



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Leann Garms

Email: leanngarms@gmail.com

214-289-3563

Fighting Islamophobia: Christians and Muslims Come Together During Lent *Salaam and St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral bring together Muslim leaders to create understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims*

San Diego, CA— During the contemplative season of Lent, Salaam and St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral will present a six-week interfaith discussion series featuring key leaders from the Muslim community in an effort to create understanding and fight Islamophobia*.

Attendees will have the opportunity to interact with the full spectrum of Muslims, progressive to conservative, enjoy a complimentary community dinner and a participate in a lively roundtable discussion. The events will be held each Wednesday, March 13 - April 17 from 6-8 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral in downtown San Diego. Registration for any or all of the weekly events is open to the public and available at SalaamUSA.org or <http://bit.ly/InterfaithSeries>.

Salaam USA, a non-religious, non-partisan organization, has partnered with St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, a place of sanctuary and safety that celebrates diversity, and leaders in the Muslim community for the opportunity to create friendships between Muslims and non-Muslims.

"In a world full of division, ignorance, and hate, Salaam builds the bridge of peace with education and fellowship as we share our stories and work for the common good," said Joseph Dirbes, Rector, All Souls' Episcopal Church, San Diego.

The speakers and topics for the series are:

- **March 13: Religious Orthodoxy vs. Cultural Fluidity - Siddika Jessa**-Leader, CEO of WiderLens, runs development programs to inspire individuals towards positive and authentic Action by sharing her journey to acceptance of her son's same sex marriage.

A Queer Muslim's Story - Kilian Colin, an American Muslim Queer activist, is working days and nights to bring awareness to the Muslim Queer community issues and to help more Muslim Queers to come out without fears of persecution.
- **March 20: Israel and Palestine: Getting Through to the Real Issues - Steve Slocum**, author of "*Why Do They Hate Us?*" and founder of Salaam, focuses on creating mutual understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims.
- **March 27: Islam's Roots in Social Justice and Today's Progressive Muslims - Ani Zonneveld**, founder of Muslims for Progressive Values (MPV), advocates for egalitarian expressions of Islam, for women's rights, LGBTQI rights, freedom of expression, and freedom of and from religion or belief by challenging human rights abuses in the name of Islam.



- **April 3: Love for All, Hatred for None: Ahmadi Muslims, Islam's Persecuted Minority - Maaz Salam**, is the grandson of Nobel Laureate Abdus Salam, the first Muslim to receive a Nobel Peace Prize in a scientific field.
- **April 10: The Women of Conservative Islam: The Real Motivation Behind the Hijab - Tehseen Lazzouni**, director and founder of the Islamic Speakers Bureau of San Diego (ISB), provides interactive presentations about Islam and Muslims to San Diegans.
- **April 17, Wrap-up, What Have We Learned?**

ABOUT: **Salaam** is a non-profit organization that focuses on creating mutual understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims. Salaam uses events, community outreach and media to raise awareness of Islam from an unbiased, non-religious, nonpartisan perspective.

Steve Slocum, the founder and president of Salaam, is the author of the new book, **“Why Do They Hate Us? Making Peace with the Muslim World”** (Top Reads Publishing, June 2019, <http://www.whyydotheyhateus.org>). Slocum served five years as a missionary in Kazakhstan and is the founder and executive director of Salaam (<http://www.SalaamUSA.org>). Slocum is a frequent speaker at churches, conferences, and civic groups.

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According to a 2016 **report by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the University of California, Berkeley, more than \$200 million was spent by 74 groups promoting “hatred” of Muslims between 2008 and 2013.*



*Steve Slocum, Founder of Salaam,
Author of “Why Do They Hate Us? Making Peace with the Muslim World” (Top Reads, June 2019)*

