

Excerpts from our Interfaith Statement against Religious Discrimination*

“...We are appalled by the violence being done and hatred being spread in the name of the God who teaches us the value of human life... especially those committed by people who claim a religious justification. ...Discrimination based on religion has caused nothing but intense suffering and pain throughout history...”



Rabbi Goldman-Wartell reading interfaith statement
12/21/15 Vigil at Confluence Park

...We are not blind to the threat posed to our children, our communities and our nation by groups who claim to be motivated by religion. We believe that law enforcement...must be given the tools they need to help keep us safe. But those tools *must reflect the values of our nation* and the values inherent in our religious traditions.

... Religious diversity makes our nation strong. It is time for members of all faiths to stand courageously against any ideology or political movement that devalues the richness of any religious tradition.

...In this time in our nation when so many are fearful, we choose to put our trust in God who expects us to love our neighbor. We pray for guidance as we seek to find ways to protect life and to lift up the value of every life.”

* The full statement is available at our website

Visit our Website: interfaithbroomecounty.com



Children of Abraham of the Southern Tier



THE CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM *Of the Southern Tier*



About Us

We are a group of clergy and laypeople of the Abrahamic (i.e, Christian, Muslim, Jewish, and Unitarian) faiths in Broome County.



Our Mission

Our mission is to build mutual trust and respect among local persons from the Abrahamic religious traditions through interfaith conversation and education.

Our Origins

The Children of Abraham of the Southern Tier can trace our roots back to 2008. The United Methodist Church's continuing education planning committee, under the leadership of layman, Dick Thompson, approached Imam Kasim Kopuz of the Islamic Organization of the Southern Tier about doing an interfaith event in the Binghamton area.

Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell of Temple Concord and Rabbi Tziona Szajman of Temple Israel were also invited to plan and participate in the event. Our first event, "The Children of Abraham: Abraham, Sarah, Hagar—Healing the Rift", held in May 2009, attracted more than 150 attendees from various Abrahamic congregations—Jewish, Christian, and Muslim to gather in a tent representing the hospitality of the stories of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar.

This committee has evolved into a broad community-based organization including a large spectrum of Christian clergy, a Unitarian minister, and laypersons from various area congregations. Today, the work of Children of Abraham continues under the leadership of Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell.

Interfaith Youth Programs

Broome County Council of Churches (BCCC) -- Ramp-It-Up Program



Over the last two years, we have assembled interfaith teams of youth aged from 13-17 to participate in the BCCC Ramp it Up program. Together, they built access ramps for the handicapped. In 2016, our team included members of Jewish, Muslim, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, United Methodist, and Unitarian Universalist congregations.

Teen Interfaith Dialogue

In April, 2016, our first Teen Interfaith Dialogue Program brought teens from Jewish, Catholic, Presbyterian, Unitarian and Muslim congregations. Students prepared questions for the other faith groups and engaged in a meaningful discussion about their faiths and things that mattered to them.

The Children of Abraham of the Southern Tier stresses the importance of listening, respecting, and appreciating the differences between our faiths and traditions.



Recent Community Programs

April and September 2016 – Community Food Packing for Refugees of Middle East Violence.



In each event, in conjunction with Kids Against Hunger, funds were collected from community religious institutions and individuals to buy non-perishable ingredients to enable over 350 men, women and children to package 30,000 meals to be sent to refugee camps in Greece and Iraq.

September 11, 2016 -- Interfaith Vigil for Peace



Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Unitarian clergy from our community shared prayers of peace and solidarity in commemoration of the 9/11 attacks, as well as more recent acts of terrorism in Paris, San Bernadino, and Istanbul.

May-December 2015 "One Great Peace" Interfaith Conversations -



Participants representing all of the Abrahamic faiths met in small groups over the course of several months. Using sacred texts, commentary and personal experiences to guide, they explored how the three religious traditions address conflict and peacemaking.