

UNIVERSITY of
DUBUQUE

Dear Professor Meyer:

On behalf of the small, but active Jewish community here in the Dubuque area, thank you for organizing such a meaningful conference on interfaith and storytelling. When one shares his story, not only is there a recipient, but one thing that was evident is that the teller changes a bit as well. This was evident in the car talk as members of our congregation drove home from the conference late on Saturday.

And on behalf of the University of Dubuque, thank you for involving students - students who are at University because (like Odysseus) they are on a journey at which the destination is unclear and even the passages seem hidden at times. I am reminded of Lewis Carroll's quote in Alice in Wonderland after listening to student stories: how do I know what I think til I see what I say? It is imperative that at their age and their place in adult developmental thinking that they see interfaith about people of faith who find not only common ground but also respect their differences and commit to learning from each other. To me, this was one of the most important takeaways from the day-long activity.

When I view the youtube pictorial animation (<https://youtu.be/FrP-P-JoiAY>), I see those engaged participants, folks who didn't know each other at 9am and yet by 1pm, they were breaking bread and sharing ideas. I don't know how to solve the world's problems, but thru respectful dialogue - stories of faith and, sometimes, loss of faith - I can meet and begin to understand my neighbor.

I met students and faculty from across town; I met students and faculty from Syria. The day was full of wonder and was so refreshing. One element that was clear in our storytelling was that every tradition, every religion, had a way of expressing the Golden Rule: treat your neighbor as you, yourself, would like to be treated. This was expressed in the positive and in the negative, but one element was clear - everyone was from the family of mankind on Saturday.

I hope we have the energy and resources to do this again as a 2.0. Please do not hesitate in contacting me if I might be of help.

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