

INTERFAITH SYMPOSIUM

May 15, 2011

Religious persecution

A very successful and intellectually stimulating gathering was organized by Lajna Imaillah Chicago West at Bait-ul-Jamay Mosque on May 15, 2011 (Alhamdulillah). 17 guests, including a news reporter from a Glen Ellyn newspaper attended the propitious event. Our guests belonged to several different Churches and Synagogues. The entire session was very well organized and our guests appreciated the arrangements and settings for a peaceful conversation. Light refreshments including sandwiches, snacks, coffee etc. were served after the event. The session lasted for two hours.

Full detail of the event follows:



Lajna Imai'llah Chicago West

HELD AT:

Bait ul Jamay
210 S Rt. 53
Glen Ellyn IL 60173



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In the name of Allah The Gracious, The Merciful

By the blessings of Allah, Chicago West Iajna organized a very successful tabligh event. The participation of Iajnat at the time of preparation created an atmosphere of unity and love. The main hall was set up for power point presentation and an open panel discussion. A table was set up to provide Jama'at information and pamphlets to the guests. The guests showed great interest in Jama'at literature.

The guests started arriving at 12:50 PM. They were greeted and directed to the registration table by a member where they registered themselves and were given name badges.

The program started at 1:15 PM with the recitation of the Holy Quran followed by the translation. A power point presentation was prepared for the guests to give them an overview of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and different incidents of religious persecution all over the world.

After that, two guest speakers presented their opinions about the religious persecution. The floor was then opened for panel discussion where different members discussed the topic and their personal experiences.



Lajna Imai'llah
CHICAGO WEST

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The program lasted for approximately two hours.

There were 17 guests and 32 members including a news reporter from a local Glen Ellyn newspaper, whose report about the symposium got published in the paper later on.

The session adjourned at 3:15 PM with a silent prayer. The local president requested everyone to join according to their own way of praying.

All the guests and the attendees of the symposium were entertained with coffee and snacks. Guest enjoyed the refreshments and the time to mingle up with Jama'at members and other attendees of the symposium.

May Allah bless all those who organized and attended the event and grant us all the courage to spread the message of Allah to the corners of the earth. (Ameen)



Note: News article is on the next page.



Lajna Imai'llah
CHICAGO WEST

REPORT FROM GLEN ELLYN PATCH

[The Neighborhood Files](#)

Changing the Perception of the 'Other'

Women discuss ways to teach tolerance to overcome fear, stereotypes.

By [Samantha Liss](#) | [Email the author](#) | May 18, 2011 [Print](#)

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Before moving to the United States Fariha Ahmad lived in Pakistan and faced religious persecution from a young age.

As a Ahmadiyah Muslim she remembers being treated differently in school—even by her teachers—because of her religious affiliation as an Ahmadiyah, which is not acknowledged as a true sect of Islam in Pakistan.

Ahmad and 30 other women of different faiths and backgrounds gathered at the Masjid Bait-ul-Jamey Mosque in Glen Ellyn on Sunday to talk about the misconceptions surrounding Muslims and their faith.

Now as a member of the Masjid Bait-ul-Jamey Mosque, she's able to teach others about her religion, and hopes to break down the myths that surround Islam. The discussion was a particularly timely topic since the death of Osama bin Laden, who invoked Islamic teachings to justify terrorism.

"For a really long time I've been wanting to do this topic. I also think that it's pertinent now in today's world, for us to understand not just the persecution of one group, to understand how it could affect everyone," said Farrah Qazi, the organizer of Sunday's discussion and member of the mosque.

Qazi explained that Muslims are too often looked at with fear and suspicion because of stereotypes that are portrayed through the media.

The purpose of the discussion was to bring people of different faiths and experiences together to understand how their differences actually unite them.

"I think we gain an understanding of how we're similar," said Qazi.

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PHOTOS (2)



Though they're of different backgrounds, discrimination is an experience Edith Brown and Ahmad have shared. Brown spoke about her experience growing up as a black female in rural Arkansas during the civil rights movement, where Brown was treated differently for the color of her skin.

"Somehow we were less than human," said Brown.

Reflecting on the injustices they each faced at one time or another, the room of women acknowledged that as females they stand in a unique position. As mothers, they're the very first educators of their children and can be the first to teach them tolerance and acceptance.

"Being a mother and being in an extreme position of influence, I wonder what it means to teach tolerance and acceptance," said Maria Metz. "We are children of God and we are so limited in our understanding of God as humans, shouldn't we be humble enough to allow for the glory and mystery of how God works? Therefore, we are taught to love God and love one another, let's not make it more complex than that," said Maria Metz.

Please follow the link below to view the posting of the news article by Samantha Liss and the reviews on the website of Glen Ellyn Patch.

<http://patch.com/A-h4Hc>