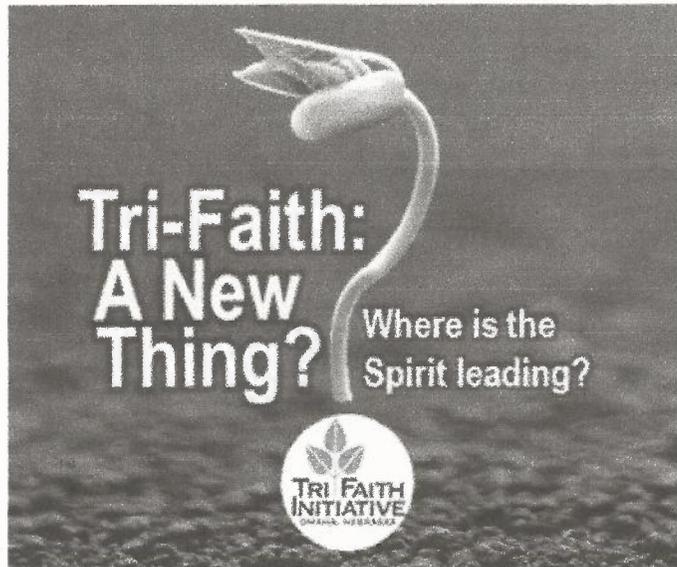


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Nebraska Muslims and Omaha's Tri-Faith Initiative

Posted By [Dr. Stephen Kirby](#) On June 23, 2015 @ 12:05 am In [Daily Mailer,FrontPage](#) | [1 Comment](#)



[1]For those not familiar with it, there is currently underway an experiment in interfaith dialogue and coexistence: the Tri-Faith Initiative in Omaha, Nebraska. The Tri-Faith Initiative wants to have a synagogue, a mosque, and a church located on a common piece of land, each with its own separate building. The religious partners are Temple Israel, the American Muslim Institute, and Countryside Community Church.

The goal of the Tri-Faith "is to build bridges of respect, trust and acceptance" between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. But Islamic doctrine prohibits Muslims from respecting, trusting, or accepting Jews and Christians, so how can Muslims support it?

With this question in mind, I tried to find out how much support there is for the Tri-Faith Initiative and its goal among the Muslims in Nebraska.

Nebraska Muslims

I located e-mail addresses for the following nine Muslim organizations/mosques in Nebraska:

Al Hadi Islamic Center (Omaha)
 Grand Island Masjid
 Islamic Center of Omaha
 Islamic Center of Siouxland
 Islamic Foundation of Lincoln
 Masjid Al-Huda (Omaha)
 Masjid al-Wadood (Norfolk)
 Millard Islamic Center (Omaha)
 Nebraska Islamic Foundation (Lincoln)

I sent the following e-mail to each of them, twice:

The Omaha Tri-Faith Initiative is an experiment in interfaith dialogue and coexistence. The goal of the Tri-Faith Initiative is to have a synagogue, a mosque, and a church located on a common piece of land, each with its own separate building. The religious partners are Temple Israel, the American Muslim Institute, and Countryside Community Church.

The goal of the Tri-Faith "is to build bridges of respect, trust and acceptance" between Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. But Islamic doctrine prohibits Muslims from respecting, trusting, or accepting Jews and Christians; for example:

According to the Koran: Muslims are prohibited from being friends with Jews and Christians (5:51); Muslims are commanded to fight Jews and Christians until the Jews and Christians pay the jizyah with willing submission and feeling themselves subdued (9:29); Jews are among the worst enemies of Islam (5:82); Allah curses the Jews and the Christians (9:30); and Jews and Christians are among the worst of

creatures and "will abide in the fire of Hell" (98:6).

Muhammad said such things as:

[1] Jews and Christians are each worth only half of a Muslim (Sunan Ibn Majah, No. 2644);

[2] Do not greet the Jews and the Christians before they greet you and when you meet any one of them on the roads force him to go to the narrowest part of it (Sahih Muslim, No. 2167);

[3] The Hour will not be established until you fight against the Jews, and the stone behind which a Jew will be hiding will say, 'O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, so kill him' (Sahih Al-Bukhari, No. 2926);

[4] Jews and Christians will take the place of Muslims in Hell (Sahih Muslim, No. 2767R1).

Consequently, I am interested in your response to the following questions:

[1] Does your mosque/organization officially and publicly support the Tri-Faith Initiative and its goal? If so, what have you done to show that support, including any financial contributions and the amounts?

[2] If your mosque/organization officially and publicly supports the Tri-Faith Initiative and its goal, how do you address the above verses of the Koran and teachings of Muhammad?

[3] If your mosque/organization does not officially and publicly support the Tri-Faith Initiative and its goal, is it because Islamic doctrine prohibits such a venture on the part of Muslims?

[4] Do you know of any Muslim organizations or individual Muslims who have provided financial support to the Tri-Faith Initiative, including for purchase of land, construction of the synagogue, or construction of the proposed mosque and/or church? If you know of any such organizations or individuals, what was the total amount of their respective contributions?

None of the nine have responded to my questions.

American Muslim Institute

Consequently, I decided to contact the Muslim partner in the Tri-Faith Initiative, the American Muslim Institute (AMI). I sent the following e-mail twice to Leigh Sittenauer, AMI Executive Director:

I am interested in finding out the extent of the support from Nebraska Muslims for 1) the Tri-Faith Initiative; 2) its goal of building "bridges of respect, trust and acceptance" between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; and 3) the construction of the new mosque. Could you please advise me of the Muslim organizations and/or mosques that publicly support these items, and the number of members in each of the organizations and/or mosques that show that support? How are they showing their support?

Also, since there are already mosques in the Omaha area, how specifically will your mosque differ, doctrinally or otherwise, from the existing mosques? If there is no difference, why should Muslims start attending your mosque after it is built? Do you already have members who are meeting for Friday prayer at some place other than the existing mosques? If so, how many current members do you have for your new mosque, who is the imam, and where are they meeting?

Ms. Sittenauer has not responded.

I recently attended a presentation on Islam by Dr. Syed Mohiuddin, President of AMI. An attendee

asked a multi-part question that included a request for the names of Muslim organizations that supported the Tri-Faith Initiative. Dr. Mohiuddin answered other parts of the question, but did not respond to the request for the names of any supporting Muslim organizations.

Conclusion

The unanimous silence when asked about what Muslim organizations/mosques in Nebraska are supporting the Tri-Faith Initiative is telling. The answer appears to be simple: there are no Muslim organizations/mosques in Nebraska supporting the Tri-Faith Initiative. There appears to be only a few, individual Muslims involved in the Tri-Faith venture. Why?

The answer lies in the fact that verses in the Koran and teachings of Muhammad prohibit Muslim participation in ventures like the Tri-Faith Initiative. In his recent presentation on Islam, Dr. Mohiuddin advised a group of non-Muslims that a good translation of the Koran was *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* by Marmaduke Pickthall, a Muslim convert. So consider the following three verses from Pickthall's translation:

O ye who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians for friends. They are friends one to another. He among you who taketh them for friends is (one) of them. Lo! Allah guideth not wrongdoing folk. (5:51)

Thou wilt find the most vehement of mankind in hostility to those who believe (to be) the Jews and the idolaters. (5:82)

Lo! those [sic] who disbelieve, among the People of the Scripture [Jews and Christians] and the idolaters, will abide in fire [sic] of hell. They are the worst of created beings. (98:6)

These three Koran verses in particular, and the many other verses with similar messages, appear to be ignored by Dr. Mohiuddin and the few Muslims actively promoting the Tri-Faith Initiative. In contrast, it appears that the greater Muslim community in Nebraska is paying attention to these three verses and the many others that prohibit Muslims from participating in a venture like the Tri-Faith Initiative.

Consequently, the Tri-Faith Initiative appears to be standing mainly on two crutches: Jews and Christians. Bi-Faith Initiative anyone?

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