

Darul Arqum Islamic Center
Joint meeting between PR Cmte & RA Cmte Minutes
March 27, 2013

Establish Quorum: Present from the Public Relations (PR) Cmte: Waddah Akili, Beth Sermet, Salahuddin Syed.

Present from Religious Affairs (RA) Cmte: Mahmoud Khan, Mohammad Mujeeb, Sufyan.

1. Call to Order: The meeting came to order at 8:00 p.m. by Br. Salahuddin, Chair of the PR Cmte.
2. Opening prayer: Br. Salahuddin read a short opening prayer.
3. Discuss the upcoming event at Bethesda Lutheran Church on April 14th: The PR Cmte members met with the RA Cmte to update them about the structure of the program being given at Bethesda Lutheran. Part of the program will consist of answering questions from the Lutherans who attended the first session in February. Details of the program are in Attachment #1 below.
4. Member from the RA Cmte for the panel discussion: A panel consisting of several Muslims and Lutheran clergy will be part of the program. The PR Cmte asked the RA Cmte to suggest a member of their cmte to be a member of the panel. Br. Mansour Manci's name was put forward. Br. Salahuddin will contact Br. Mansour to see if he is willing to participate. If he agrees, he will be given a set of the questions in advance so that he can review them. Other members of the panel are Br. Salahuddin and Sr. Beth. The three panelists will meet prior to the event to discuss the questions in detail.
5. The next meeting of the PR Cmte: There was no meeting date selected for the PR Cmte. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm. with a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Sermet, Secretary

Attachment #1:

Bethesda Lutheran Church – April 14, 2013 – 2-4 pm.

2:00 – 2:30 pm. Garthering Time

- Nametags for everyone
- Light snacks – cookies, fruit, coffee, tea fruit juices
- Greet and meet each other
- Sit down together at tables with a few Muslims at every table, if possible.

2:30 pm. Approx.“Dialogue” begins

- Moderator: Intern Christine Cowan
- Introduction of Panel Members by themselves: Pastor Randy, Pastor Russ Melby, Salahuddin Syed, Mansour Manci and Beth Sermet .
- Prayers – Begin with offering prayer by Pastor Randy & Salahuddin.

Introduction by Pastor Randy or Intern Christine: Why should Christians and Muslims engage in interfaith dialogue, assuming that conversion is not the purpose? What is the desired outcome? We feel this would be a good topic to begin the dialogue.

Questions & Answer Session:

1. Question to Mansour: What was the promise God made when Abraham sent Hagar and Ismael away into the desert? Or, what story do you have in the Quran about Abraham, Hagar and Ismael? About Abraham, Sarah and Isaac? Perhaps we would like to compare the accounts in Bible and Quran.
2. Question to Beth: convert from Christianity: Is there a specific part of Christian beliefs (like the need for a sacrificial crucifixion of Jesus) that was impossible to take seriously-- or on the contrary--that was hard to give up?
3. Question to Salahuddin : What do Muslims believe regarding life after death?
4. Question to Mansour: If Islam does not personalize God, do you pray for specific interventions from God, like, for healing of an illness for instance? Or for help in challenging times? How do you experience God's response to your prayer?
5. Question to Beth: How does your experience of the fast of Ramadan affect you? Since you have made a Hajj, what can you share with us about that pilgrimage?
6. Question to Salahuddin: How do Muslims relate to God in the face of tragedies, especially when bad things happen to good people? (Sal, you and I talked some about this but it would be great to hear this in the forum and also to hear more.)

3:15 pm. Approx. Table Discussion (10 to 15 min.) – Short Break followed by discussion at all tables of all three questions in order. Assign someone to take notes and give a summary to the entire group:

1. Discuss from personal experience ways Muslims and non-Muslims misunderstand each other. What biases and prejudices do you encounter?
2. What does God/Allah call upon us to do to make a more just society?
3. What would be good "next steps" for us to take together?

Main Points: Once the summaries are read, the main points are stated again to the entire group.

3: 50 pm. Conclusion:

- Thank all who participated.
- Announcement of third session at Darul Arqum?
- Closing prayer by both Pastor Randy and Salahuddin.