



**WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONYWEEK**

# ABRAHAM in THREE FAITHS:

## LESSONS FROM HIS LIFE

### Panel Discussion

- Batya Friedman, *Rabbanit, Beth Israel Synagogue*
- Ishak Yorganci, *Chaplain, Canadian Armed Forces*
- Julien Hammond, *Ecumenical Officer, Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton*

Moderator: Dr. Jason West, *Newman Theological College*

**February 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 Wednesday**

**6:30pm-8:30pm**

**Nova Chateau Hotel**

**RSVP at [eventbrite.ca](http://eventbrite.ca)**



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Intercultural Dialogue Institute (IDI) Edmonton organized a Panel Discussion on `Abraham in Three Faiths: Lessons from His Life` in the Interfaith Harmony Week on February 1, 2017 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Panel speakers were Rabbanit Batya Friedman of Beth Israel Synagogue, Chaplain Ishak Yorganci of Canadian Armed Forces, Ecumenical Officer Julien Hammond of Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton. Panel was moderated by Dr. Jason West, president of Newman Theological College.

Rabbanit Friedman stated that Abraham is the symbol of the monotheism, believing in only one God. His stance radically differs from the belief of his society, which is based on idols (polytheism). As a young person he was a character, who questioned and learned. He deduced the faith of believing in one God from such inner questioning. He also questioned the idols, which are actually wooden or stone pieces, unable to save themselves from harm. Rabbanit Friedman also mentioned Abraham exemplified *hesed* (loving kindness or loving in a kind way). He was always open to hospitality and he loved human beings as creatures of God.

Chaplain Yorganci described Abraham (pbuh) as a source of love embracing the whole humanity. He waited days and weeks for people to invite for meal no matter what they believe. In this regard, Chaplain Yorganci cited a versus from Quran: We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another (49:13). He pointed out Abraham (pbuh) loved all people without judging them, likewise, we should not judge people because of their faiths and we must be busy with ourselves to find the love of God as Abraham did. Abraham left his place for a mission to notify people to believe in one Creator. He added the source of all holy books is the same but calling him differently: Allah, Jehova, Lord.

Ecumenical Officer Hammond mentioned about Irish monks, who went pilgrimage beginning in 6<sup>th</sup> century. They imitated the Jewish patriarch Abraham and left all day-to-day customs to go on a pilgrimage via mainly England and Europe to Palestine for the sake of Christ. That movement revitalized the Christianity in Europe.

Dr. West closed the panel remarking that Abraham is very important figure in Judaism, Christianity and Islam to promote the interfaith dialogue and understanding today.

The event continued with the questions from the audience the speakers.

Panel was advertised on IDI Edmonton website, twitter and facebook accounts.

<http://edmonton.idialogue.ca/2017/01/21/abraham-in-three-faiths-lessons-from-his-life/>

<https://twitter.com/IDIEdmonton/status/825959957526835200>

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