

Faith Shared

Uniting in Prayer and Understanding

Thank you for agreeing to be a part of *Faith Shared*. With your help, this project will send a strong message both here at home and around the world that Americans can come together and demonstrate respect for one another's faiths. Pluralism and religious freedom are at the core of our democracy, and they are what have brought our two organizations together for this important work. We believe that reaffirming those basic American values will help counteract an intensified level of negative stereotypes and anti-Muslim bigotry in our recent public discourse.

Religious freedom is guaranteed to all Americans by the First Amendment to our Constitution, but for liberty to have its full impact, we must go beyond the legal definition and embrace its moral underpinnings. A passionate defense of human rights ensures the dignity to which everyone is entitled, a message that we send abroad and something we actively model here at home.

The law can't force anyone to respect the Muslim community; it can only stop people from infringing on Muslims' right to practice their faith. Taking the next step to true understanding is where you come in and where *Faith Shared* can make a difference. *Faith Shared* embraces the diversity of America's religious landscape and offers houses of worship the opportunity to tell their congregations, "We may have different beliefs and traditions than the church, mosque or synagogue down the street, but we share a common desire to worship freely and search for answers to life's questions through our faith."

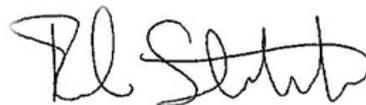
At the same time, by having hundreds of congregations participate in this project on the same day, we send a message to the world that Americans do respect religious differences and reject religious bigotry and the demonization of Islam or any other religion. It doesn't mean that we don't have disagreements, or that we are naïve about the challenges facing our country. But we will let the world know that we understand that respect for human dignity, human rights and the rule of law is the foundation of our strength and security. And more importantly, we will act accordingly.

This resource kit is your guide to planning a *Faith Shared* event. You will find suggested readings along with recommendations on how to incorporate this event in your worship service. Also included are fact sheets that explain the project and how to speak with media about your involvement. Keep checking faithshared.org for updates and additional resources as we get closer to the event. And, again, thank you for your important contribution to this much-needed display of respect and inclusion.

Sincerely,



Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy
PRESIDENT
INTERFAITH ALLIANCE



Tad Stahnke
DIRECTOR OF POLICY & PROGRAMS
HUMAN RIGHTS FIRST