

PMC General Meeting on May 9th at Congregational Church of Belmont

Attended:

Congregational Church of Belmont	Rev. Kristi	Denham
First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame	Gary	Deatherage
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of RWC	Tovis	Page
First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame	Vickie	Sherman
LDS Church (Mormon) San Bruno	Desirae	Barton
Trinity Baptist Church in San Mateo	Rev. Carole	Moore
Trinity Baptist Church in San Mateo	Justin	Wooley
Peninsula Temple Sholom (PTS) in Burlingame	Jeff	Savitz
Peninsula Sinai Congregation (PSC) in FC.	Dana	Izenson
Trinity Baptist Church in San Mateo	Ina	Allen
Peninsula Temple Beth El (PTBE) in San Mateo	Joel	Miller
Peninsula Temple Beth El (PTBE) in San Mateo	Judy	Maller
Peninsula Temple Beth El (PTBE) in San Mateo	Dick	Heiman
Peninsula Temple Sholom (PTS) in Burlingame	Lionel	Engelman
Peninsula Temple Sholom (PTS) in Burlingame	Evelyn	Engelman
Ahmadiyya Muslim Community SV	Sabiha	Ijaz
Ahmadiyya Muslim Community SV	Mujeeb	Ijaz
St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in San Mateo	Pastor Connie	Winter-Eulberg
Shinnyo-en USA Buddhist Temple in Redwood City	Kyoko	Lee
Congregation Church of San Mateo	Rev. Kibbie	Ruth
Island United Church in Foster City	Alexis	Lewis

Opening prayer by Rev Kristi D.

Education: Rev Kristi D.: Interfaith in United Church of Christ – Pluralism

- Her detailed presentation is posted on the PMC website at:
 - <http://www.peninsulamultifaith.org/app/download/763794104/Why+Pluralism.pdf>
- Explained each symbol on the Coexist sign
- Learn from other faiths

Peace Village

- Rev Kristi D. spoke about TILC being involved in Peace Village.
- This year at Congregational Church of San Mateo – children 7 – 13.
- Try & get teens involved as volunteers.
- This event is an integral part of PMC and we should really push for more involvement.
- Held on July 25 – 29th
- Desirae B. said that the cost is actually not that high considering it's a whole week.
- They need 60 campers to make it work.
- Suggestion is that an existing camper brings a friend or friends – then they could get some sort of discount.

Interfaith marriage meeting on April 24th – Pastor Connie W. – see below

- How can we promote this event in the future (if this event occurs on a regular basis)?
- Does (PMC) want to do this as part of this?
- Publicize this at MLK day.

- Some sort of outline from Pastor Connie W. & Desirae B. to give to various faith houses to help promote.

Songfest is Sunday June 12th – let Rev Kristi D. know if you can participate.

- Song Fest flyer is posted on PMC website at:
<http://www.peninsulamultifaith.org/app/download/763794090/PMC+Song+Fest+Flyer+2016.pdf>

MLK Day – Dick H. & Vickie

- **ACTION ITEM** -Dick H. passed out MLK captains. alternates & assistants document- showing responsibility in detail with description and estimated time commitment . *Go to attached PDF or:*
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1PF-hHZzkKgENMMNL2fk3GoBVWK_5hSn6-GqByilokk4/edit?ts=573f41a5#gid=0
We would like every member to place their name under a category or categories that interest them. Then, we'll figure out later with them which specific position fits them best
- Much more formal this year than previous years.
- Meetings with schools needs to happen very soon
- Need associate chairs as backups and heirs apparent
- Smaller in 2017 – 400 instead of 500 volunteers
- Publicity with Dick H. & Justin W.
- Possible grant money
- Companies may give us donations and discounts if we are 501(c)(3)
- We need much better communication perhaps an up-front brochure
- Dana I. has already put together a draft PMC/MLK brochure, recommended by Rehana
- Food sourcing last year was a nightmare
- Crafts – Desirae B. and Debbie G. have already volunteered
- Singing – needs better promotion and another site
- Reading Buddy is a great concept but difficult to implement
- Ken Klieman thinks he can make it work
- Safe Harbor & veterans are always great projects – Gary D. will help
- Create a Survey Monkey for signups – send out to a number of volunteers asking for project leaders. Need detailed descriptions
- Target faith houses and not the broader peninsula for volunteers / leaders
- MLK Day will only be successful with committed PMC involvement
- Suggestion that volunteers really know what is expected before they signup or register
- Captains will have project responsibility from top to bottom
- Suggestion for MLK Day testimonials that could be distributed or posted. “Why I like volunteering at MLK day”

Other

- Kyoko L. talked about floating lantern event at Shinnyo-en
- Live streaming video from Hawaii
- Prayers for loved ones who are no longer here. Ask Kyoko for Flyer.
- Prayer requests can be made online at website. www.floatinglanternhawaii.com
- Rev. Kibbie Ruth talked about Earth Day and getting volunteers for a cleanup event to clean up neighborhoods.
- For details go to: <http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/teamup>

Finances – Jeff S.

- Handout that Jeff S. passed out shows details.
- We really need our own checking acct, but cannot do this until we are a 501 (c)(3)

Next meeting is Thursday, June 2nd with a talk by Ahmadiyya Muslim Community SV

- At Congregation Beth Jacob in RWC.
- See notes below.

Rev. Kristi D. concluded meeting with a prayer.

These notes were written by Joel Miller as Secretary of PMC on May 15th^h, 2016

Meeting Minutes: Interfaith Marriages

April 24, 2016

Peninsula Multifaith Coalition

A small group attended this meeting but we had lots of good and interesting discussion on interfaith marriages.

Interfaith marriage is a part of our new life. It was discussed that there is a high rate of interfaith marriages (40% to up to 70% in America) across all faith groups. Interfaith marriages are increasing but unfortunately issues in interfaith relationships are not reducing. Attendees shared their experiences and talked about potential issues and solutions (below).

Today's youths are secular and are influenced by media. Many don't care to strictly follow norms in their family/culture and thus end up dating people from other faiths. Many times they even agree to follow new faith/traditions without really understanding what they are agreeing to. However, unexpected issues surface when they decide to get married. The issues get worst when time comes to give religious education to their children.

A question was raised if PMC should get involved further in this discussion. It was also discussed that individual faith groups are providing guidance to their own congregants but there is no joint effort by multi faith groups to discuss this issue collectively. Therefore, if there is continuing interest from PMC, additional meetings will be planned inviting the Bay Area larger community, including people already in interfaith relationships to share their experiences.

ISSUES IN INTERFAITH MARRIAGES

Attendees at this meeting raised the following issues that potentially an interfaith couple may face. *Asterisks* indicates the importance given by attendees.*

1) Which Church to Join? *****: Will the interfaith married couple and their children join: 1) one of two church/mosque/synagogue/mandir, 2) will attend both on different days or 3) will decide not to be a part of any of religious institution? Certain faith traditions may not allow dual religions and thus the interfaith couples will be compelled to decide one or the other.

2) What will be religions of children? ****: Will interfaith children follow one, the other or none of two religions of their parents? ***** Will these children be honoring one, both or none of two Traditions? * Will children follow certain milestones (like christening, baptism, bar mitzvah, sunat, namasankara, etc)? * What will interfaith children learn about God?

3) Role of in-laws and community ***: Today's pluralist and secular youths may wish to find some middle ground and manage their interfaith life with harmony of two faiths but that may not be acceptable by one or the other in-laws or community.

4) Weddings **: Is interfaith couples going to have wedding ceremony from only one of two traditions or going to have dual weddings to satisfy all? Alternatively, will they consider only civil wedding and

ignore both faith traditions? Conflicting rituals in two faiths may create problems. Certain religious institutions forbid dual weddings.

5) Holidays **: Conflicting religious traditions will bring headaches to interfaith couple during major holidays, especially when two faiths are at odds or with historical conflicts.

6) First name of children: Will children have names of one tradition or both?

7) Food/Diet: Will the interfaith family cook and eat halal, kosher or vegetarian food?

8) Culture: Individual cultural practices will impact family life. In some cultures dominance by in-laws is considered an acceptable practice. In some other cultures, male dominance is expected. Certain dress code (like hijab or turban) can be an issue by the other family. Is the other interfaith party aware and can cope with such cultural differences?

9) Finances: To be a part of a religious institution, the couple may have to pay 3-12% of their total gross income to the institution. Will the other side okay with such financial commitment for life?

10) Burial: One day we have to go and can go only one way. Will the burial for the couple (or children) be according to one or the other tradition?

WHAT COULD A DATING COUPLE DO?

What should a dating interfaith couple do before getting deep into a serious interfaith relationship to make it a healthy one? The couple could discuss above listed issues and decide before hands for how they will handle their planned married life. It is also good to run by couple's decision to the two sets of parents to make sure parents are on board for the planned married life.

A big confusion may come between a pluralist (all faiths lead to salvation) and an exclusivist (only my faith is truth). A pluralist may agree for religious conversion to the other faith without realizing what they are getting into. In the later case, major issues may potentially surface 5-10 years down in couple's married life when time comes to guide children.

Instead of picking one or the other faith, and if it works for the couple, Unitarian type unifying concept may be a good solution. Sometimes, the couple will have to make compromises and reluctantly accept the other faith practices even not acceptable in own faith.

RESOURCES

The interfaith dating couples should make fully "informed" decision for their planned interfaith life. There are many resources available for more information: Books in a public library, Coalition Statistics on InterFaith Marriage; Meetups/Gatherings/Support groups for people who are grappling with issues related to InterFaith Marriage and support from members of organizations like PMC.

(The other information is not minutes and can be provided if asked for.)

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

An Overview

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a dynamic, fast growing international revival movement within Islam. Founded in 1889, it spans over 206 countries with membership exceeding tens of millions. Its current headquarters are in the United Kingdom.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is the only Islamic organization to believe that the long-awaited [Messiah](#) has come in the person of [Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{\(as\)}](#) (1835-1908) of Qadian. Ahmad^(as) claimed to be the metaphorical second coming of [Jesus^{\(as\)}](#) of Nazareth and the divine guide, whose advent was foretold by the [Prophet of Islam, Muhammad^{\(sa\)}](#). The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community believes that [God](#) sent Ahmad^(as), like [Jesus^{\(as\)}](#), to end religious wars, condemn bloodshed and reinstitute morality, justice and peace. Ahmad's^(as) advent has brought about an unprecedented era of Islamic revival. He divested Islam of fanatical beliefs and practices by vigorously championing Islam's true and essential teachings. He also recognized the noble teachings of the great religious founders and saints, including Zoroaster^(as), Abraham^(as), Moses^(as), [Jesus^{\(as\)}](#), Krishna^(as), Buddha^(as), Confucius^(as), Lao Tzu and Guru Nanak, and explained how such teachings converged into the one true Islam.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is the leading Islamic organization to categorically reject [terrorism](#) in any form. Over a century ago, Ahmad^(as) emphatically declared that an aggressive "[jihad by the sword](#)" has no place in Islam. In its place, he taught his followers to wage a bloodless, intellectual "[jihad of the pen](#)" to defend Islam. To this end, Ahmad^(as) penned over [90 books](#) and tens of thousands of letters, delivered hundreds of lectures, and engaged in scores of public debates. His rigorous and rational defenses of Islam unsettled conventional Muslim thinking. As part of its effort to revive Islam, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community continues to spread Ahmad's^(as) teachings of moderation and restraint in the face of bitter opposition from parts of the Muslim world.

Similarly, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is the only Islamic organization to endorse a separation of mosque and state. Over a century ago, Ahmad^(as) taught his followers to protect the sanctity of both religion and government by becoming righteous souls as well as loyal citizens. He cautioned against irrational interpretations of Quranic pronouncements and misapplications of Islamic law. He continually voiced his concerns over protecting the rights of God's creatures. Today, it continues to be an advocate for universal human rights and protections for religious and other minorities. It champions the empowerment and education of women. Its members are among the most law-abiding, educated, and engaged Muslims in the world.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is the foremost Islamic organization with a central spiritual leader, known as the Khalifa of Islam. Over a century ago, Ahmad^(as) reminded his followers of God's promise to safeguard the message of Islam through [khilafat](#) (the spiritual institution of successorship to prophethood). The Community believes that only spiritual successorship of Khilafat can uphold the true values of Islam and unite humanity. Five spiritual leaders have succeeded Ahmad^(as) since his demise in 1908. It's fifth and current spiritual head, His Holiness the Khalifa of Islam [Mirza Masroor Ahmad](#), resides in the United Kingdom. Under the leadership of Islamic Khilafat, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has now built over 16,000 mosques, over 500 schools, and over 30 hospitals. It has translated the [Holy Quran](#) into over 70 languages. It propagates the true teachings of Islam and the message of peace and tolerance through a twenty-four hour satellite television channel ([MTA](#)), the Internet ([alislam.org](#)) and print (Islam International Publications). The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has been at the forefront of worldwide disaster relief through an independent charitable organization, [Humanity First](#).

PDF:

<https://www.alislam.org/introduction/intro.pdf>
