

LIPC Newsletter

London Interfaith Peace Camp Initiatives

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Celebrating Our Faith Traditions...

London Interfaith Peace Camp would like to stay connected with each of you even after our exciting week of camp each summer!

We hope that this newsletter will allow the opportunity for participation in each of the Abrahamic faiths both on a local and global scale. We can continue to learn from one another, forge friendships and share peace building.

In this issue, take a look at some of the holy days that are celebrated in each of the Abrahamic faith traditions that have just past or are about to begin within the calendar year.

Ramadhan: A Time of Reflection



If you were to Google ‘fasting in Islam’, or ‘Ramadhan’, you would probably find out that Muslims all over the world abstain from eating and drinking during daylight hours (sunrise to sunset) for around 30 days each year during the month of Ramadhan. Of course, when it is dark outside we can eat, but imagine not eating or drinking water during the day?

Usually when we meet people who learn about fasting they have this look of disbelief at what we are doing. Yes, abstaining from food and drink during the day is hard, but the month of Ramadhan is more than just not eating or drinking. For us it is a time to reconnect with the Holy Qur’an both the Arabic and the meaning of the verses in English. It is reminding us of the beautiful lessons in the Qur’an like those from the time of Adam, Moses, Abraham, Joseph, and Jesus. It is trying to help one another, and remembering that many people around the world don’t have a plate of delicious food and a glass of clean water at the end of the day to enjoy. But one of the best ways to describe the month of Ramadhan is to explain the self-discipline we get from making a conscious decision not to eat simply because it is commanded by God. It takes faith, patience, endurance, and a lot of self-control. Imagine grating cheese and not being able to sneak a few strands! These traits that we get from fasting help us in our everyday life. For example, during isolation, where our everyday luxuries are taken away from us (I miss the mall), and our whole schedule has changed, fasting builds that resilience in us to handle new and uncomfortable situations.

Ramadhan is a time for reflection, trying to gain closeness to God and being conscious that God is always with us. During this time of isolation, our family has had a chance to pray almost every prayer in congregation, we have also been reading the Qur’an together and learning more from clips online about the Qur’an and Science. There are loads of lectures, Kahoot games, and Zoom get togethers to help us understand and gain more Islamic knowledge. Normally we would have food and programs at the mosque every evening, but this time, we are enjoying eating as a family together each night...and my husband’s delicious cooking!

Written by Shahin Pardhan

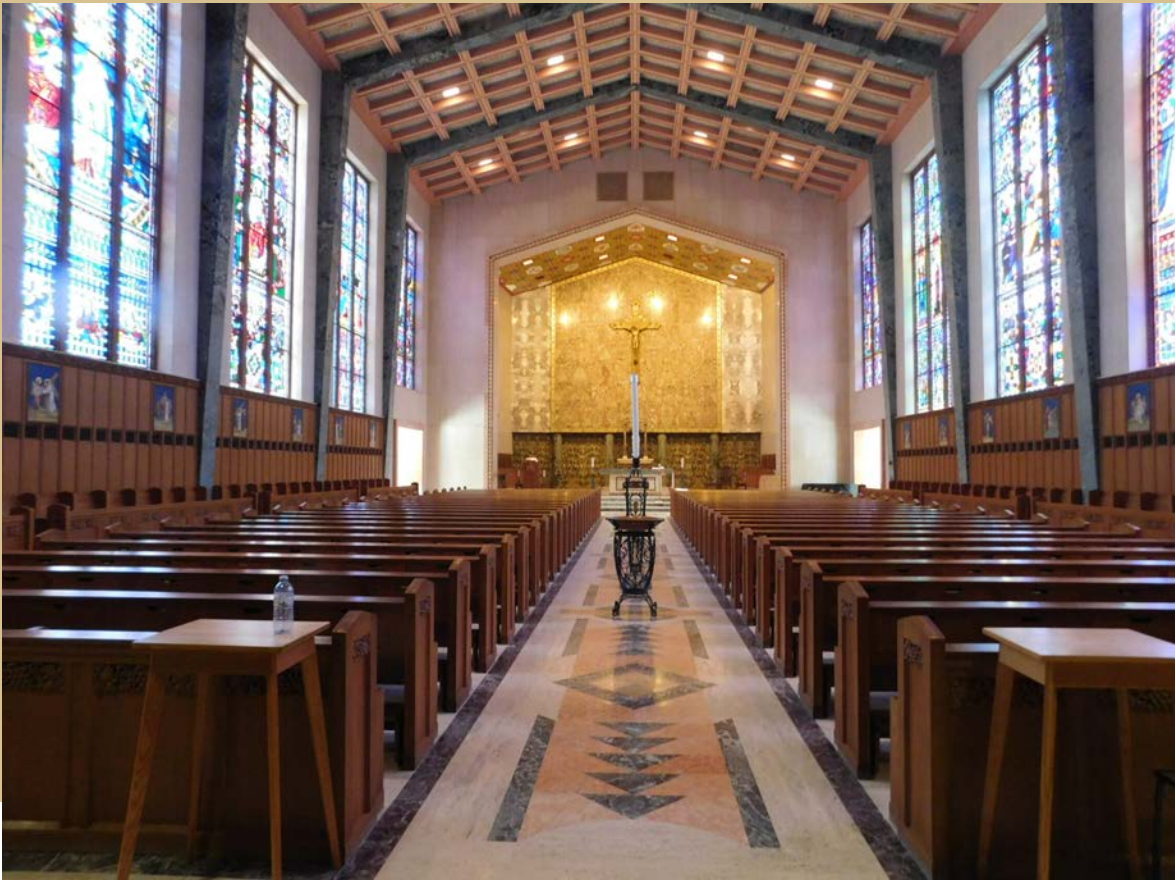
Shavuot: Commemorating the Revelation of the Torah



Shavuot - In addition to many other religious holidays, the Jewish year contains three Pilgrimage Festivals - Sukkot (The Feast of Booths, which falls shortly after the High Holy Days in the fall,) Passover (Pesach in Hebrew, which celebrates the Exodus from slavery in Egypt and which falls in the spring,) and Shavuot, fifty days after Passover, which commemorates the Revelation of the Torah - the Five Books of Moses including the Ten Commandments - at Mount Sinai as the Israelites were still in the process of migrating from Egypt to the Land of Israel. Later it also became associated with the wheat harvest in Israel. The festival is celebrated by eating dairy foods such as blintzes (crêpes with cheese fillings,) cheesecake, and ice cream, the last one, of course, not having ancient roots! This year, 2020, Shavuot begins on the evening of May 28th and is observed by Orthodox and Conservative Jews for two days and by Reform Jews as well as all Jews in Israel for only one day. The greeting for this holy day is Chag Sameyach - Happy Holiday.

Written by Nevia Frank

Pentecost: The Birth of the Church



"50 days after Easter Sunday, Christians celebrate the feast day of the Pentecost, the day that marks the coming of the Holy Spirit and the launching of the Church's mission. In many Christian faith communities, Pentecost is celebrated as the birthday of the Church. And in the Church that I go to, we celebrate the rhythm of our Church here in seasons. Each season has a colour. So on Pentecost Sunday we would have taken away the white of the Easter season and swapped it for the red of Pentecost. And the red of Pentecost symbolizes fire, spirit, passion and commitment, that strength, courage and determination -- all really important traits for life right now..."

To hear more, you can listen to Barb McGill's full reflection at https://youtu.be/I_8SEdXls14

In light of the developments with COVID-19, King's University College is taking several preventative measures. During the summer, many large events and conferences are cancelled, and with a heavy heart, London Interfaith Peace Camp will be cancelled for August 2020. While camp at King's may be cancelled this summer, you can look forward to staying connected and finding creative ways to continue to work towards interfaith initiatives. Our staff is working to put together summer programming for the months of July and August. Until then, stay safe and stay healthy. Many blessings to each of you.