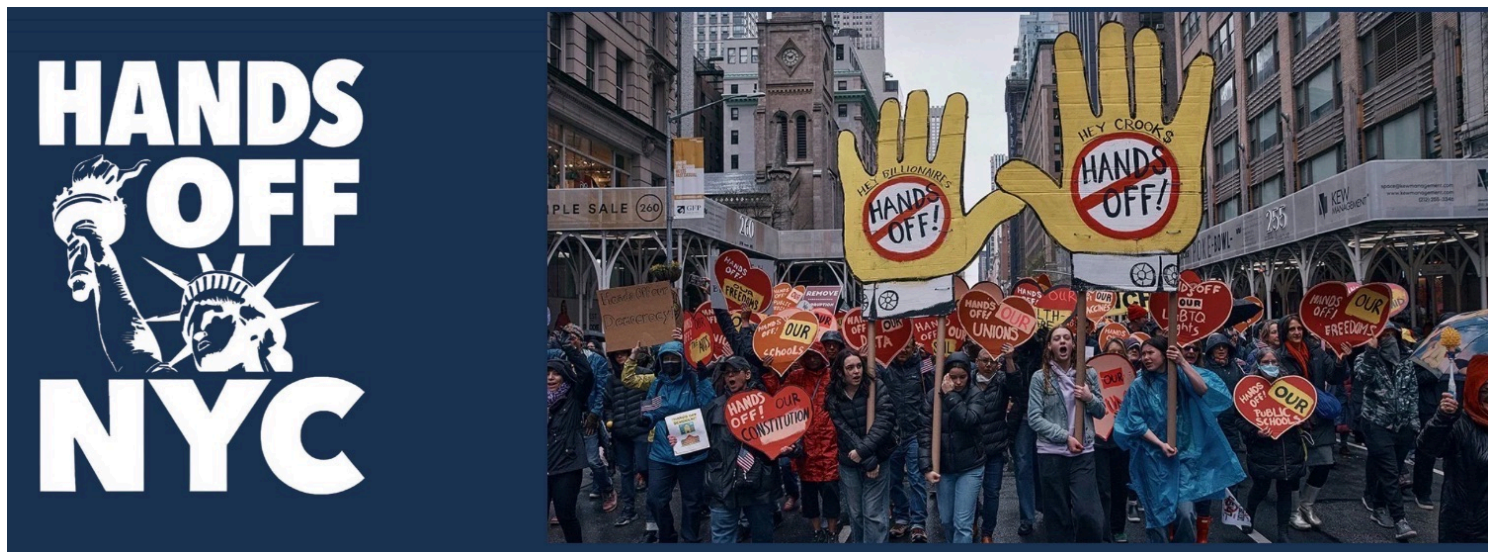
Sunday, December 21st at 3:00 pm (talkback starts at 5 pm)

Join the Interfaith Center of New York at the Perelman Performing Arts Center (PAC NYC) for a special **interfaith talkback** following the matinee performance of *A Christmas Carol* on **Sunday, December 21 at 3:00 pm** (talkback starts at 5pm).

ICNY leaders will reflect on the play's timeless themes of compassion, transformation, and moral responsibility, featuring **Imam Ammar** (Masjid Al-Haram USA), **Dubbs Weinblatt** (SAJ – Judaism That Stands for ALL), and **Rev. Dr. Chloe Breyer** (ICNY/ICLA).

All are welcome to stay after the performance for this rich multifaith conversation.

[Get Tickets Here](#)



Get trained with Hands Off NYC

Hands Off NYC Trainings Start Soon

Trainings start on Saturday, December 6th at 12 pm

Click the button to find out more

[Hands Off NYC is a coordinated effort supported by unions, faith leaders, and community groups, standing together in nonviolent resistance.](#) Just as people in cities across the country have stood up to these attacks, we will too.

The Trump administration claims this is about “crime,” but the crime rates in each of the targeted cities have been going down, not up. What they do share is strong, multi-racial, union power — and city leadership that refuses to bow down. This is not about safety. It’s about punishing communities that fight back. We stand in solidarity with all cities that have already faced military intervention.

We believe tax dollars should strengthen schools, hospitals, and safe neighborhoods — not build detention centers and tear families apart. Occupying our cities is not “law and order,” it’s an assault on our rights and values, including our First Amendment rights to freedom of the press, to free speech, and to peaceably assemble.

We pledge to organize together, build local power, and stand in solidarity with every city facing military occupation. Our cities and our people are our greatest strength.

Find out more about Hands Off NYC's trainings below:

[**Take Action, Get Trained Here**](#)

Multifaith Mondays

Columbus Circle, Every Monday, 5:30-6:00 pm

Witness for Democracy



People of all faiths and none, join us for prophetic resistance and community-building in a time of deep division and threat to our shared democratic values.



Scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/multifaith-mondays to learn more, join our email list, or express interest in speaking at a vigil.

Make Your Voice Heard

Multifaith Mondays: Moral Witness for Democracy

Every Monday, 5 :30 - 6:00 pm

Columbus Circle (gather at the USS Maine Monument on the SW corner of Central Park)

Since Monday, March 3rd, faith leaders and community members have gathered each week at Columbus Circle, to stand in solidarity and bear moral witness for democracy. Each vigil, held from 5:30 to 6:00 PM at the USS Maine Monument on the southwest corner of Central Park, is hosted by a different faith community or interfaith coalition. Through prayer, song, and collective presence, we affirm the power of spiritual resilience in the face of challenges to democratic values.

These gatherings serve as a space for reflection, connection, and public witness, reminding us of the shared moral responsibility across faith traditions to uphold justice and human dignity. If your house of worship or community organization would like to host a Monday vigil, [please sign up here](#). We invite all to join in this weekly call for unity and action.

Sponsors Include: **The Interfaith Center of New York | Union Theological Seminary | The Jewish Theological Seminary | Episcopal Diocese of New York | The Riverside Church | T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights | The BeaconNYC**

[Click Here to Fill Out Interest Form](#)

OTHER PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Listing does not imply endorsement by the Interfaith Center of New York

Step Up. Speak Out.

Tuesday, December 2nd

2:00pm

Robert F. Wagner Park
in Battery Park City

Join us for a multifaith prayer service marking the end of Father Gary's pilgrimage to Liberty Island. The program will feature remarks from Muslim, Jewish, Episcopal, Baptist, Evangelical, and Catholic faith leaders as well as the personal stories of immigrant children.



**Father Gary's pilgrimage is almost over.
The fight for immigration reform is not.**

For more information on Father Gary's pilgrimage, The Footprint Project, and the Priests for Justice for Immigrants, visit stepupspeakout.org

Step Up,
Speak Out!



¡Levántate y Exprésate!

Join us for a multifaith prayer service

Step Up. Speak Out

Tuesday, December 2nd at 2:00 pm

Robert F. Wagner Park in Battery Park City

Mark the end of Father Gary's journey with us by attending a multifaith celebration in Battery Park!

Join us for a multifaith prayer service marking the end of Father Gary's pilgrimage to Liberty Island. The program will feature remarks from Muslim, Jewish, Episcopal, Baptist, Evangelical, and Catholic faith leaders as well as the personal stories of immigration children.

After visiting the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, Father Gary and faith leaders of all denominations will lead a public prayer service and share the personal stories of immigrant children.

While Father Gary's trip to Liberty Island will be private for security reasons, the public is welcome and encouraged to show their support for the cause and Father Gary's work at the service in Battery Park.

Learn more and visit stepupspeakout.org

[Learn More Here](#)



Borough of Brooklyn Interfaith Advisory Group
HIV Task Force INVITES YOU TO

WORLD AIDS DAY

Wednesday, December 10, 2025
Time: 10:00 AM - 2:00PM

Brooklyn Borough Hall (Courtroom)
209 Joralemon Street, Brooklyn N.Y. 11201

For more information, contact us

Tel: (646) 988-8605 | Email: mpiersaint@health.nyc.gov
Tel: (929) 625- 6465 | E-mail: fjohnson7@verizon.net

Office of Faith-
Based Initiatives
NYC DOHMH

You're invited to join us for observance

Worlds AIDS Day Community Gathering

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Brooklyn Borough Hall (Courtroom)

209 Joralemon Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201

The Borough of Brooklyn Interfaith Advisory Group HIV Task Force invites you to join us for a special World AIDS Day observance. This gathering will bring together community members and faith leaders to honor those affected by HIV/AIDS, promote awareness, and share vital resources for commemorating International World AIDS Day within your congregations and communities.

This event is an important opportunity for faith leaders to access information, tools, and strategies to support HIV awareness and prevention efforts in their congregations.

For more information, please contact:

- **Tel: (646) 988-8605 | Email: mpiersaint@health.nyc.gov**

• Tel: (929) 625-6465 | Email: fjohnson7@verizon.net

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