

Inter-Religious Council of Linn County, Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes from Thursday, September 7, 2017

Attendees: Bob Buntz, Charles Crawley, Brian Daugherty, Aaron Doolin, Rebecca Hinds, Eugenia Kendall, Steve Knudson, Susan Liddell, Brenda Mitchell, Hassan Selim, Joan Thaler, Nathan Williams. Unable to attend: Erin Broich, Ashok Chawla, Alan Diehl, Nancy Rhodes, Todd Thalblum Leif Zalewski. Absent: Afnan Elsheikh.

Guests: Jeremy Brigham (lowans for Gun Safety), Krishna Kumare Iyer (candidate for IRCLC Board), Meredith Mitchell.

Charles Crawley, president, opened the meeting at 7 p.m.

INSPIRATION

Hassan Selim brought the following as our inspiration message:

It is He who is revealed in every face, sought in every sign, gazed upon by every eye, worshiped in every object of worship, and pursued in the unseen and the visible. Not a single one of His creatures can fail to find Him in its primordial and original nature.

--Ibn al-Arabi Shaykh Al-Akbar, "the greatest master", was an Arab Andalusian Sunni scholar of Islam, Sufi mystic, poet, and philosopher. He died: November 16, 1240, Damascus, Syria.

"Nature is to the Divine Self as character is the human self...Knowledge of nature is the knowledge of God's behavior. In our observation of Nature we are virtually seeking a kind of intimacy with the Absolute Ego; and this is only another form of worship."

--Muhammad Iqbal, widely known as Allama Iqbal, was a Kashmiri descent poet, philosopher, and politician, as well as an academic, barrister and scholar in British India and is widely regarded as having inspired the Pakistan Movement. He died: April 21, 1938, Lahore, Pakistan.

Bob Buntz will bring the October inspiration thoughts.

GUEST REPORT

Jeremy Brigham gave information regarding the Concert Across America. It will be held at CSPS Hall on September 24. One of the purposes of this concert is "to raise the mood of people out of depression." Joan Thaler moved and Susan Liddell seconded a motion to donate \$200 towards the concert expenses. Carried.

NOMINATION

Krishna Iyer, representing the Hindu religion, was presented as a candidate for the board. After introducing himself, he left the room while board members voted to approve his nomination as a member of the board. Carried. He will join the finance committee.

OLD BUSINESS

Following our March meeting when Charity Tyler, executive director of the Cedar Rapids Library Foundation joined us, three *Religious Literacy meetings* will be held at the downtown public library. At each meeting, three IRCLC members will speak about their faith or religious tradition. Jan. 8--Baha'i, Buddhism, and Christianity will be presented; Feb. 12—Hinduism, Humanism, and Islam will be presented; March 12—Judaism, Native American, and Unitarian/Universalist will be presented. It is anticipated that the meetings will be held from 6 pm to 8 pm.

Program Committee will bring suggestions to our next meeting of ways in which to *honor Cedric Lofdahl and Taha Tawil* at our annual meeting.

Bob Buntz stated that over 100 *Postcards for Peace* were sent to the Dar Al Farooq Islamic Center as a result of our invitation to stop by Via Sofia's and write messages of hope to the recipients. Some were taken to Mt. Mercy University to be completed by students and staff. Bob asked if we respond to all national tragedies. Rebecca Hinds suggested that we be proactive rather than reactive. She suggested that we have an *interfaith prayer meeting* monthly in a public setting. After much discussion, it was decided that we will discuss this issue at our next meeting, and everyone is encouraged to bring ideas for a location and type or format of service. Bob will be in charge of the discussion. An announcement will be made at the Thanksgiving Service regarding these prayer meetings.

Charles Crawley mentioned that there is a Supersaver Rate for the *Parliament of the World's Religions* to be held in Toronto, November 1-8, 2018. If anyone is interested in attending, please let Charles know.

NEW BUSINESS

We no longer have an office, but a postal box, in the Ecumenical Center, so our monthly rental cost will be \$25 to use the conference room, instead of \$100 for the office and conference room.

NAACP Banquet will be held October 28, and we have been asked to host a table for eight people. The cost is \$480. Bob Buntz, Charles Crawley, Rebecca Hinds and Susan Liddell will attend and each person will bring a guest. For more information, see announcements below.

Hassan Selim stated that the *World Interfaith Harmony Week Annual UN Observance*, which will be held Feb. 1-7, 2018, offers three prizes for groups or institutions which are involved in interfaith activities. He suggested that we participate in the contest and that we bring our suggestions to our next meeting as to what we are doing, or can do.

Indivisible Iowa has asked us to participate in a Unity Vigil with them. However, because it is an overtly political group, we decided not to participate as a board, although individual members may choose to do so.

Steve Knudson mentioned the *Speak Up Series: MedQuarter End-of-Life Planning Events*, which is being offered monthly, October through December, at the First Lutheran Church, in conjunction with the MedQuarter. More information is below in the announcements.

MINUTES

May minutes were approved as printed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee report was given by Nathan Williams.

The reports for June, July and August were presented. As of August 31,

Checking account: \$116.40 Money Market Account: \$15,036.24.

Charles presented Nathan with a t-shirt along with our appreciation for his work as our treasurer. Nathan will be moving to a new pastorate in West Des Moines in the middle of September.

Brian Daugherty moved and Bob Buntz seconded a motion that Steve Knudson be the new treasurer. Carried. Signers on the accounts are treasurer Steve Knudson, president Charles Crawley, and immediate past president Todd Thalblum.

Community Relations Committee report was given by Brian Daugherty.

Inter-Religious Dialogue Group met August 27 with over 30 people present. The next meeting will be held October 29 and the topic is Religious and Ethnic Pluralism in America.

The *Between the Traditions* presentation may have to be postponed.

Ethical Perspective on the News updated topics were given. See attached list.

Communication Committee report was given by Eugenia Kendall.

We had the most hits on our August website—255. The website information has been added to our Face Book page. We need to add minutes in order to have the website information up to date.

Events Committee report was given by Charles Crawley.

Thanksgiving Service: Theme will be “Creating a Welcoming Community”. Artwork for the bulletins will be provided by Joan Thaler. Short readings and names of speakers need to be sent to Charles by October 5. The readings should take no more than 2-3 minutes.

Susan Liddell, Joan Thaler, Hassan Selim, and Dedric Doolin will be greeters and ushers. We were asked to sign up to bring cookies, drinks, plates, cups or napkins.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Abdelkader Education Project Forum: Cedar Rapids Public Library, Sept. 16, 9 am to 5:30 pm.

The Concert Across America to End Gun Violence: CSPA Hall, 1103 3rd St. SE, September 24, 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm.

Speak Up Series: First Lutheran Church, 1000 3rd Ave SE. October 5, 6:30 pm to 8 pm. Guest speaker, Dr. BJ Miller, Topic: Facing Life.

Intersections: First Presbyterian Church, 310 Fifth St, SE, October 6, 11:45 am to 1 pm. Guest speaker: Casey Guet, Topic: Opioid Crisis: There's No Place Like Home for Drug Addiction.

NAACP 75th Freedom Fund Banquet: IBEW/Miller Hall, 1211 Wiley Blvd. SW, October 28, 5:30 pm. Speaker: Judge Kevin McKeever, Theme: Steadfast and Immovable.

ADJOURNMENT

Nathan Williams moved and Brenda Mitchell seconded adjournment at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Mitchell, secretary.