

Interfaith Walk for Peace and Reconciliation Minutes of Meeting No. 12

Location	Philadelphia, PA	Issue Date	February 26, 2005
Type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Phone Call	Date Held	February 9, 2005
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Place Held	Al-Aqsa Society, Philadelphia, PA
Subject	Interfaith Walk for Peace and Reconciliation—Planning Meeting	Recorded By	L. Laver

Participants:	Distribution:
<p>Rashedah Abdul-Khabeer Ron Abrams Mohammad Almashhadani Vic Compher Patricia Coyne Nancy Fuchs-Kreimer Ethan Genauer Adab Ibrahim Lance Laver Jim McGovern Steve Newman Victoria Pearson Arthur Waskow Ayesha Weinberg Renate Woessner Aisha Yasin</p>	<p>Attendees Interfaith Peace Walk E-Mail List</p>

No.	Item	Action By	Due Date
12.01	Purpose: Interfaith Walk for Peace and Reconciliation Planning Meeting		
12.02	<p>Opening: After individual introductions, V. Pearson noted that we are in the midst of a long and dark winter that is not yet over—but that if nothing else happens tonight (other than the enlivening round of intros), it will be OK. She noted the wonderful joy and spirit permeating the room—as we prepare to plan for this May’s Peace Walk, which was such a heartening experience last year. She offered that we will do “some wonderful things together out of that spirit.”</p> <p>M. Almashhadani noted, however, that his presence at the meeting was muted by what is happening in his country, Iraq. He spoke about the impossibility of imposing freedom in Iraq—and how the war has sacrificed so many people, has been accompanied by so much stereotyping and has caused many to be robbed of their rights. He has been in telephone contact with his people in Iraq, some of whom have not worked for two years, have been confined to their houses for weeks at a time and can only obtain drinking water by filtering rainwater.</p> <p>J. McGovern said he was feeling positive about this year’s Walk,</p>		

**INTERFAITH WALK for PEACE and RECONCILIATION
PHILADELPHIA, PA**

Meeting Minutes No. 11

Date: February 26, 2005

Page 2 of 5

No.	Item	Action By	Due Date
	<p>partly because of two experiences from last year's event: 1) he encouraged a "chronic relapser" from a Kensington halfway house to join the Walk, and the man has not had a drink since that experience; and 2) the Imam's chanting in the church (and other stops) projected God's grace in a way that helped his friend stay sober.</p> <p>R. Abrams noted that he felt the Imam's presence in the room now through the evening <i>salat</i> prayer chanting (projected over the intercom), even though he did not understand the words.</p> <p>M. Almashhadani noted that understanding the words was not so important, as the Koran enters a person's being not through the ears, but by surrounding one's entire presence. The chanting offers light to those who believe, he added, and the feeling of the chant (different for each chanter) more important than the specific reading.</p> <p>R. Abrams concluded by commenting that when Louis Armstrong was asked to explain jazz, he answered, "If you don't feel it..."</p>		
12.03	<p>Hands-on projects/work days:</p> <p>Following up on the prior discussions of a pre-Walk "hands-on workday," the group decided the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Group workday: Sunday, March 13, 2005, 11 AM – 4:00 PM: Clean-up/beautify the grounds on a lot near Al-Aqsa and possibly install planters at the Al-Aqsa property.</u> <p>Two other possible projects need further investigation and set-up work: the New Jerusalem Peace Garden (20th & W. Norris Sts.); and the Grupo Motivos building/gardens (Palethorpe Street above Norris Square). Work days at these locations may take place in the spring.</p>		
12.04	<p>Peace Walk 2005: The theme for the May 22, 2005 Peace Walk will continue the message of the first Peace Walk: to build community and interfaith dialogue and promote peace and understanding among all people. We discussed some possible actions around the Peace Walk, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ways to reach out to various and different faith communities. • Walking to various neighborhood places representing grass roots healing in the community (e.g., at a church exemplifying the work of "Mothers in Charge," a group dedicated to stopping random gun violence in the streets, which last year conducted a march of 10,000 through city streets); or • Walking to places acknowledging the spiritual/emotional/ physical toll and healing needed from the Iraq War—as exemplified by the 857 pairs of surrogate boots of slain soldiers displayed at Independence Mall last year as part of the AFSC <i>Eyes Wide Open</i> exhibit...which is now over 1,300. • Specific hands-on projects that the group can do together prior to the Peace Walk. (11.03) <p>Continuing the discussion about the May 22, 2005 Peace Walk, M. Almashhadani said that the Walk is important in showing that a Muslim can pray together with a Jew and Christian [and vice-versa], to show doubters that we can work and walk together and to show authorities that the problem lies with them, not us. The</p>		

**INTERFAITH WALK for PEACE and RECONCILIATION
PHILADELPHIA, PA**

Meeting Minutes No. 11

Date: February 26, 2005

Page 3 of 5

No.	Item	Action By	Due Date
	<p>group then made the following decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name: Because the focus of the group is now truly ecumenical, involving peace, justice and reconciliation among Jews, Muslim and Christians (the “children of Abraham”)—and having involved other religious and peace groups as well in last year’s Walk, the group decided to call this years Peace Walk: Interfaith Walk for Peace and Reconciliation. • Time: This year’s Peace Walk will begin at 1:00 PM. • Program/route: The group decided once again to have stops and prayers at a mosque, synagogue and church—as well as possibly at locations where we have participated in volunteer community outreach programs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mosque stop will be at Al-Aqsa (which has been the site for most Peace Walk planning meetings and the volunteer façade upgrade project in the past year). • R. Abdul-Khabeer also will investigate the possibility of having a stop at United Muslim Masjid at 15th & Christian Sts. (where she and Kenny Gamble are members; and he has expressed interest in participating in outreach for this year’s Walk). • P. Coyne and J. McGovern will look into St. Peter’s Church at 4th & Girard Streets and possibly Old Reformed Church at 2nd & Race Sts. • N. Kreimer will investigate possible synagogue options. <i>(Post-meeting note: The synagogue stop again will be at Rodeph Shalom on North Broad Street, as confirmed by N. Kreimer and Rabbi Michael Holzman.)</i> • Other noted locations included the African-American Museum (7th & Arch Sts.), Liberty Bell and Church of the Advocate (17th & Diamond Sts.) • If we have a substantial number of stops and people, we might consider “feeder” walks all joining at Al-Aqsa. • Outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact list: We will use the Peace Walk e-mail list (~190) for outreach, as well as contacting the same religious, peace and community groups as in 2004, and others (to put our the word on their mailing lists). These include the following (with people making contact): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shalom Center: A. Waskow will put out information on the Shalom Center e-mail list (~2,000). • Interfaith Center: V. Compher. • Reconstructionist Rabbinical College: N. Kreimer. • Bawa Fellowship: A. Weinberg. • AFSC/Friends Meetings: R. Woessner. • CAIR: M. Almashhadani. • Tikkun community: S. Newman. • Catholic agencies and archdiocese: J. McGovern. 	<p>R. Abdul-Khabeer</p> <p>P. Coyne/ J. McGovern</p> <p>N. Kreimer</p>	

**INTERFAITH WALK for PEACE and RECONCILIATION
PHILADELPHIA, PA**

Meeting Minutes No. 11

Date: February 26, 2005

Page 4 of 5

No.	Item	Action By	Due Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brit Tzedek/Progressive Zionist Alliance: L. Laver. • Metropolitan Christian Council: TBD. • Filming: All agreed that we were fortunate to have Usame Tunagur film last year's Peace Walk (as part of a graduate school program). The film will be shown at Al-Aqsa in May as part of the Palestine Film Festival. If we can find a filmmaker for this year's Walk, P. Coyne noted that it would be good to document the planning process as well. S. Newman will check into a possible Temple University filmmaker. • Flyer: A. Ibrahim will help develop a flyer for the event. • Permit: P. Coyne will look into permits (with M. Kreidie). • Aerial photograph: P. Coyne will investigate an aerial photograph of the city for use with the flyer and/or event-day material. • Walk Route, Program & Instructions: L. Laver will develop a data sheet for the march with this information, following confirmation of the Walk route and transport. • Funds: We have \$742 in our account that can be used for this year's Peace Walk. 	<p>S. Newman</p> <p>A. Ibrahim</p> <p>P. Coyne</p> <p>P. Coyne</p> <p>L. Laver</p>	
12.05	<p>Documentary film project on the Peace Walk: Ref. 9.06: V. Compher reported that he has today (10/13/04) received the final 17-minute version of the documentary film of the Peace Walk made by Usame Tunagur as part of an Ohio University graduate film school project. VHS copies will be available to Peace Walk participants for \$7.00 each, and DVD copies also may be available.</p> <p>Copies of the Peace Walk film are now available in VHS and DVD formats for \$7.00 each. Contact V. Compher for copies.</p>		
12.06	<p>Tent of Abraham – October 2005: A. Waskow described a “new initiative of Muslims, Christians and Jews...part of an upsurge in multi-religious prophetic concern for peace, justice and the earth.” The <i>Tent of Abraham Statement</i> reads:</p> <p>Gathering in response to the Spirit's call— To make peace, not war; To make justice, not oppression; To build bridges, not erect barriers; To heal the earth, not despoil it; and To renew and expand our democracy—</p> <p>We members of the families of Abraham—Jews, Christians, Muslims—invite you, and all people of good will, to join us in creating circles that celebrate the prophetic vision of our traditions, both in attitudes and actions.</p> <p>According to tradition, the Tent of Abraham, Hagar and Sarah was open in all four directions, the more easily to share food and water with travelers from anywhere. In that spirit, we welcome all those who thirst and hunger for justice, peace and dignity to join in celebrating the Tent of Abraham, Hagar and Sarah—</p> <p>By gathering in a way that nurtures the spirit --through circles of personal sharing about our spiritual journeys --breaking bread together --respectfully shared worship the creation of new, common ceremonies and occasions of celebration</p>		

**INTERFAITH WALK for PEACE and RECONCILIATION
PHILADELPHIA, PA**

Meeting Minutes No. 11

Date: February 26, 2005

Page 5 of 5

No.	Item	Action By	Due Date
	<p>--the linking of festival times --our rich traditions of singling, dancing and the arts --discerning ways the Spirit is calling us to action</p> <p>by supporting each other in strategies that --create local and regional occasions for similar sharing and action --link regional and national celebrations to the festivals and holy days of each other's traditions --serve the young, especially those alienated from or indoctrinated by our traditions --seek human rights for all --challenge the forces that undermine democracy and support oppression</p> <p>The group is planning a series of events in October 2005 around <i>A Convergence of Ramadan, Tishre and St. Francis Day</i>, where the confluence of special days "provides an opportunity for many kinds of local, national and international activities.</p> <p>See www.tentofabrham.org for updates and resources to use to create your own rituals.</p>		
12.07	<p>Next Peace Walk planning meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday, March 2, 2005 at Al-Aqsa, 7:00 PM. <p>Date for 2005 Peace Walk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunday, May 22, 2005. 		