

# Interfaith Peace Walk for Jewish-Muslim Reconciliation

Philadelphia – May 2004

## Minutes of Meeting No. 2

<b>Location</b>	Philadelphia, PA	<b>Issue Date</b>	January 9, 2004
<b>Type</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Phone Call <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Date Held</b>	December 12, 2003
<b>Subject</b>	Second Interfaith Peace Walk for Jewish-Muslim Reconciliation Planning Meeting	<b>Place Held</b>	Al-Aqsa Society, Philadelphia, PA
		<b>Recorded By</b>	L. Laver

### Participants: (\*Denotes Part-Time)

Dr. M. Almashhadani, Al-Aqsa  
Judith Axler, Temple Beth Zion Beth Israel (BZBA)  
Allison Carter, Temple BZBI / Arab-Jewish Dialogue Group  
Joe Clay, St. Vincent de Paul  
Vic Compher, Tabernacle United Church  
Roy Feinberg, Rodeph Shalom \*  
Jim Feldman, Mishkan Shalom  
Elinor Ferko, As-Aqsa Society  
Eman Hasan, Americorps AACDC  
Ahmed Hefuna, Arab-Jewish Dialogue Group  
Adab Ibrahim, Al-Aqsa Society  
Marwan Kreidie, Philo-Arab American CDL  
Jeanne Ayesha Lauernborg, Sufi Ruhaniat Society  
Lance Laver, Mishkan Shalom / Interfaith Community Building Group  
Rabbi Yael Levy, Mishkan Shalom  
Jim McGovern, Catholic Peace Coalition  
My Mohammad  
George Mordecai, BZBI / Arab-Jewish Dialogue Group  
Victoria Pearson, Christian Association, Univ. of Pennsylvania  
Ahmad Muhammed  
Jenny Sawyer, Tabernacle United Church / Ulster Project  
Mohamed Shehuto, Al-Aqsa Society  
Lil Sigal, Mishkan Shalom  
Sharon Sigal, Mishkan Shalom  
Ahlam Yassin, Americorps AACDC

### Distribution:

Attendees  
Mohammad Aziz, ISGUR  
Irv Ackelsberg, Mishkan Shalom  
Wilbur Bryant, Mishkan Shalom  
Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb, Peace Walk/FOR  
Jan Hamer, Mishkan Shalom  
Rabbi Linda Holtzman, Mishkan Shalom  
Mary Laver, St. Vincent's  
Margaret Lenzi, Mishkan Shalom  
Herb Levine, Fellowship Farm  
Abdul Rauf Campos-Marquetti, Peace Walk/FOR  
Steve Masters, Mishkan Shalom/Brit Tzedek v'Shalom  
Susan Teegen-Case, Arts & Spirituality Center  
Carol Towarnicky, Mishkan Shalom  
Simone Zelitch, Mishkan Shalom

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No.	Item	Action By	Due Date
2.01	<b>Purpose:</b> Second Philadelphia-area group Peace Walk planning meeting.		
2.02	<b>Opening prayer:</b> The opening prayer, chanted by the Imam of the mosque, was loosely translated from the Arabic as follows:  <i>You are all created by one God—into nations. Those who know each other best among you are those who fear God, and God knows best. This is a supplication to God. Because He is at peace, we can ask Him for peace, and ask Him to go to a place where He is—to paradise.</i>		
2.03	<b>Introductions:</b> A. Ibrahim opened the meeting by welcoming the group to Al-Aqsa and asking each attendee to provide an introduction with name, organization, tradition and a reason for wanting to be part of the Peace Walk planning, which included the following:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a troubled world, we need to seek peace.</li> <li>• We need to change our perception, change stereotypes.</li> <li>• We need to be passionate about peace, especially through interfaith dialogue.</li> <li>• We need to be part of healing together.</li> <li>• We have a duty to reach out and extend a hand. Peace is possible.</li> <li>• We should be able to pray together.</li> <li>• This is an important opportunity to seek peace and repair the world together.</li> </ul>		
2.04	<b>Minutes of Meeting No. 1:</b> As there were a number of new participants at this meeting, L. Laver reviewed the Minutes of the first planning meeting on 11/10/03 at Mishkan Shalom.		
2.05	<b>Statement of purpose/name for Peace Walk:</b> The group reviewed the <i>Statement of Purpose</i> in the original Jewish-Muslim Peace Walk pamphlet as well as the <i>Hijos de Abraham</i> statement from the third Peace Walk. These statement are as follows:  The Peace Walk pamphlet, put together by organizers Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb and Abdul Rauf Campos-Marquetti in Albuquerque, includes the following <i>Statement of Purpose</i> :  <i>The Jewish-Muslim PeaceWalk seeks to nurture the needed work of Muslim-Jewish dialogue as well as promote interfaith and intercultural communication. The Jewish-Muslim PeaceWalk cultivates a common ground for peace action based on faith principles of compassion and justice. The Jewish-Muslim PeaceWalk is committed to transformation of oppressive structures through non-violent resolution of conflicts, openness to diversity, and affirmation of our shared existence on this earth. By walking for peace together, we affirm our belief is possible.</i>  *		

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	<p><i>Hijos de Abraham</i>  <i>The Third Jewish-Muslim Interfaith Peace Walk</i>  <i>Saturday, May 10 at 7:00 am</i>  <i>From Nahalat Shalom to the Islamic Center of NM</i></p> <p><i>We the Children of Abraham desire Peace for the people of the World. We invite people of all faiths to join us on a Pilgrimage from Congregation Nahalat Shalom to the Islamic Center of New Mexico. We want to give witness to our belief that peace between people of all faiths is possible. We affirm the process of truth and reconciliation in order to achieve that goal.</i></p> <p><i>We lament war and the loss of innocent life, especially the children. We pray for the safety and freedom of all people who suffer the violence of war. We support the voices of peace around the globe that struggle and work in behalf of the dignity and well being of all peoples. In this time of war we embrace hope. As people of faith we place our trust not in military might but in God's desire for love and justice as the true pathway of peace.</i></p> <p><i>Let us call out Salaam. Let us call out Shalom.</i>  <i>Let us call out Peace in the language we love.</i></p> <p>The statement's flyer also included the following intentions:  <b>PLEASE WEAR WHITE (at least white shirts), carry water and snacks to share.</b></p> <p><i>Banners are invited to say the words for peace: Salam, Shalom, Peace. NO POLITICAL BANNERS.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">*</p> <p>A discussion followed about creating a new <i>Statement</i> for this Philadelphia-area Peace Walk, which resulted in forming a sub-committee to put together a draft and report back to the group at the next meeting (on Tuesday, January 20). That group will meet on Tuesday, January 13 for this purpose.</p> <p>Much of the discussion centered on the primary purpose of the Peace Walk and the relationship between the Muslim, Jewish and Christian groups represented here (as well as other groups, such as Quaker organizations, which may also be interested in participating). Comments (in the order of the discussion) included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main thrust of this Peace Walk should be to address the most immediate need for healing between Jews and Muslims, particularly in light of the current situation between Israelis and Palestinians. But we don't want to exclude any others who want to support this intention. Perhaps we could stop at a church along the walk route.</li> <li>• It is important for Christian folks to engage in this process as well—to stand with their Jewish and Muslim sisters and brothers.</li> </ul>	<p>Statement planning sub- committee</p>	<p>1/13/04</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rabbi Lynn and Abdul Raul felt it important to keep the Jewish-Muslim focus, but this intention allowed for flexibility in how any subsequent Walk group could determine the focus of its walk. Christians can be present in the spirit of accompaniment, in the same way that Jews and others accompanied Christians during the Sanctuary movement. Be present at the invitation of the parties asking for reconciliation and honoring those trying to reconcile. But as Christians, we also need healing: all three groups are in need of healing with each other, even if the primary purpose is Muslim-Jewish reconciliation.</li> <li>• We [as Jews—and Christians] need to acknowledge that Muslims receive general hostility from this culture, so I can see the Walk being broad-based. On the other hand, if we decide the Walk should focus on Jewish-Muslim healing, we should change the wording of the name [from the original <i>Jewish-Muslim Interfaith Peace Walk</i>]. Somehow, the name should include the primary intention, but also allow for "interfaith" participation.</li> <li>• Let's remember that this is a "walk" and not a "march." The primary purpose is a spiritual journey. The Walk is the goal, but the entire process—being here together, planning, whatever else we might do—is part of the "walk."</li> <li>• What is the deeper work contained within the Walk?</li> <li>• Building relationships.</li> <li>• We should invite all faiths. As a Christian, I can participate as a witness, be a part, but not the focus.</li> <li>• Numbers are not important, as (we) the Muslim group will always be in the minority. It is important, especially after 9/11, to recognize that. Will Christian groups be interested if the focus is Muslim-Jewish? What about Humanists? Atheists? But we're all children of God. We should welcome people of good will, but this shouldn't be an "all-peoples" march. All three [major] religions have problems. We should start with the "book" people, and let others participate.</li> <li>• It is important to recognize the cultural triangle of relationships between Muslims, Christians and Jews in planning this walk—and honor that triangle.</li> <li>• I think [as a Jew] that the focus should be on Jewish-Muslim reconciliation. Christians also should be involved and should organize among other Christian groups. We should all meet with each other, get to know each other, not just in these planning meetings, but have meals together, so we're not marching as strangers.</li> <li>• Many Christians don't know Muslims. Focus on the three Abrahamic faiths.</li> </ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [As a Jew] I'm concerned about convincing Jews...I can't convince Christians. This is foundation work. We really need to walk around the world. Six miles seems short [compared to what we need to do]. There's such tension and fear between Jews and Muslims. We need to look at each other, confront the face of fear. I don't want to dilute that. Maybe have Christian involvement in the next phase. This is the focus of the Pesach Seder—the four cups of freedom, how to find liberation.</li> <li>• I'm torn [about the focus of the Walk]. There is a lot of fear among Jews, Muslims and Christians—fear of each other. And [as a Jew], if I don't like the policies of Israel, and I speak out, does that make me anti-Semitic to some Jews?</li> <li>• This is an opportunity for some more open-minded Christians to do something. It would be a harder sell for me [as a Christian] if it's called Jewish-Muslim only. Maybe we could have monthly services, alternating between Muslim, Jewish and Christian houses of prayer.</li> <li>• It will be hard to get the Muslims out as well.</li> <li>• We should keep it simple. The broader it is, the more diluted. The steps are good. [From a Muslim point of view] Focus on the Muslim/Jewish part.</li> <li>• We Christian folks should caucus first. Everyone should be walking with Muslims, not just Jews.</li> </ul> <p>Following this discussion, the group determined to call the walk: <b><i>Interfaith Peace Walk for Jewish-Muslim Reconciliation.</i></b></p> <p>The group will develop the Peace Walk statement at the next meeting, following review of the draft submitted by the statement sub-committee.</p>		
2.06	<p><b>Peace Walk route:</b> A sub-committee will develop a proposed Walk route, which will include Al-Aqsa at one end and a synagogue at the other end (possibly Rodeph Shalom on Broad Street or Society Hill Synagogue, as Mishkan Shalom is probably too far away). The intention is to include at least one church along the route (possibly St. Malachi's at 11<sup>th</sup> &amp; Master and/or the Latino church at 5<sup>th</sup> &amp; Tioga)—with stops for prayer at each location. The sub-committee will meet on 1/13/04 to discuss route options for discussion at the next planning meeting.</p>	Route sub-committee	1/13/04
2.07	<p><b>Peace Walk date:</b> Confirmed for <b>Sunday, May 2 at 1:30 PM.</b></p>		
2.08	<p><b>Miscellaneous issues:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Banners:</b> There will be no political banners allowed at the Walk.</li> <li>• <b>Training:</b> We will try to have non-violence training sessions prior to the Walk. J. Clay will contact the Brandywine Peace Community for training assistance.</li> </ul>	J. Clay	1/20/04

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Permitting:</b> M. Kriedie will contact the Philadelphia Civil Affairs Division (Captain Fisher?) about any necessary permitting and for civil affairs support during the Walk.</li> </ul>	M. Kriedie	TBD
2.09	<p><b>Next meeting date: <del>Tuesday, January 20, 2004</del> Tuesday, February 10 at 7:00 PM at the Christian Association at the University of Pennsylvania (118 S. 37<sup>th</sup> Street at 37<sup>th</sup> &amp; Sansom Sts.).</b> Parking is normally available on Chestnut Street in the evenings.</p> <p><i>(Post-meeting note: The date for the next meeting has been changed to Tuesday, February 10 because of the Jewish-Muslim dialogue program at the University Museum's Harrison Auditorium (33<sup>rd</sup> &amp; Spruce Street). Entrance to the auditorium is from the 33<sup>rd</sup> Street side. The program includes Professor Judah Pearl (father of murdered journalist Daniel Pearl), Computer Science, UCLA, and Professor Akbar Ahmed, Chair of Islamic Studies, American University. All Peace Walk planners are encouraged to attend.)</i></p>		