



NEWSLETTER

Volume 18 | Issue 1

January 2024 | Jumada al-Awal - Jumada al-Thani 1445

The thunder glorifies His praises, as do the angels in awe of Him. He sends thunderbolts, striking with them whoever He wills. Yet they dispute about Allah. And He is tremendous in might. [al-Ra'd, 13:13]

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"There is nothing that befalls a believer, not even a thorn that pricks him, but Allah will record one good deed for him and will remove one bad deed from him." [Muslim]

News Release

IONA's Leadership Meets With Dr. Cornel West

On Tuesday, December 19, Imam Mustapha Elturk, Ameer of IONA, and Naveed Ashraf, Director of Operations at IONA's masjid, recently attended a luncheon with a distinguished guest, Dr. Cornel West.

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First Friday sermon starts at 12:10 PM and the second one starts at 1:20 PM



Monthly Family Dinner
January 19th, 7:00PM

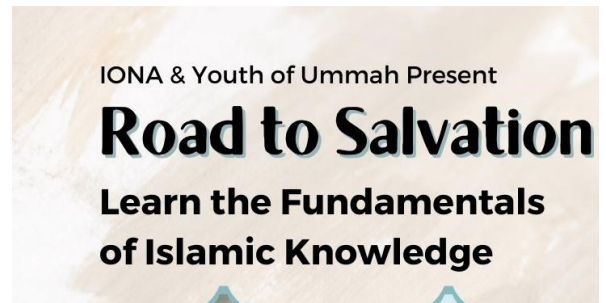
Bring your family and friends to spend an evening with your community.



Friday Lunch Special

Try IONA's delicious chicken and beef biryani. Every Friday

| More on page 2



Road to Salvation - Winter Semester starts January 13

Special program for ages 14 and up.

| More on page 3



Mustapha Elturk
Ameer

IONA Masjid
Community
Advisory Board

Naveed Ashraf
Director of Operations
IONA Masjid &
Learning Center

Mahreen Abid

Mirza M. Ahmad

William Antoun

Parwin Anwar

Farhan Baber

Mohammad A. Barlaskar

Ashfaqul Chaudhry

Irina Colakovic

Kaysar Hussian

Mohammad Sirajul-Haq

Ashraf Jaigirdar

Iqbal Surti

Sayed Khan

Announcements

IONA's Friday Lunch is BACK

Experience the return of IONA's Friday Lunch! Visit the IONA Cafe and indulge in our freshly prepared biryani with chicken or beef for just \$10.00. Your purchase directly supports the Masjid. Thank you for backing your Masjid!



News Release

IONA's Leadership Meets With Dr. Cornel West

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Renowned Philosopher Dr. Cornel West Meets Michigan Leaders to Discuss the Palestinian Plight

Wednesday, December 20, 2023

Warren, MI - On Tuesday, December 19, Imam Mustapha Elturk, Ameer of IONA, and Naveed Ashraf, Director of Operations at IONA's masjid, recently attended a luncheon with a distinguished guest, Dr. Cornel West. The luncheon, organized by the Michigan Task Force for Palestine, gathered nearly two dozen influential leaders from Michigan's diverse community, including Khalid Turani, President of the Michigan Task Force for Palestine, Imad Hamad, Executive Director of the American Human Rights Council, and Abdallah Sheikh, a founding member and President of the Arab and Muslim Political Action Committee (AMPAC).



Continued on page 7

Help Those in Need - Become a Volunteer

HAVE CAR, WILL TRAVEL? VOLUNTEER DRIVERS URGENTLY NEEDED!

All our "snowbirds" are heading South for the Winter! Won't you please help fill in for them? Many of our regular drivers take a couple months off this time of year, but the need for transportation does not lessen. The Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers program needs drivers who can provide rides for our older and disabled neighbors so that they can get to doctor appointments and essential errands. Just a couple hours of your time can make a huge difference in someone's life. You pick your own area & your own times. Drive as often or as little as you like in the comfort of your own car. Even one more ride a year might get someone to an appointment that could save their life! **Daytime drivers especially needed!** Please call IVC today at (586) 757-5551 for more information.

[Learn more about our work at www.ivcinfo.org.]

Synopsis of Ameer Mustapha's Friday Khutbah

Antisemitism - Part 2

Antisemitism Among Contemporary Muslims has Political Causes

The existence of anti-Semitism in some contemporary Muslim communities is a reality that cannot be denied. However, it is crucial to differentiate between this phenomenon and the teachings or historical stance of Islam towards Jewish people. The hatred or animosity directed towards Jews within certain segments of Muslim societies doesn't find its roots in Islamic scripture, theology, jurisprudence, or historical practices.

In fact, prior to the nineteenth and even the twentieth century, antisemitism was not prevalent within Muslim societies. The emergence of this sentiment within some Muslim communities is closely tied to specific political occurrences, particularly the Israel-Palestine conflict in the twentieth century. This conflict has deeply influenced perceptions and attitudes towards Jews in some Muslim-majority regions.

Importantly, recognized Jewish historians have acknowledged that historically antisemitism was not a prevailing sentiment in Muslim societies. It was notably absent or very limited before the nineteenth century and even less so before the twentieth century, affirming that antisemitism was not an intrinsic part of Muslim societies or teachings.

The emergence of anti-Semitic sentiments within some Muslim communities must be understood within the context of the complex interplay between religion, nationalism, and political dynamics. In examining this phenomenon, it is crucial to consider the shifting boundaries between religious scripture and secular nationalism, especially in modern Judaism.

Zionism, originally a secular and socialist movement among non-religious Jews in the nineteenth century, has evolved to become an integral part of the religious identity for a significant portion of the Jewish population. This blending of religious identity with nationalist ideals has contributed to a fusion where political debates often take on religious connotations. As a result, issues that are primarily political in nature frequently acquire religious overtones.

Moreover, this combination has led to the invocation of religious sentiments in discussions that fundamentally require pragmatic and political resolutions. Consequently, when addressing purely political matters grounded in practicality, religious themes are often interjected, creating a convoluted landscape where political debates are infused with religious undertones.

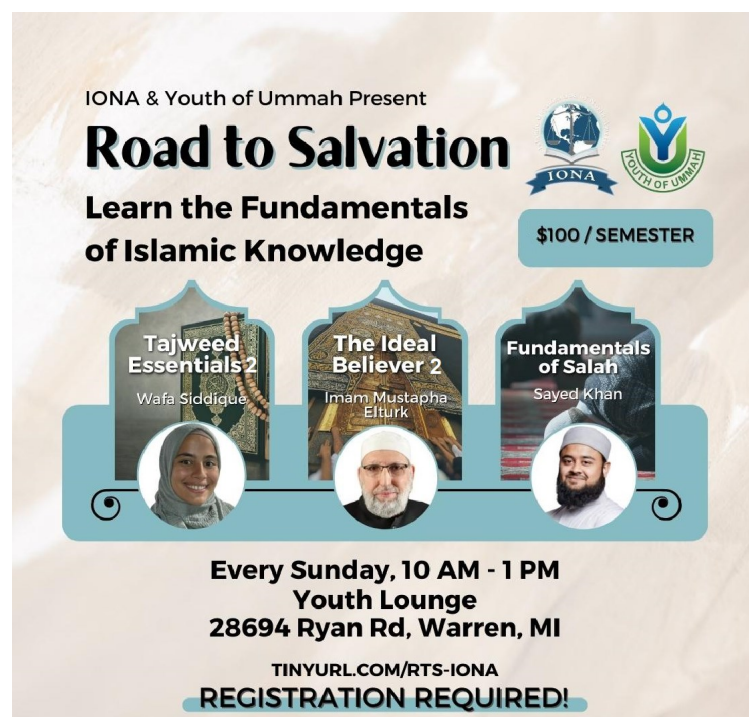
An unfortunate consequence of this blurring of boundaries is the potential for moral criticisms of specific political policies to be misinterpreted or falsely construed as religious or racial animosity. This misunderstanding can arise when principled criticisms based on ethical foundations are mistakenly perceived as attacks grounded in religious or racial bias, complicating the discourse on contentious issues.

In light of these three foundational points, IONA holds a definitive stance against antisemitism. Our belief in the fundamental unity of humanity drives our rejection of any form of hatred, prejudice, or discrimination rooted in racial, ethnic, or religious identities. Antisemitism, like all other forms of racism and discriminatory ideologies directed at any group, is unequivocally denounced by us.

Our stance is not limited to the rejection of antisemitism alone. We reject irrational hatred directed towards the Jewish people just as vehemently as we oppose Islamophobia – the baseless animosity aimed at Islam and Muslims. This public declaration aligns with our obligation as outlined in the Qur'an – "to promote what is right and forbid what is wrong," and "to stand up for God as witnesses for justice."

It's essential to stress that our respect for any religious tradition or racial/ethnic group does not imply a waiver of our right or obligation to offer principled moral criticism.

Upholding justice and advocating for what is right remains central to our ethos and commitment to justice, as guided by our faith.



IONA & Youth of Ummah Present

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Sisters Corner

10 Lessons We Have Learned From Bearing Witness to Palestinian Resilience and Resistance



Something is happening.

As Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank (and other places) are undergoing genocide and constant war and bombardment in the weeks since October 7, with thousands upon thousands of Palestinians and children martyred and millions more displaced from the rubble of their homes, so many of us around the world are learning impactful lessons through the immense strength and faith of Palestinians.

We are witnessing parents in Gaza say *Alhamdulillah* after losing their children to bombings. We are seeing medical professionals risk and lose their lives to give every single last bit of care that they can give to their patients. We are bearing witness to parents writing their names and their children's names on the limbs of their sons and daughters, so they might be identified if their body is blown up in the yet another bombing attack. We are seeing journalists providing coverage of the war losing their lives at an alarming rate.

And through it all, we are seeing in real time the almost other worldly faith and strength of Palestinians as they face genocide and destruction, their utter reliance on Allah (S) to protect them and provide them justice either in this life or the next. We see non-Muslims reading the Quran and making videos on social media, trying to understand where this trust in Allah and faith is coming from.

Bearing witness to all this is changing us. Something is happening, and as we explore the depths of what is important to us and where our inten-

tions like in this month around our #LikeYouMeanItHH campaign, we asked you a question: *What you have learned from Palestinians the past two months?*

This is what you had to say:

1. I think collectively our perspective on what it truly means to have *tawakkul* is altered. *Absolutely. Tawakkul is defined as "the belief in the sufficiency of Allah (God) that invokes patience and efforts to achieve goals while accepting the outcomes unconditionally." Palestinians are a living embodiment of this.*
2. It has given me a new purpose to my postgrad research - humanity in political economy. *Alhamdulillah. We hope this research will help affect positive change.*
3. Oppressors say truth and justice are complicated. It isn't; it's covered up and we accept. *So true. Of course to understand the history of the region and what has happened, one must read, gather information, seek resources and take the time to learn and understand. But at the end of the day, oppression isn't a complicated thing to understand.*
4. The du'a, *Hasbunallahu wa ni-mal wakeel* has engrained in my soul. I will live by this. *"Allah is enough for me, and He is the disposer of my affairs." Indeed once we truly accept that for ourselves, we can face anything. We will experience pain and grief, but we know Allah (S)'s plan is greater.*
5. I talk to Allah (S) and do more *du'a* for others. I am reevaluating my life what I do and don't do. *Alhamdulillah sister. That's what our #LikeYouMeanItHH campaign is all about. What really matters to us? Why is social justice and fighting*

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Continued on page 6

IONA Hosts Religious Diversity Journeys

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IONA Hosts Successful Religious Diversity Journeys, Educating Seventh Graders on Islam

Thursday, November 9, 2023

Warren, MI – IONA proudly hosted the 2023 Fall Religious Diversity Journey, an initiative organized by the Interfaith Leadership Council of Metropolitan Detroit (IFLC) in partnership with local schools. Nearly 100 seventh-grade students from diverse school districts immersed themselves in a day of learning about Islam and the Muslim community.

Divided into groups, the students rotated between three engaging speakers. Sr. Mahreen Abid covered Islamic Articles of Faith, Br. Sayeduzzaman Khan delved into Islamic modes of worship such as salah, sawm, zakah, and Hajj, and Imam Mustapha El-turk provided insights into the Islamic worldview and how Muslims perceive the world.

The event fostered attentive discussions, encouraging students to explore, question, and understand Islam openly. Female students respectfully adorned head coverings (hijab) as a gesture of honor toward the house of worship.

A Q&A session over a delightful halal meal became a highlight, bringing joy to many participants. Students actively engaged in a service project, emphasizing the importance of communal service across faiths.



Religious Diversity Journeys' Students. Imam Elturk (Center), Sr. Mahreen Abid (Left), and Br. Sayeduzzaman Khan (Behind Imam)

Witnessing Muslim prayers, some students joined in, while mothers accompanying the students appreciated the program, acknowledging their own learning through the presentations.

The Religious Diversity Journey aims to equip students with critical thinking skills, fostering a desire to build bridges of understanding in their schools and communities. It seeks to instill confidence in their knowledge and comfort in engaging with diverse experiences.

Acknowledgments were extended to Raman Singh and Jean Fluary for their tireless efforts in organizing an enriching event that exposed young minds to diverse faiths and cultures.

"We are thrilled to continue hosting such programs," stated Imam Elturk. "Initiatives like the Religious Diversity Journeys are pivotal in shaping a unified community free of prejudice, including racism, Islamophobia, and antisemitism."

END



And I Hurried to You, My Lord

A Qur'aan teacher always advised her students to live by this Ayah, "And I hurried to You, my Lord, so that You'll be pleased." (Ta Ha, 20:84)

She told them, "This Ayah is what moves me. When I hear the Adhaan and I'm occupied and in the middle of something, I remind myself of this Ayah and so I get up to pray."

"When my alarm goes off at 2am and I want to go back to sleep I remember: 'And I hurried to You, my Lord, so you'll be pleased', and so I get up and stand before Allah."

Her husband had the following arrangement with her: On his way home from a long day at work he'd call her so she'll get the food hot & ready, so he can come home and eat & rest.

One day he asked her to make Mahshi (stuffed grape leaves) - a very time consuming dish. The process involves wrapping many of them and then putting them in a pot to cook. She had 3 more to wrap; but the Adhaan was called.

So she left the 3 remaining grape-leaves (which would have taken her 5 more minutes) and went to pray.

Her husband came home and found that the food was not ready and she was in sujood. He noticed there were only 3 grape-leaves left. A bit upset, he uttered, "You could have just finished them & put the pot to cook then pray!" But she wasn't responding.

He went to her to discover that she had died in her Sujood!

Subhaan Allaah! Had she waited like any of us to "finish what's in her hand" she would have died in the kitchen! Indeed, the way we live our life is how we will die. Courtesy Islamcan.com

Lessons We Have Learned From Bearing Witness to Palestinian Resilience and Resistance (cont'd)

oppression important? What matters to us in our faith? The rest is dunya.

6. Palestine liberated me of my worldly desires of more money, bigger house. It changed me to the core.

Ameen, ameen, ameen. We think this has been happening for so many of us. There's nothing wrong in having nice things, but what benefit is there in always desiring more material goods and focusing solely on that? We must center deen and balance it with dunya.

7. I prayed *tahajjud* after three years, despite my personal issues with God. I did for the Palestinians.

Alhamdulillah. So many of us are becoming more regular and stronger in our prayer, even praying tahajjud.

8. My *dhikr* has increased tremendously, Alhamdulillah. *It's like we all are being shown that anything can happen, anything can be taken from us. Our lives and loved ones aren't promised to us. So we return to dhikr and prayer.*

9. I feel like Palestine is literally re-wiring my entire brain. Forever changed.

May Allah (S) forgive us for our failures and wrongdoings of the past and accept and keep us on the path we are on.

10. I have understood the need for us to be confident and unapologetic for the sake of Islam.

Ameen, sis. Being confident, strong, kind, compassionate and unapologetic in who we are is something we've always strived for at Haute Hijab and something we have tried to instill in the communities we serve. We are proud to be who we are, and we are unapologetic about our authentic selves and our place in this world, as a part of our global humanity.

Courtesy Haute Hijab



By giving your generous contribution to IONA masjid, you can empower the heart of our community, fostering spiritual growth, educational opportunities, and a place of solace for all. Together, let's build a stronger foundation of faith and service. Donate to the masjid today and make a lasting impact on the lives of countless individuals.

IONA's Leadership Meets With Dr. Cornel West (cont'd)

Dr. Cornel West, a notable American philosopher, theologian, and political activist, shared insights on the current situation in Gaza and the West Bank during the luncheon. Drawing from his background as a Christian Baptist, Dr. West, who previously marched in civil rights demonstrations, expressed admiration for iconic figures such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. He refrained from joining the Black Panther Party due to his Christian convictions, instead opting to serve in prison and church programs.

Known for his outspoken advocacy on the Palestinian cause, Dr. West has actively voiced his support for Palestinians without fostering hatred toward any community. His recent address in New York at demonstrations calling for a ceasefire in Gaza emphasized the importance of compassion for Palestinians while rejecting animosity toward others. He stressed, "Supporting Palestinians doesn't mean hating someone else; we aim to end the vicious Israeli occupation."

Dr. West has a history of engaging in civil disobedience, standing in solidarity with suffering Palestinians and Israelis. He has called for divestment from companies profiting from the Israeli occupation and advocated for justice for Palestinians.

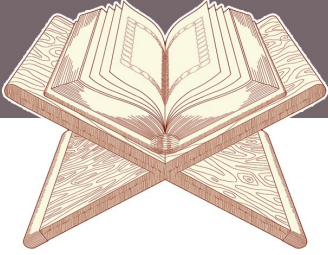
A Harvard graduate in Near Eastern languages and civilization, Dr. West earned his Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) from Princeton University, becoming the first African American to graduate from Princeton with a PhD in philosophy.

Imam Elturk praised Dr. West's commitment to advocating for the marginalized. "I have always admired Dr. West for his voice of the voiceless, speaking out on issues of injustice, racism and the plight of the Palestinians," Imam Elturk said. "We studied and analyzed his work in the Master's program for Social Justice at Marygrove College. He will get my vote" Imam Elturk added.

END

About IONA: The Islamic Organization of North America (IONA) is dedicated to promoting humanitarian causes and advocating for justice and human rights.

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JANUARY 2024

IONA Masjid - Salah and Iqamah Timing

Date	Fajr	Iqamah	Sunrise	Zuhr	Iqamah	Asr (S)*	Asr (H)*	Iqamah	Maghrib	Iqamah	Isha	Iqamah
Mon 1	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:41	1:00	2:52	3:28	3:45	5:13	5:18	6:42	7:45
Tue 2	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:41	1:00	2:52	3:29	3:45	5:13	5:18	6:43	7:45
Wed 3	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:42	1:00	2:53	3:30	3:45	5:14	5:19	6:44	7:45
Thu 4	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:42	1:00	2:54	3:31	3:45	5:15	5:20	6:44	7:45
Fri 5	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:42	1:00	2:55	3:32	3:45	5:16	5:21	6:45	7:45
Sat 6	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:43	1:00	2:56	3:32	3:45	5:17	5:22	6:46	7:45
Sun 7	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:43	2:00	2:57	3:33	3:45	5:18	5:23	6:47	7:45
Mon 8	6:26	6:45	8:02	12:44	1:00	2:58	3:34	3:45	5:19	5:24	6:47	7:45
Tue 9	6:26	6:45	8:01	12:44	1:00	2:59	3:36	4:00	5:20	5:25	6:48	7:45
Wed 10	6:26	6:45	8:01	12:45	1:00	3:00	3:37	4:00	5:21	5:26	6:49	7:45
Thu 11	6:25	6:45	8:01	12:45	1:00	3:01	3:38	4:00	5:22	5:27	6:50	7:45
Fri 12	6:25	6:45	8:00	12:45	1:00	3:02	3:39	4:00	5:24	5:29	6:51	7:45
Sat 13	6:25	6:45	8:00	12:46	1:00	3:03	3:40	4:00	5:25	5:30	6:52	7:45
Sun 14	6:25	6:45	8:00	12:46	2:00	3:04	3:41	4:00	5:26	5:31	6:53	7:45
Mon 15	6:24	6:45	7:59	12:46	1:00	3:05	3:42	4:00	5:27	5:32	6:54	7:45
Tue 16	6:24	6:45	7:59	12:47	1:00	3:06	3:43	4:00	5:28	5:33	6:55	7:45
Wed 17	6:23	6:45	7:58	12:47	1:00	3:07	3:44	4:00	5:29	5:34	6:56	7:45
Thu 18	6:23	6:45	7:58	12:48	1:00	3:08	3:46	4:00	5:31	5:36	6:57	7:45
Fri 19	6:22	6:45	7:57	12:48	1:00	3:09	3:47	4:00	5:32	5:37	6:58	7:45
Sat 20	6:22	6:45	7:56	12:48	1:00	3:10	3:48	4:00	5:33	5:38	6:59	7:45
Sun 21	6:21	6:45	7:56	12:48	2:00	3:11	3:49	4:00	5:34	5:39	7:00	7:45
Mon 22	6:21	6:45	7:55	12:49	1:00	3:12	3:51	4:15	5:36	5:41	7:01	7:45
Tue 23	6:20	6:45	7:54	12:49	1:00	3:13	3:52	4:15	5:37	5:42	7:02	7:45
Wed 24	6:19	6:45	7:54	12:49	1:00	3:14	3:53	4:15	5:38	5:43	7:03	7:45
Thu 25	6:19	6:45	7:53	12:49	1:00	3:15	3:54	4:15	5:39	5:44	7:04	7:45
Fri 26	6:18	6:45	7:52	12:50	1:00	3:16	3:56	4:15	5:41	5:46	7:05	7:45
Sat 27	6:17	6:45	7:51	12:50	1:00	3:17	3:57	4:15	5:42	5:47	7:06	7:45
Sun 28	6:16	6:45	7:50	12:50	2:00	3:19	3:58	4:15	5:43	5:48	7:07	7:45
Mon 29	6:15	6:45	7:49	12:50	1:00	3:20	3:59	4:15	5:45	5:50	7:09	7:45
Tue 30	6:15	6:45	7:48	12:50	1:00	3:21	4:01	4:15	5:46	5:51	7:10	7:45
Wed 31	6:14	6:45	7:47	12:51	1:00	3:22	4:02	4:15	5:47	5:52	7:11	7:45
Thu 1	6:13	6:45	7:46	12:51	1:00	3:23	4:03	4:15	5:48	5:53	7:12	7:45

* S = Shafi'i, H = Hanafi | **Athan is 10 minutes** before Iqamah except for Maghrib

First Friday sermon starts at 12:10 PM and second sermon is at 1:20 PM



IONA aims at transforming its members and surrounding communities to righteous, God-fearing people, who collectively strive for the highest moral standard and constantly seek God's forgiveness to earn His pleasure. IONA members seek His mercy and grace in this life and in the hereafter. They rejuvenate their souls through internal struggle (jihad) and spiritual exercise in worship of the Creator, God most glorified. The strength of their belief in God almighty gives them the courage to promote good and forbid evil, and to engage in the struggle to establish social, political, and economic justice.

