



Testimonials

Charmaine Coimbra (St. Paul, MN, USA)

Do not be silent in the face of terrorism—any terrorism. Harassment, ridicule, racism, name calling, marginalization, violence, acts of cruelty have no place in civil society particularly in holy places. It is hypocritical to pretend to be against terrorism or terrorists while perpetrating your own brand of terrorism. Do not tolerate terrorism in any form including micro-aggressions. Be clear and be vocal about the intolerance. If the offense is in writing or in the media, write a letter to the editor or go to the comment section of the website to make your thoughts known. Counter bullying where you find it on social media. Let the Muslims in and around your community know you care, embrace and support them. Be visible beyond World Interfaith Harmony Week.

Edmonton Committee for a Parliament of the World's Religions—ECPWR (Edmonton, Canada)

"The Islamophobia Guidebook" An excellent resource with lots to ponder:...
<https://www.facebook.com/ECPWR/>

Sande Hart (Rancho Santa Margarita, CA, USA)

The Charter for Compassion just released this Islamophobia Response Guide with contributors such as Karen Armstrong, Imam Malik Mujahid and CAIR. Please distribute far and wide! Take it to your mayor, police department, all over social media and to everyone you know could use it. Thank You!

Katalusia (St. Paul, MN, USA)

I'm better off, I've concluded, to spend my time reading material such as the Charter for Compassion's newsletter, which hit my inbox today with a comprehensive guide to Islamophobia. The pdf version of the guide is 90 pages long, so I've only had time thus far to scan pages of immediate interest. Thanks to Karen Armstrong's input, those pages include intelligent, well-informed discussions of the differences between secularism and religion.



Barbara Kaufmann (Appleton, WI, USA)

World Faith Harmony week brings together people of all persuasions. The coming together to solve issues and social problems is paramount in building a new culture of trust and inclusion instead of fear and exclusion, on this planet. This age of cynicism, xenophobia, free floating fear deliberately cultivated and fueled by greed and special interests, has left us in a very dangerous place. We are facing real and documented climate change which places not only our way of life, but our very existence in question and in a cascading danger. We, who through evolution have now become a global community, are facing the greatest existential threat in history and of all time.

Our survival and existence itself requires the collective acting as one to establish a rational voice and a new path to survival within a new philosophy that embraces all people as kin and all problems as intimately personal as well as a singular and collective responsibility. In this new era, we must forge a means and a path to come together as a people to solve problems that affect us as a collective.

What better place to begin the requisite connections than by people who already embrace morality through their practice of faith? That impulse illustrates a momentum with the potential of a global wave rippling through the pond of collective consciousness that can eventually mitigate the tendency for making other" people who can be marginalized using "differences." Faith and initiatives like the Interfaith Harmony Week teaches us that we are more alike than different and there are places we can all come together and work toward the greater good of all. The premier faith-generated voices of our time include people like His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Pope Francis with his recent Encyclical, Desmond Tutu, and other leaders of faith who can remind us of our innate brilliance as creations of a greater mystery with the ability (and responsibility) to generate our own future.

The Charter for Compassion with its dedication to humanity and its mission to spread compassion by all means at its disposal around the world and through all people, is the present best reason for hope in the world. We need human connection like never before. Interfaith Harmony Week is an important strand in braiding hope into a strong cable of connection that can support diverse life in culture and on our planet.



Reed Price (Bainbridge Island, WA, USA)

In participating in the World Interfaith Harmony Week calls with the Charter, I was struck by the theme that we don't transcend differences by denying them. Rabbi Ted Falcon of the Interfaith Amigos called out that the search for interfaith peace is not a search for the absence of conflict or difference. The journey—or jihad or struggle, has his colleague Imam Jamal Rahman said—is to recognize that unity that transcends difference, it doesn't abolish it. We heard a similar message during the series from Emotional Intelligence Coach Aleasa Word, who reminded us that “we all smile in the same language.” We need to recognize that we have biases and prejudices – and its important to see them for what they are, to havbie compassion for yourself as you work to bridge divides. Marie Roker-Jones and Louisa Hext described their efforts to bridge that gap—recognizing that they came from different cultural backgrounds and working to develop a “safe space” for sharing their biases directly. It was very refreshing, and even lead to one of the participants sharing a reaction to a racial stereotype and grappling with how to respond to it.

Georgetown scholar John Esposito gave several examples of how efforts to make common ground across religions—and specifically in relationship to Islam—have been sabotaged by extremist voices that are focused on emphasizing divisions. He noted that these voices have been most noticeable during US elections and that many of these divisive voices are well-funded. Tying this to the earlier recognition that finding common ground is not a function of denying differences, I find Esposito's observations to be an invitation to be a voice for accuracy, but to seek to do so in a way that doesn't deny the emotions of those with whom I disagree. To proceed in this way is a challenge to be patient and centered—since voices of division and hate are often very hard to respond to in the moment.

To end the week with a discussion of work that is being done to help Syrian refugees suggested a way forward. When words fail us, we can still act. Reham Hamoui of Salaam Cultural Center and John Forseth of Lutheran Community Services offered tangible actions we can take to support people who are in need and seeking safer lives.



World Interfaith Harmony Week Report

Nancy Seifer (Reston, VA, USA)

A new publication was announced during that call: [Islamophobia Guidebook](#). In addition to practical information, it is an extraordinary compendium of writings on the universality of the human spirit from sources as diverse as Leo Tolstoy, Pope Francis, and George Lucas. The first section, “Compassion: A Religion for All,” begins with points to consider in the battle against Islamophobia, the first of which is recognizing Islam as the new “other.” It states: “The hate is the same hatred of white supremacists against people of color, of Anti-Semitism, of the Tutsis toward the Hutus, of Native Americans by the early American settlers... ‘Otherizing’ divides and harms humanity rather than uniting in compassion, love for one’s fellow humans.”

in Soul of Humanity: http://whentheshoulawakens.org/the-soul-of-humanity_499.html

Lesa Walker (Austin, TX, USA)

I was privileged to listen to and take notes for the Charter for Compassion International's daily (FREE) World Interfaith Harmony Week Speaker Series from February 1st through February 5th. The talks were inspiring and informative. I learned so much about faith, interfaith, peace, dialog, and compassion. Here is the link with the list of the talks and the notes and recordings for each one: <http://www.charterforcompassion.org/index.php/world-harmony-week-speakers-series>. I share these and hope people will be able to read the notes and/or listen to audios. By taking notes, I found that I gained more details than I might have by just listening. I was able to think about each talk and synthesize the messages. Powerful!

The talks were a wonderful way to gain inspiration for each day during the week. The information was so valuable and I learned so much! Hopefully, we can spread the word, so more people can hear these amazing and powerful messages.

CCI Announcements in support of Interfaith Harmony Week

CCI published information in four of its newsletters about World Interfaith Harmony Week. The links to these newsletters are listed below. We have a mailing list of 125,000+. We also published a number of Facebook posts about the week. These too are listed below.

<http://www.charterforcompassion.org/index.php/if-we-are-willing-to-begin-to-commit-to-make-a-difference>



World Interfaith Harmony Week Report

<http://www.charterforcompassion.org/index.php/we-have-a-lot-to-talk-about>

<http://www.charterforcompassion.org/index.php/desperate-times-call-for-compassionate-action>

<http://www.charterforcompassion.org/index.php/are-you-in>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CharterCities>

As people of faith and moral conscience, we must build a circle of protection around our Muslim brothers and sisters — right now.

Sign our letter of solidarity with the Muslim community in America. The letter says:

America is not America without Muslims. As people of faith and moral conscience, we promise to defend our Muslim brothers and sisters from attack, to speak up when they are maligned, and to support them with our voices, our actions, and our bodies.

Sign the letter here: <http://action.groundswell-mvmt.org/.../amid-anti-muslim-hate-...> (Dec. 9, 2015)

Turn Moral Outrage into Compassionate Action. Please join us for a special call on Islamophobia, Fri., Dec. 18, 6 am Pacific Time. Click here to register for the call: <http://bit.ly/CCI-Islam> (Dec. 16, 2015)

Join Interfaith Harmony Halifax, Waves of Compassion and others in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada in signing a 'Declaration of Interfaith Peace and Friendship'. A draft declaration can be found at <http://ihhalifax.ca/.../declaration-of-interfaith-peace-frien...>

Groups just need to insert their logo, sign it, and return a colored copy to kim@ihhalifax.ca (January 26, 2016)

Thank you for your help. All good wishes! Interfaith Harmony Halifax

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CharterPartners>

Register today for this call on Islam with expert John Esposito, part of Charter for Compassion speakers' series for World Interfaith Harmony Week. (Feb 3, 2016)



World Interfaith Harmony Week Report

A Call to Action: Bringing People Together to Create Individual and Systemic Change

Wed 9 AM · Maestro Conference Call—Interfaith Harmony Week (January 31, 2016)

Declaration of Interfaith Peace & Friendship

United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week

Public Declaration of Interfaith Peace and Friendship (January 26, 2016)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CharterforCompassion>

Team Charter For Compassion, Your mission today is to bring The Golden Rule into action. How can you do that? Click here for the answers! The inspiration of today's mission is Karen Armstrong. Let us electrify our day with acts of compassion with Compassion Games: Survival of the Kindest World Interfaith Harmony Week Coopetition Feb 1-7th! #BeTheChange #HarmonizeWithCollectiveCompassion #LoveWins #PromotePeace #ReportActions <http://us5.campaign-archive1.com/...> (February 4, 2016)

World Interfaith Harmony Week Coopetition Mission #3 Harmonize With Love inspired by Malala Yousafzai. It is time to harmonize our voices with traditions and cultures through the universal expression of music. #CompassionateVoices #LoveWins #WorldInterfaith. (February 3, 2016)