

Faith Over Fear
February 1-2, 2019
Speakers

Sheikh Hassan Aly has been the Imam and Director of Religious affairs at The Mecca Center in Willowbrook, Ill., since December 2011. He is a graduate of the prestigious Al-Azhar University of Cairo, Egypt in Islamic Studies and Sharia. He has the “sanad / ijazah” linked to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in Quran and Hadith. He has held the position of Imam and served as the director of religious affairs in many Islamic centers and has taught at Islamic schools in Egypt and the United States. He is also the author of many articles published in newspapers and websites. Sheikh Aly is the recipient of the Best Religious Speech award from Al-Azhar University Cairo in 2002. He has hosted many Islamic radio shows in the U.S. Currently, he is a PhD candidate in theology at LSTC.

Mark Swanson, Harold S. Vogelaar Professor of Christian-Muslim Studies and Interfaith Relations, and Associate Director of Center of Christian-Muslim Engagement for Peace and Justice at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, is an ordained pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Swanson came to LSTC from Luther Seminary where he taught Islamic studies, Christian-Muslim relations, Arabic language and early church history. Before that he served for 14 years on the faculty of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo, Egypt. His research interests include the history of Christian-Muslim relations, medieval Egyptian church history, and early Arabic Christian literature.

Catherine Orsborn is the Campaign Director of Shoulder to Shoulder, a national campaign of religious and interfaith organizations dedicated to ending anti-Muslim bigotry in the United States and around the world. She offers strategies and support to regional and local efforts combatting discrimination against the Muslim faith and seeks to present a new story of interfaith engagement and solidarity that focuses on positive relationships across faith lines. Prior to leading the Shoulder to Shoulder campaign, Orsborn led the Social Justice Community at the University of Denver while working on her doctoral studies in religion, conflict and peace. She also worked as a researcher at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies, examining the interactions between religion and peacebuilding in deeply divided societies. She holds a masters and recently earned her PhD in Religious Studies from the University of Denver.

Kathryn Lohre is the ELCA Director for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations, and served a two-year term as president of the National Council of the Churches of Christ.

Feryal Salem is Associate Professor of Arabic and Islamic studies, as well as Director of the ATS affiliated Master of Divinity in Islamic Studies program and Muslim Chaplaincy program. Her research interests include Islamic philosophy and theology in the post-classical period, interfaith dialogue, and the development of Muslim thought in the contemporary era as it came into conversation with aspects of modernity. Dr. Salem has also taught at Hartford Seminary where she was Assistant Professor of Islamic

Scriptures and Co-Director of its Islamic Chaplaincy Program. She received her PhD in Islamic studies from the University of Chicago's Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations.

Alia Bilal serves as Director of Community Relations, where she works with individual donors to sustain and advance IMAN's critical social justice work, and engages other organizations and institutions around strategic programs and initiatives. In her eight years at IMAN, Bilal has worked on development, community organizing, and policy, advocating on issues related to food, criminal, and juvenile justice, and strategizing around creative new ways to get healthy foods and safe physical activities into Chicago neighborhoods. A native of Chicago's South Side, Bilal graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a degree in International Studies and a concentration in Islamic World Studies. She studied Arabic and Islamic history in Cairo, Egypt, and was an intern for the Muslim Public Service Network in Washington, DC. She has given talks and conducted workshops on the connection between faith and social justice, IMAN's community organizing model, and access to healthy food both locally and across the United States. She is an appointee of the Equity Advisory Council of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations and lives with her husband and son on Chicago's South Side.

Jenan Mohajir, Leadership Curriculum Consultant at Interfaith Youth Core, oversees the overall strategy, development and implementation of the Interfaith Leadership Institutes (ILIs). She received her bachelor's from DePaul University in elementary education and Islamic studies. Over the last decade, she has led skills-based trainings on interfaith service and cooperation here in the United States and around the world. Mohajir designs IFYC's interfaith leadership curriculum and manages the 'look and feel' of the ILIs, spearheading what has become a truly holistic interfaith leadership experience at the institutes. Mohajir also serves on the steering committee for the Hyde Park Muslim Family Circle, which fosters the social and spiritual growth of Muslim families and individuals within the robust cultural setting of Hyde Park, Chicago. She is a committed Muslim, and is deeply inspired by the Quran and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad to build a world where we can live together in equal dignity and mutual harmony.

Yasir Bilgin serves as the Vice President for Academic Affairs at the Niagara Foundation while also working on his PhD at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago. He is active in dialogue, writing and presenting in various venues about the subject of dialogue within the Abrahamic faiths. Bilgin has served as Pastoral Care Giver, Interfaith Dialogue Coordinator, and Executive Director for the Niagara Foundation and the Turkish Community in both Minnesota and Michigan. He also worked as an instructor at Michigan State University for four years. His work in the area of interfaith dialogue and cultural diversity has been recognized by the State of Michigan and Michigan State University.

Guthrie Graves-Fitzsimmons is the Rights and Inclusion Collaborative's Senior Media Associate at ReThink Media. He works to broaden the movement of allies speaking out

against anti-Muslim bigotry, including the religious, veteran, and business communities as well as local elected officials. He is based in Louisville, Ky., but can often be found in ReThink's Washington and Berkeley offices. Prior to joining ReThink, Guthrie worked at the National Immigration Forum from 2011 to 2015 to mobilize conservative and moderate faith, business, and law enforcement officials in support of comprehensive immigration reform. He holds a BA in International Studies from American University and a Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary.

Samantha Owen – Project OverZero

Terry Kylo is a Lutheran pastor serving as the director of Neighbors in Faith. He began this work part-time in September of 2016 and full-time in September of 2017. A graduate of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, he has been a pastor since 1991 and has served in partnership between Episcopalians and Lutherans since 2004. He is the author of two books, *Being Human* and *Apprenticeship*. Terry was the recipient of the Faith Action Network Interfaith Leadership Award in 2016, the Interfaith Leadership Award from the Muslim Association of Puget Sound in 2017, the Sultan and Saint Peace award in 2017, and the Muslim Association of Puget Sound 2018 “Inbound Good” award for a non-Muslim who benefitted the Muslim Community.

Mandy France is pastor of Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Bird Island, Minn. In response to anti-Muslim sentiments she became aware of while serving as an intern in at Grace Lutheran Church in Dawson, Minn., in 2016, she helped organize church workshops and community talks to explain Islam. With Ayaz Virji, Chief of Staff and Medical Director of Johnson Health Services in Dawson, and a Muslim, she organized a series on interreligious dialogue at Grace Lutheran in early 2017.

Lisa Zook is Director of Interreligious Institute at Chicago Theological Seminary.

Kim Schultz is the Coordinator of Creative Initiatives and Events at the Interreligious Institute at Chicago Theological Seminary