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Photo: "The Good Samaritan" sculpture by Stan Watts in LDS Bishops' Central Storehouse

A Newsletter of the Salt Lake Interfaith Roundtable

THE ROUNDTABLE



2014 Interfaith Community Awards

*Roundtable Board Presentations at Annual Prayer Breakfast
January 30, 2014*

The annual interfaith prayer breakfast marked the official start of the Roundtable's Interfaith Month 2014 and gave members and guests the opportunity to join with others around the world in recognizing the United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week, February 1-7.

Interfaith Month is the highlight of the Roundtable's year, and an important component in meeting its goal of fostering understanding and cooperation among faiths. Each year, the Roundtable Interfaith Month Committee works with member faith and community organizations to present over 20 free, daily events during February that showcase the true diversity that exists in our city.

Also, for the first time, the morning breakfast included a water ceremony. As guests arrived they were invited to pour a small cup of water into a large bowl while saying a private blessing or prayer. The bowl represented the world, and each cup of water was a way of figuratively pouring out the blessing or prayer over or into it.

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Faith and Community Leaders gathered for the Salt Lake Roundtable's Annual Interfaith Prayer Breakfast

Annual Prayer Breakfast / *Continued*



The prayer breakfast included a water ceremony



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The Breakfast began with Josie Stone, Vice Chair of the Interfaith Roundtable and Interfaith Month Committee Chair, welcoming everyone. Wendy Stovall, Administrative Assistant of the Interfaith Roundtable, highlighted how the Roundtable's activities promote the ideals of the U.N. World Interfaith Harmony Week.



Pamela Lloyd, an Interfaith Minister from Volunteers of America, offered a prayer during the water ceremony

Left to right: Indra Neelameggham, Roundtable Treasurer; Elaine Emmi, Roundtable's e-mail maven and coordinator; Janet Healey, Assistant Interfaith Month Chair; Josie Stone, Board Vice Chair

Annual Prayer Breakfast / Continued



Wendy Stovall spoke on the United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week

Josie Stone gave a report on the upcoming Interfaith Month activities followed by Dave Sharp who spoke about the Musical Tribute. Pamela Lloyd, an Interfaith Minister from Volunteers of America, then offered a beautiful prayer over the filled bowl of water during the breakfast.

This year's community awards were presented to the following individuals and organization:

Community Outreach Award: Catholic Community Services of Utah

CCS Executive Director Brad Drake accepted the award on behalf of the organization, which recognizes humanitarian service to the community. CCS was organized in 1945, by the Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City. Today, it provides help and creates hope for thousands of people of all beliefs who are most in need in our community. CCS programs include Refugee Resettlement, Treatment Services, and Basic Needs Services. Mr. Drake was appointed Executive Director in July 2008. The award was presented by Jim Jardine, a member of the Roundtable Board, representing the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Individual Award for promoting harmony and love in the community: Pamela J. Atkinson

Ms. Atkinson was selected for the award because of her unwavering dedication to improving the lives of Utah's homeless and low-income citizens. She has over 20 years of volunteer work, which has established her as the leading advocate for Salt Lake's impoverished and underprivileged residents.

The Pamela Atkinson Homeless Trust Fund is funded by the Utah State Legislature



Dave Sharp presented a report about the upcoming Musical Tribute



and by contributions made by others on their Utah Individual Income Tax Form. The competitive grant program supplements various agencies statewide in moving people out of homelessness.

Colleen Scott, the Roundtable's Media and Education Chairperson, presented the award to Ms. Atkinson.

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Jim Jardine (right) presented the Community Outreach Award to Catholic Community Services Executive Director Brad Drake



Colleen Scott (right) presented the Individual Award for Promoting Harmony and Love in the Community to Pamela J. Atkinson

Annual Prayer Breakfast / *Continued*



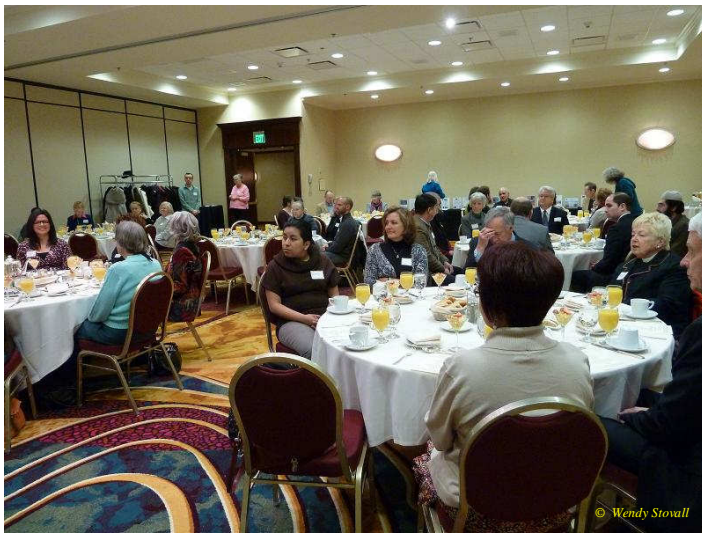
Josie Stone (right) presented the "We Can't Live Without You" award to Susan Soleil

"We Can't Live Without You" award: Susan Soleil

This surprise award was presented to Susan Soleil by Josie Stone, an Episcopalian and Vice Chair of the Interfaith Roundtable. Ms. Soleil was selected for her community work in promoting a healthier environment for everyone. She is the Director of Utah Interfaith Power & Light, an organization that "inspires, educates and collaborates with faith communities to promote earth stewardship, clean energy and climate justice." In a web article published September 2012, she talked about the importance of interfaith work: "The group is always stronger than the individual... [Interfaith work] gets people talking across lines of faith, class, the political spectrum... it's that weaving that makes something stronger and longer-lasting."



Aden Batar (left) with Imam Muhammed Mehtar from the Islamic Khadeeja Mosque and Islamic Center



The meeting concluded with a prayer given by Imam Muhammed Mehtar, from the Islamic Khadeeja Mosque and Islamic Center.

Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of each member or member organization. The Roundtable encourages open discussion and dialogue.

Salt Lake Buddhist Temple Film Festival, "Dharma in Cinema"

February 1, 2014

So what do Bill Murray, Japanese immigration, and guru-ism have in common? Buddhist teachings, of course.

On February 1, the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple held its first ("and hopefully annual") film festival, "Dharma in Cinema," featuring "Groundhog Day," the documentary "Streams of Light," and "Kumare" (plus, Japanese-American fusion refreshments, such as furikake hotdogs and spam musubi).

The afternoon screenings included panel discussions by Rev. Jerry Hirano and Dr. Carmela Javellana Hirano of the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple, who are from the Jodo Shinshu tradition; and Dr. Steve Proskauer of the Soto Zen tradition. Together, they sifted through each film to explain how dharma (teachings, universal truth) can be found and appreciated even in the most mundane everyday circumstances.

An example is conceited, self-centered, entitled TV weatherman Phil Connors (Bill Murray, in "Groundhog Day"). Underneath this appearance lay a vulnerable human being trapped by a blizzard in a small town in Pennsylvania. His entrapment is akin to our own prison of ignorance about our frailty and ego-centeredness. The only way he was able to get out of this prison was by repetitious and gradual transformation through the path of the Bodhisattva, or enlightened being. His day-by-day blunders gradually turned into life-changing moral, ethical, and spiritual lessons.

"Streams of Light" was produced by Jodo Shinshu Buddhist priest Kentaro Sugao from Brazil, in collaboration with the Buddhist Churches of America. The documentary shows how Jodo Shinshu (Pure Land) Buddhism first came and thrived in America. It became dormant and suppressed dur-

ing World War II with the internment of Japanese-Americans while their young men served in the U.S. military. How Japanese Americans today have survived the trauma of that time, and still remain a vibrant and thriving community, especially those in Utah, can be largely attributed to Buddhist teachings and their devoted practice.

In the "rather controversial" "Kumare," a false prophet created by an ordinary guy Vikram, demonstrates how on the one hand, Americans can be so gullible to the novelty and esotericism of a guru (Sanskrit for "teacher" or "master"), yet on the other hand, have an incredible thirst for truth and spiritual transcendence. "Perhaps to be gullible is to also be open to the path of wisdom," albeit "risky"?

According to Dr. Hirano, "We had such a great time that we will probably do this again, around the same time next year."

"In the Shadow of the Holocaust" *Panel Discussion at Congregation Kol Ami*

February 2, 2014

As part of Interfaith Month, Congregation Kol Ami, sponsored a morning panel discussion, "In the Shadow of the Holocaust," moderated by congregant, Jay Jacobson, M.D. Panelists Diane Warsoff, Ira Fields, Orly Ardon, Les Kelen, and Judy Dahlquist shared what they knew of their parents' harrowing Holocaust experiences and how these events affected their own lives. The speakers described how, with a combination of luck, wits, and the kindness of non-Jewish friends and neighbors, their parents managed to survive. Several related heroic stories about how their families were hidden by "righteous gentiles" who were always at great risk to their own lives.

A common theme of the presentations was the reluctance of surviving parents to share their stories, wanting to leave the horrors of the past behind them. Although their grief affected many aspects of their lives, they did not wish to burden their children

with their personal tragedies. Some panelists knew nothing of their family's experiences until their parents were asked to submit oral accounts of their Holocaust history to the Steven Spielberg Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation project. Believing that, "Those who do not remember the past are doomed to repeat it," the Shoah Foundation has interviewed and recorded the stories of more than 52,000 Holocaust survivors and witnesses. Information regarding these important audio and visual testimonies is now available to teachers and students of the Holocaust at svf.usc.edu.

Panel member Diane Warsoff told of her mother being sheltered by an ordinary French farm family, before spending six months in a small Catholic convent to avoid capture by both the Vichy French Police and the Gestapo. When informants told authorities that the nuns were hiding Jewish children, the Mother Superior lied to keep

Diane's mother and the other children safe. Only the Mother Superior knew that the children were Jewish; the other nuns thought they were just orphans. Her mother remembers that the convent had blue windows so that authorities could not see inside, and the chapel had a trap door where the children would hide when hunted. In 1999, Diane's mother, Ruth Hartz, published her childhood memoir, "Your Name Is Renée: Ruth Kapp Hartz's Story as a Hidden Child in Nazi-Occupied France." Inspired by her mother's experiences, Diane is interested in working with local teachers and congregations who would like help teaching about the Holocaust. Diane may be reached at: Diane.warsoff@gmail.com.

A video of this informative and inspiring Interfaith Roundtable program is available through Congregation Kol Ami at matthew@conkolami.org.

True Parents: A Legacy of Peace

Family Federation for World Peace and Unification

February 5, 2014

The Salt Lake Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (formerly known as the Unification Church) hosted a dinner and talk at their church in Sugar House. The event coincided with the celebration of the birthdays of FFWPU Founders Rev. Sun Myung Moon and his wife, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, commemorated on January 6 according to the lunar calendar.

The evening began with a reception and dinner when members had the opportunity to meet Roundtable guests. Everyone also had the opportunity to sing “Happy Birthday” to Rev. and Dr. Moon, and cut a celebratory cake.

Pastor Michael Stovall began the meeting by inviting Josie Stone, Roundtable Vice-Chair, and also Chair of the Interfaith



Michael Stovall, Pastor of the Salt Lake FFWPU explains Rev. Moon's legacy of peace



Month Committee, to talk about meaning of Interfaith Month. She gave a brief overview of the Roundtable's origin as part of the Salt Lake 2002 Winter Olympics

The video “Legacy of Peace,” which depicts the late Rev. Moon's life and work, was shown. Pastor Stovall then shared information about the tenets and beliefs of the FFWPU, highlighting the textbooks published by Rev. Moon, the church's administrative structure, the Blessing (generally referred to as “mass weddings” by the public), and other important church traditions.

He also explained the honorific “True Parents” as Rev. and Dr. Moon are referred to by the FFWPU membership. Following the presentation the audience had the opportunity to ask questions in depth and meet many of the local FFWPU members.

The evening concluded with the Salt Lake FFWPU children's choir singing two songs, followed by a performance by the church's Youth String Quartet and Flute. More information is available at www.dplife.info.

Human Rights Education Center of Utah Workshop: "What's Compassion Got to Do with It? (IT being the operative word)"

February 8, 2014



Carla Kelley, HREC's director and workshop group leader



The Saturday, February 8 workshop was held at the Cathedral of St. Mark's Dean's Hall.

The largely secular conversation revealed the importance of exercising compassion among differing religious belief systems.

HREC's director and workshop group leader, Carla Kelley, says, "One need not to be religious to practice compassion. Yet, all major religions carry the message that love, forgiveness and practicing The Golden Rule are necessary for the betterment of all."

The HREC is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to bring greater harmony across differing belief systems. It has held similar workshops over the past several years as part of Interfaith Month activities.

Peace, Justice and Climate Change – An Interfaith Panel

February 10, 2014



Left to right: Liz Paige, Jean Hill, Rev. Canon Diana Johnson, Patrick Reese, Tariq Banuri



On February 10, Utah Interfaith Power & Light, the Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City, and the Newman Center at University of Utah co-hosted a lively discussion about our moral imperative to care for creation and the poor in the face of a warming planet.

More than 40 people attended and participated in the discussion. Five panelists made brief presentations and answered questions from the audience: Tariq Banuri, Economics Professor, University of Utah; Pat-

rick Reese, Humanitarian Services, LDS Church; Rev. Canon Diana Johnson, retired Episcopal Priest; Jean Hill, Catholic Diocese of SLC; and Liz Paige, Salt Lake's Congregation Kol Ami.

Roundtable Members Get Firsthand Tour of LDS Bishops' Central Storehouse

February 12, 2014

Around 20 Roundtable members took Horace Greeley's advice to "Go West ..." literally when they drove to tour the Bishops' Central Storehouse of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, February 12. The storehouse is located at 5405 West 300 South in Salt Lake City. That's one exit past the airport when travelling west on I-80.

Storehouse manager Richard Humpherys greeted the group at the front door of the 570,391 square-foot facility. It could be described as a huge, climate-controlled warehouse that includes refrigeration and freezer buildings the size of football fields; office space for 100 employees; conference rooms; kitchen facilities; and a full-service trucking center; all under a 36-acre roof. Its main purpose is to feed the hungry and needy around the world through the church's welfare system.

Interfaith participants began the tour by walking down a hall lined with photographs and paintings depicting Jesus Christ ministering to the poor and needy, and the history of the church's welfare program. "Everything we do in this building is based on the Savior's admonition to take care of those who are less fortunate than we are," said Humpherys. "Our goal is to provide resources to our bishops as they minister to the poor and needy and to relieve suffering in the wake of natural and manmade disasters."

The participants climbed into elongated, multi-seat golf carts that drove past row after row of packed and canned food items stacked on specially designed rotating steel shelves that keep the food fresh. The storehouse stocks 143 different items, including corn, beans, turkey and beef chunks, cheese, milk, cereals, butter, ice cream, peanut butter, and a variety of produce, both fresh and canned. Also stocked are hand and dish-washing soap, shampoo, toilet paper, and other hygiene items.

On occasion, emergency equipment such as electrical generators, shovels, chain saws, picks, food, and supplies are also dispatched to areas of the world from the warehouse to people who have suffered the effects of natural disasters.

For example, when Hurricane Katrina approached the Gulf Coast in August 2005,



LDS Bishops' Central Storehouse Manager Richard Humpherys (far right) greeted the tour group

church leaders and storehouse managers had 18 supply trucks poised in a semi-circle from Texas to South Carolina, because no one knew where the hurricane would come on shore. "As soon as the hurricane hit New Orleans, all of the trucks immediately converged on that area; and they were there within 24 hours," Humpherys said

The commodities in this facility are shipped worldwide. According to Humpherys, there are 110 storehouses in the United States and Canada, plus 100 home-storage centers. Internationally shipments have gone to 165 different countries. The day-to-day operations are managed by volunteer, full-time missionaries, who consider it a privilege to serve.

The facility also houses a fleet of De-seret Transportation semi-trucks and trailers (43 tractors and 98 trailers) with 44 loading docks to move products to wherever they are needed. Drivers log about 3.5 million miles per year delivering goods to the storehouses across the United States and Canada.

Another unique feature of the storehouse is that it was built under seismic guidelines to withstand a 7.0 earthquake and to stay in operation during an earthquake of that magnitude.

The 45-minute tour ended with a Q & A session with Mr. Humpherys. Those who participated said it was enlightening and encouraged others to make the trip west to tour this one-of-a-kind facility.



Increasing Harmony and Understanding
in our Communities

The **Salt Lake Interfaith Roundtable** is a Non-Profit 501(c)(3) organization. Your tax deductible contributions are very much appreciated and help to make our work of faith cooperation and event planning possible. We could also use donations of office supplies, such as stamps and copy paper.

Go to www.interfaithroundtable.org and click on the "Donations" tab to pay through PayPal™ or mail your check or money order to:

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