



Newsletter

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FEBRUARY 2017 – JUMADA I 1438 - ISSUE 20

Narrated Safwan bin Muhriz Al-Mazini:

While I was walking with Ibn 'Umar holding his hand, a man came in front of us and asked, "What have you heard from Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) about An-Najwa?" Ibn 'Umar said, "I heard Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) saying, 'Allah will bring a believer near Him and shelter him with His Screen and ask him: Did you commit such-and-such sins? He will say: Yes, my Lord. Allah will keep on asking him till he will confess all his sins and will think that he is ruined. Allah will say: 'I did screen your sins in the world and I forgive them for you today', and then he will be given the book of his good deeds. Regarding infidels and hypocrites (their evil acts will be exposed publicly) and the witnesses will say: These are the people who lied against their Lord. Behold! The Curse of Allah is upon the wrongdoers.'" (11.18) (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Mecca Center Community,

Asalamu Alaikum,

I hope this message finds you and your family in the best of health and iman.

The new Mecca Center has opened, alhamdulillah, thanks to the generous support and tireless efforts of our members and community. This project has been years in the making and it has culminated with our beautiful new masjid and community center. We have started prayers and programs at the new center and invite you to join us as we start a new beginning.

We also ask you to please join us for our Annual Fundraiser, Celebrating A New Beginning, on Sunday, March 5, 2017 at Drury Lane in Oakbrook Terrace. The following month, we will hold our official Grand Opening event for the new Mecca Center on Saturday, April 22, 2017. These two events are very important for the Mecca Center so we encourage you to please save the dates and attend with your families, insha'Allah.

Our amazing new center is a reflection of your deep faith in Allah (swt) and the dedicated support of our community since 2004. We are still in the process of completing projects as part of the new center and ask that you please help us pay construction bills and costs by donating to the Mecca Center today.

May Allah (swt) reward you in this life and the hereafter for your generous donations and good deeds. May he continue to bless your families and our growing community.

Wassalamu Alaikum,

M.A. Hamadeh, MD

President

Day	Feb	Hijri	Fajr	Sunrise	Zuhr	Asr-Shaf	Asr-Hanafi	Maghrib	Isha
اليوم	شباط	هجري	الفجر	الشروق	الظهر	العصر / شافعي	العصر / حنفي	المغرب	العشاء
WED	1	4	5:45	7:04	12:06	2:45	3:26	5:07	6:27
THU	2	5	5:44	7:03	12:06	2:46	3:27	5:08	6:28
FRI	3	6	5:43	7:02	12:06	2:47	3:28	5:10	6:29
SAT	4	7	5:42	7:01	12:06	2:48	3:29	5:11	6:30
SUN	5	8	5:41	7:00	12:06	2:49	3:31	5:12	6:31
MON	6	9	5:40	6:59	12:06	2:50	3:32	5:14	6:32
TUE	7	10	5:39	6:58	12:06	2:51	3:33	5:15	6:33
WED	8	11	5:38	6:56	12:06	2:53	3:34	5:16	6:35
THU	9	12	5:37	6:55	12:07	2:54	3:36	5:17	6:36
FRI	10	13	5:36	6:54	12:07	2:55	3:37	5:19	6:37
SAT	11	14	5:35	6:53	12:07	2:56	3:38	5:20	6:38
SUN	12	15	5:34	6:51	12:07	2:57	3:39	5:21	6:39
MON	13	16	5:34	6:51	12:07	2:57	3:39	5:21	6:39
TUE	14	17	5:31	6:49	12:06	2:59	3:42	5:24	6:41
WED	15	18	5:30	6:47	12:06	2:59	3:43	5:25	6:43
THU	16	19	5:29	6:46	12:06	3:00	3:44	5:26	6:44
FRI	17	20	5:28	6:45	12:06	3:01	3:45	5:28	6:45
SAT	18	21	5:26	6:43	12:06	3:02	3:46	5:29	6:46
SUN	19	22	5:25	6:42	12:06	3:03	3:47	5:30	6:47
MON	20	23	5:24	6:41	12:06	3:04	3:48	5:31	6:48
TUE	21	24	5:22	6:39	12:06	3:05	3:50	5:32	6:50
WED	22	25	5:21	6:38	12:06	3:06	3:51	5:34	6:51
THU	23	26	5:20	6:36	12:06	3:07	3:52	5:35	6:52
FRI	24	27	5:18	6:35	12:06	3:08	3:53	5:36	6:53
SAT	25	28	5:17	6:33	12:05	3:09	3:54	5:37	6:54
SUN	26	29	5:15	6:32	12:05	3:09	3:55	5:39	6:55
MON	27	1	5:14	6:30	12:05	3:10	3:56	5:40	6:56
TUE	28	2	5:14	6:30	12:05	3:10	3:56	5:40	6:56



Sh. Hassan Aly meets with leaders and students of the confirmation program of the Hinsdale Redeemer Lutheran Church at the Mecca Center.

MESSAGE FROM THE IMAM

Islam & Religious Tolerance – Part I

By Sheikh Hassan Aly

We are taught in Islam that one of the most important characteristics of human rights is respect and tolerance we all must show towards the religious freedom and religions of other people. On the other hand, religious intolerance is one of the most common misconceptions about Islam and Muslims.

A great way of understanding the Islamic view on freedom of religion is to look at the Holy Qur'an and the role of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). In many verses of the Holy Quran, we can see how Allah (Subḥānahu wa ta'alā) is telling us that believing in any religion is a person's own concern, and it's for his/her own good or harm, as Allah (Subḥānahu wa ta'alā) said in Sūrat al-Kahf:

“The Truth is from your Lord; so let him who please believe and let him who please disbelieve.” (18:29)

“ وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ ”

In Sūrat al-Insān: “We have truly shown him the way; he may be thankful or unthankful.” (76:3)

“ إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا ”

The job of the prophets and messengers of Allah was never to force people to follow them, but instead ask them to accept Allah with their own will and choice, in Sūrat ash-Shūrā, Allah says to Prophet Muhammad:

"But if the people turn away (then do not be sad because) We did not sent you to be a guardian over them. It is for you only to deliver the message." (42:48).

“ فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا إِنْ عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ ”

..... Islam & Religious Tolerance Continued

And, of course, one of the most famous verses in this topic is: "There is no force in (accepting) the religion (of Islam)..."

“لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ”

Islam directed Muslims to convey the message of Allah without any force, even to the enemies at the time of war!

In Sūrat at-Tawbah: “If anyone of the non-believers seek your protection, protect him till he hears the word of Allah, then convey him to his place of safety. This is because they are a people who have no knowledge.” (9:6)

“وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ ابْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ”

George Sale, who produced the first English translation of the Qur’an directly from Arabic in the 18th century, and was a hostile critic of Islam, in his footnote on this verse, said:

[“You shall give him a safe conduct that he may return home again securely in case he shall not think fit to embrace Muhammadanism.”]

What greater tolerance could there be, than this, that an enemy soldier, on his request, is to be granted protection while he learns about Islam, and if he chooses not to accept it, Muslims must conduct him securely to his place of origin, where he is safe from Muslims and rejoins the very enemies whom the Muslims are fighting!]



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The Mecca Center is Hiring a Youth Coordinator

The responsibility of the Youth Coordinator is to provide development, coordination and oversight of youth services, and to build a positive youth program. He or she must integrate recreational and artistic activities with educational and spiritual components and provide leadership to youth, including but not limited to tutoring and mentorship programs, community service, education and cultural programs.

For more details about the responsibilities and job requirements please visit our website: <http://meccacenter.org/jobs/>
Please Submit resumes to Haniatassi68@gmail.com



FIGHTING HATE

ONE TOWN AT A TIME

By Mehrunisa Qayyum

I was born and raised in a Chicago suburb believing that the KKK had fizzled out in Illinois. Two decades later, I see that 23 hate groups have grown up in Illinois too, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center. The intensity of hate groups' rhetoric has grown into both random and systematic assaults against minorities — in particular toward our 3.3 million Muslim-Americans — since the campaign season. President-elect Donald Trump called for extreme vetting of immigrants and asked that Muslims “report when they see something going on.”

Random assaults against Muslims in America have occurred in New York and Minnesota. Systematic assaults produced the Kansas militia plot to blow up a mosque. The diverse community of Ann Arbor, Mich., is also home to the American Freedom Law Center, which has defend Islamophobes such as Pamela Geller, who initiated bus ads denouncing Islam. Meanwhile, hate crimes against Muslim-Americans have increased by 67 percent in 2015, according to the FBI's crime statistics.

The Trump administration appointed Kris Kobach, who advocates for a registry for immigrants from Muslim countries, to the transition team. I cannot forget how some of my classmates were forced to register through the National Security Entry-Exit

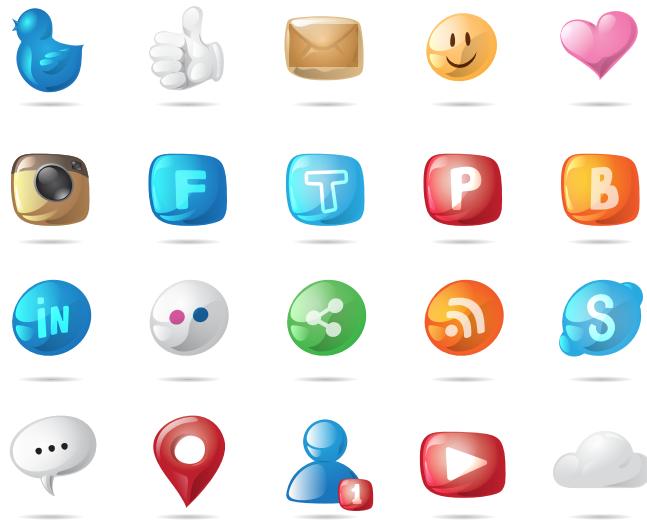
Registration System during Kobach's earlier stint at the U.S. Department of Justice.

Closer to home, in November, Burr Ridge Mayor Mickey Straub was asked over a radio program whether or not he would support a registry for Muslims.

I saw a positive step forward when my brother engaged our hometown leadership on the question of a Muslim registry at our Burr Ridge town hall later that same month. My brother's question received a positive response of support for Muslim-Americans from Straub. He and the Village Board condemned any registry promoted by political nominees, like Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn.

The public discussion showed me that we are not alone. Our Arab-Christian friends stood with us. Likewise, our Jewish and Christian non-Arab friends promised to register as Muslims, in the spirit of “I am Spartacus.” Their empathy overwhelmed me. Tech companies, like Twitter, refused to compile a Muslim registry. Call it nonpartisan or bipartisan or a coalition of groups: I see that we must keep showing up at town halls to gauge the local pulse on national policies.

YOUTH CORNER



OUR NEED TO CONNECT

By Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di

'The more we're connected, the more we seem to be disconnected' pretty much sums up our growing modern dilemma. Our globalised social media age is one in which selling ourselves, sharing ourselves, expressing ourselves and defending ourselves are now part and parcel of everyday life for millions of people across the world.

Not to deny the positive aspects of social media, but there are darker, more tragic dimensions to our engagement with social media. There's what many call the 'compare & despair' syndrome. As people compare their own mundane lives to the endless Instagram, Facebook or Twitter pictures of friends on a perfect vacation, with a perfect partner, or part of a perfect family; or as they devour doctored images of the day-to-day glamorised lives of celebrities; or as they notice how many more hits, likes or shares others are getting than they are, instead of inspiring people, is causing them to despair or be unhappy. The timely wisdom of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, echoed by more recent findings in neuroscience, of comparing downwards (with those less well to do than ourselves), instead of upwards (with those better off), continues to be ignored by our destructive consume-and-be-consumed culture.

There is also the FOMO (fear of missing-out) phenomenon. More common with the under-30s, it's the anxiety caused by not being in-the-know about, or missing out on, experiences (parties, gigs, concerts, or other social events and interactions) that others might be having. Once afflicted, one cannot be at ease for the thought that something important might happen whilst one isn't connected. The result: angst, addiction and an obsessive need to keep checking one's phone or social media device.

As with compare and despair, the FOMO affliction has also been around long before social media ever

made its mark. But there can be little doubt that social media – with its endless status updates and photos of friends sharing their (seemingly) happier and more exciting lives, and that everybody else is (supposedly) having fun and somehow you're being left out – has made such paranoia, depression and trauma far more acute and widespread in society.

So as can be seen, and unbeknown to many who are part of a more 'older' crowd, the problems with our social media culture isn't just about selfie-taking narcissists. If we are to retain our sanity; our emotional stability, we need to urgently (re)learn the lost art of JOMO (joy of missing-out): learning to take pleasure in being disconnected for a time, by not feeling one has to be everywhere, or with everyone, at once. So let's just switch off, be calm and have a cuppa.

A final thought. Social media addiction is real, and it's a far larger problem than most of us care to realise. Its harms are real, too. Islam teaches that Man, being a social creature, has a deep need for connectivity. But more than the need for friendship, intimacy or socialising with others, Islam insists that the greatest need for human hearts – their ultimate yearning – is to be connected to God; and in the absence of that connection there is only an unfulfilled restlessness within us. In the Qur'an, one of God's Beautiful Names is al-Kafi – 'The Sufficer' or 'He who satisfies all needs'. It follows, then, that if we turn our hearts away from the Sufficer, we shall continue to remain unsatisfied, anxious and unfulfilled. For human hearts can only find true peace, fulfilment and meaning in their Creator: Indeed in the remembrance of God do hearts find tranquility. [Qur'an, 13:28]

The choice, therefore, is ours; and where there's a will, there's always a way.



DOWNERS GROVE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS TO BE HELD APRIL 4

Many Mecca Center community members reside in Downers Grove Township which includes Burr Ridge, Willowbrook, Hinsdale, Darien, and parts of Downers Grove, Clarendon Hills, Woodridge, and Westmont. For this reason, it is important that eligible Mecca Center community members vote in the Downers Grove Municipal Township Elections on April 4, 2017

This election has 17 times as many seats up at local elections than in the November presidential election. Candidates are running for positions at city, library, park, school, community college, highway, fire district, and township levels. The Muslim community is growing in Downers Grove Township and are a significant voting bloc in DuPage County and the smaller township. The Mecca Center urges you to make your voice heard and vote in this election.

For more information, please visit <http://www.dgtownship.com/>

Source: https://www.dupageco.org/Election/Candidates_and_Campaigns/37053/

طبيب اطفال

Mohamed N. Jabri, M.D FAAP
Board Certified Pediatrician



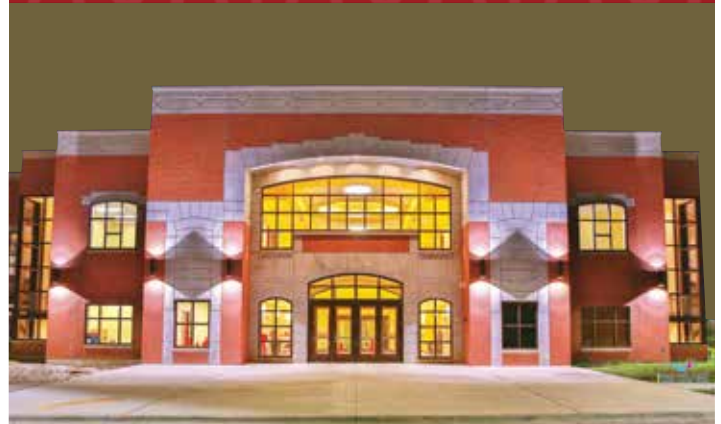
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OF OUR NEW MECCA CENTER!

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The Mecca Center will hold its Annual Fundraiser on Sunday, March 5, 2017 at Drury Lane in Oakbrook Terrace. Please save the date and join us for this important community event!

SAVE THE DATE



ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 2017

Drury Lane • Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois

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