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A Newsletter of the Salt Lake Interfaith Roundtable

THE ROUNDTABLE



An Evening of Fellowship at Salt Lake's Historical Greek Orthodox Holy Trinity Cathedral

February 4, 2014

The Greek Orthodox Church and the Hellenic Cultural Association "were privileged to host" an interfaith evening at the Cathedral, sponsored by Holy Trinity and Holladay's Prophet Elias Greek Orthodox Church.

Continued on next page



Westminster College's Youth Interfaith Leaders Present "Speed Faithing" As Part of "Better Together Campaign"

February 11, 2014

Speed Faithing is one of Westminster College's "Better Together" campaign activities, and is taught by the Interfaith Youth Corps at their interfaith leadership institutes (ILI).

Continued on page three

The Sikh Temple of Utah Welcomed All Faiths to an Evening of Prayer and Kirtan

February 21, 2014



In celebration of Interfaith Month, the congregation of Utah's Sikh Temple (Gurdwara) in Taylorsville invited Roundtable members and friends to join them at the Friday evening service of prayer and Kirtan (chanting).

As is the Sikh custom, everyone met in the dining room for a meal before and after the service.

Continued on next page



An Evening of Fellowship / Continued from first page

Roundtable members met in the Cathedral to hear a short history about the Greek settlement in Utah. Member Jeanne Timothy talked about her family's experience of immigrating from Greece to settle in the United States, the reasons why Greeks migrated to Utah, and the building of the state's first Orthodox Church.

Afterwards, the Holy Trinity Choir, directed by George Miller, performed chants and sang several Orthodox hymns, both an integral part of the church's worship services. Roundtable Board Chair Rev. Fr. Elias Koucos followed with an explanation about Orthodox Church teachings and beliefs.

The women's philanthropic organization, The Philoptochos of Holy Trinity, provided refreshments in the Hellenic Cultural Center, which, of course, included Greek pastries. Members and guests had the chance to fellowship in an atmosphere of friendliness and generosity.



Salt Lake's Historical Greek Orthodox Holy Trinity Cathedral

"It was a wonderful evening as people gathered to share and enjoy each other's company, and to continue the

celebration of Interfaith Month. We thank everyone for attending and look forward to next year," says Fr. Elias.

An Evening of Prayer and Kirtan / Continued from first page



The service also included an informative video presentation about the history of the Sikh. It was followed by Roundtable Board Chair, Rev. Fr. Elias Koucos, who offered the Roundtable's thanks, and recognized the Utah Sikh community's longtime participation in Salt Lake interfaith activities.



An Evening of “Speed Faithing” / Continued from first page



Jan Saeed (right) moderated the Westminster College evening of “Speed Faithing”

Five Westminster students received training last August at an ILI in New York City. The students have become the corps’ team of the interfaith activities on the Westminster campus.

Speed faithing is a series of 10-minute presentations by peers about their beliefs, which are followed by five-minute Q & A sessions. Participants chose from six presentations, which included Islam, Judaism, Mormonism, Buddhism, Baha’i, Catholicism, Agnosticism, and Christianity,

A similar event was held during the fall 2013 semester.



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

“Dialogue 2.0: A Call for Interfaith Service Action”

Pacifica Institute Utah Welcomes Turan Kayaoglu, Ph.D. *February 20, 2014*

Dr. Kayaoglu spoke with great warmth and humor as he shared his hopes that the popularity and transformative experience of interfaith dialogue would eventually involve the prospects of interfaith community service. He called such endeavors, “Dialogue 2.0,” and described ways in which members of the interfaith community could come and work together on any number of humanitarian projects. Such communal endeavors for the greater good, he noted, would also enhance our experience of friendship and bonding.

He cited the example of a group of high school students at a summer camp. These adolescent boys were divided into two groups and resided in two separate living quarters. Inevitably, each group created a sense of its own special identity and expressed this through such things as name calling and verbally diminishing the other rival group. This air of superiority and exclusivity continued until both groups had to come together to work on a broken water system. The shared experience of working together for a common good created a bond between the two groups of boys, who stopped calling each other names and began to form bonds of



Dr. Turan Kayaoglu

friendships like the ones in their initial group.

Dr. Kayaoglu suggested that our interfaith community go beyond interfaith dialogue, and consider ways of participating in service for the common good of Salt Lake. Such grass roots service groups would potentially allow for many more people to become involved, who may otherwise feel hesitant to participate in the more “theological” kind of sharing interfaith dialogue usually encourages.

Dr. Kayaoglu’s vision for Dialogue 2.0 was very well received, and resulted in inspiring others to consider ways they may engage in such service with others, for the experience of enhancing our common human identity.



Left to right: Roundtable Chair Rev. Fr. Elias Koucos, Board Vice Chair Josie Stone, Coskun Kariparduc, Director of Pacifica Institute Utah, Dr. Turan Kayaoglu, Roundtable Board Member Elaine Emmi



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Turan Kayaoglu is a native of Istanbul, Turkey, and an Associate Professor of International Relations at the University of Washington in Tacoma. He has authored a number of academic articles, which have appeared in several publications covering international studies. His most recent paper, “A Rights Agenda for the Muslim World? The Organization of Islamic Cooperation’s Evolving Human Rights Framework,” was published by the Brookings Institution.

Roundtable Young Adult Committee Sponsors Special Screening of the Documentary Film "Jerusalem"

*Clark Planetarium IMAX Theater
February 22, 2014*

Around 200 people attended this free screening of the acclaimed film. For a short 45 minutes, the audience experienced a spectacular tour of Jerusalem, a city regarded for thousands of years to be the center of the world and to many, the closest place on Earth to God.

Jerusalem is perhaps the most fought-over place in history, having been conquered, destroyed, and rebuilt at various times in its 5,000 year history. Today it is a place of profound spiritual and historical connection to over half of the world's population, and cherished sacred ground for three major religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

The film follows three contemporary young women as they share their connection to the city: Farah Ammouri, a Muslim; Revital Zacharie, a Jew; and Nadia Tadros, of the Greek Orthodox and Catholic faiths. Each relates the history of her own family's attachment to the land, her culture, and her religious beliefs, and also her love of the land that nourishes her beliefs.

The three women are strikingly similar in appearance, which adds a touching quality to the film's invocation for understanding, peace, and harmony. At the end, they profess ignorance about the daily and spiritual lives of their neighbors, and express curiosity and interest in getting to know one another. One states that every religion assumes that "we are so different," but she suspects that "we have more in common than we realize."

The film also shows ancient sites for each religion and stunning aerial photography of the region. It is distributed by National Geographic and took many years to make. Producers faced enormous challenges to gain special access



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to sacred sites and the right to film in restricted airspace. In the end, their determination paid off, as the film crew was given unprecedented access to the city.

The film includes an interview with archaeologist and religious studies professor Jodi Magness of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She discussed the history of the destruction and recovery of the region, and its formation into the crossroads of three major religions. Computer-generated spe-

cial effects demonstrate how Jerusalem may have appeared in ancient times when the Second Temple stood with all the splendor of one of the Great Pyramids of Egypt.

A lively panel discussion was held in the theater immediately following the film, which was moderated by Megan Leonardi of the Roundtable's Young Adult Committee. She was assisted by fellow committee members Andrea Hoke, Kyra Duys, Priya Sukhwani, and Karla Mendez.



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Abhisheka (ablutions) Ceremony for Hindu Deities

Sri Ganesha Hindu Temple of Utah Open House

February 25, 2014

Members of the Roundtable gathered at Sri Ganesha Hindu Temple of Utah in South Jordan for this special service ritual, which is observed on certain holy days in the Hindu calendar.

Visitors were asked to follow the Hindu tradition of removing their shoes when entering a Hindu Temple. Inside, Temple priests, led by Pandit A.R. Krishnan and Satish Seshadri, chanted prayers in the traditional Sanskrit language, and conducted a special prayer ceremony.

A number of devotees consisting of families that included small children were present. As part of the ceremony, everyone (Hindu and, if they wished, persons of other faiths) were invited to come forward and pour milk over a font in front of the deities. As the ceremony was being conducted, Temple member and Roundtable Board Member Indra Neelameggham described the significance of what was happening.

This sacred ceremony is part of the ablation or bathing of the deities, and includes ages-long practices that encouraged everyone to share their bounty with all. The milk poured over the shrine was often distributed to the poor and needy. During the ceremony, the curtains in front of the deities were pulled closed. This way, the priests pro-

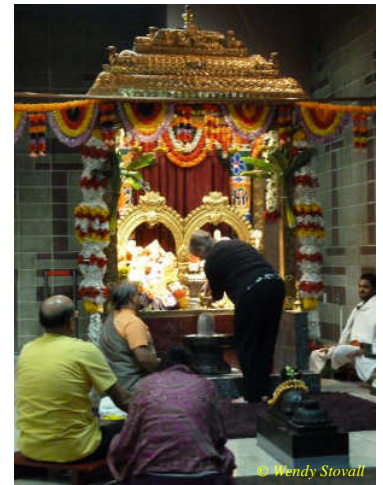


Balaji Sudabattula and Indra Neelameggham

vided privacy for the deities as they dressed them with flowers for the rest of the ceremony.

The curtains were then opened and everyone was invited to circle around the deities and offer prayers and place flowers upon the deities. Everyone then rose and the priest circulated the room offering fruit to everyone.

After the ceremony, everyone met in the Indian Cultural Center, where Balaji Sudabattula and Indra explained the religious tenets of Hindu-



ism, and also the training required to become a priest. The discussion included an informative Q&A, followed by a very traditional meal prepared by the priests.

This was a special exposure to a faith that is not familiar to many Utahns. It was also a unique opportunity for visitors to enjoy the warm hospitality of the Hindu Temple priests and Temple members.

2014 Houses of Worship Tour: A Smashing, Soggy Success!

February 27, 2014

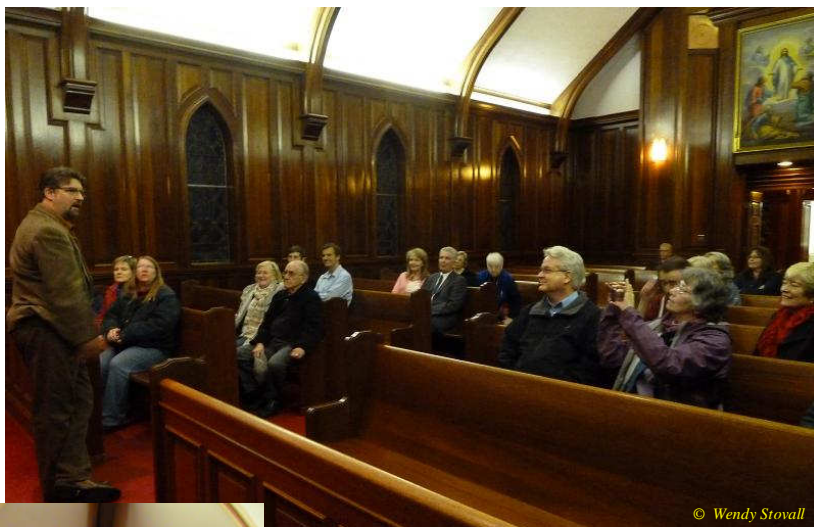
A consistent rain couldn't dampen the spirits of Salt Lake Interfaith Roundtable members and others as they entered a 50-passenger bus on February 27, to begin the second-annual "Houses of Worship" tour, the Roundtable's own sponsored Interfaith Month event. After a short drive everyone piled out at the First Baptist Church of Salt Lake City across the street from East High School at 777 South 1300 East. Rev. Curtis Price welcomed everyone at the back door as they scampered in under umbrellas dripping with rain.

The tour of the Church complex began in the beautiful Skaggs Memorial Chapel, a smaller edifice connected to the west side of the building that is used for weddings and funerals. Rev. Price said the 1954 Baptist congregation dedicated the chapel in honor of L.S. Skaggs, well-known Utah business leader, and his wife, who were major donors to the church's construction program.

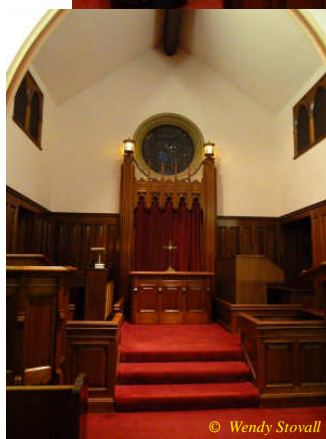
According to the church's website: "In September, 1949, pledges were taken to build a new building. Many members mortgaged their homes, provided 'sweat equity,' or both, to help build the new facility. In January, 1950, L. S. Skaggs donated \$20,000 for the purchase of land on the corner of 1300 East 800 South. Work on the site began in fall, 1950; the cornerstone was laid on Thanksgiving Day, 1951. On January 4, 1953, over 1,000 people worshipped in the sanctuary for the first time, even though the stained glass windows had not yet been installed and their openings were temporarily covered."

Ultimately the tour ended in the larger chapel used for Sunday worship services. Rev. Price explained points of Baptist doctrine and, at the end of his talk, guided the group to an exit behind the baptismal font and out the back door where umbrellas magically appeared over those running for the bus.

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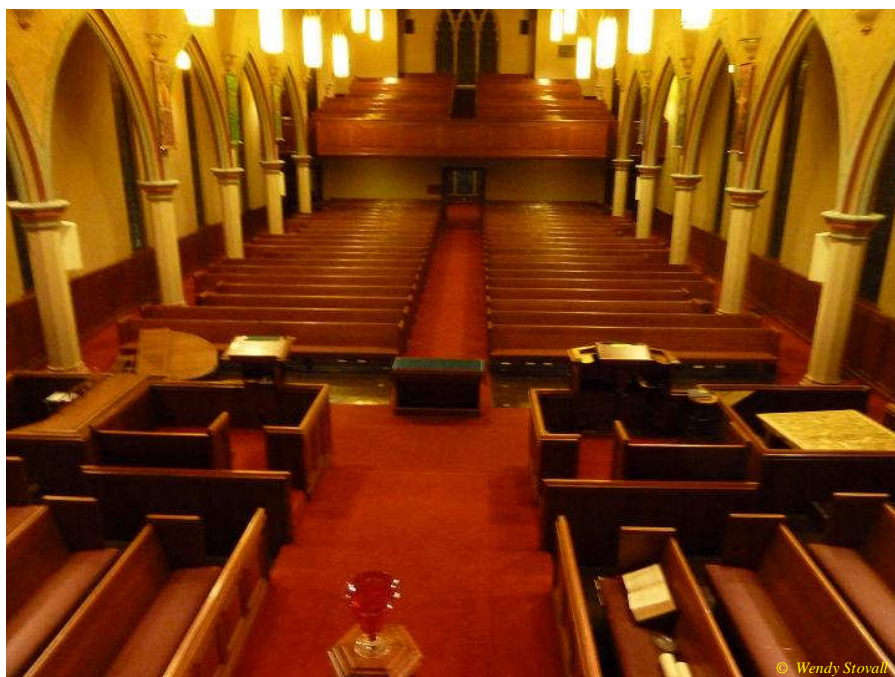


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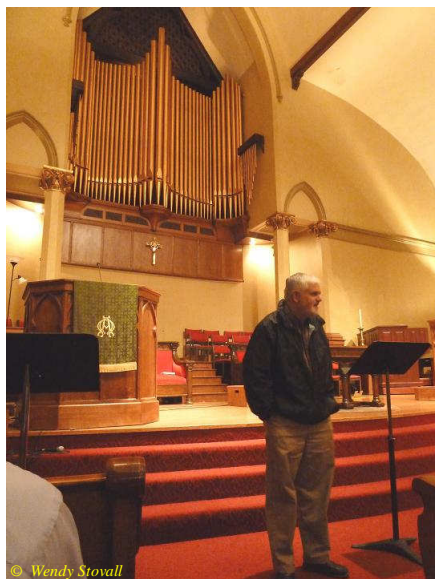
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Rev. Curtis Price shared history of the First Baptist Church of Salt Lake City



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2014 Houses of Worship Tour / Continued



Rev. Dr. Michael Imperiale

The First Presbyterian Church of Salt Lake City on South Temple was the next stop on the tour. Rev. Dr. Michael Imperiale greeted the talkative group at the side door on 12 C Street amidst a flurry of rising and falling umbrellas. Everyone was seated in the main worship chapel where “Pastor Mike,” as he likes to be called, explained some of the history and doctrine of the Presbyterian Church. He began by telling the group that the word “Presbyter” means elder, and that the Presbyterian Church played a key role in the founding of the United States. In fact, 26 of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were Presbyterian. The religion’s origin can be traced back to the Protestant Reformation in the 1550’s. He explained that his church has two worship services every Sunday—traditional and contemporary; he also talked about the history and architecture of the beautiful chapel in which the group was sitting.

Last, but not least, the Roundtable bus pulled up in front of the First United Methodist Church of Salt Lake City on 205 East 200 South. Rev. Eun-sang Lee personally greeted each person in the group as they filed into the main chapel. Rev. Lee, Scott Mills, church organist, and others ran a PowerPoint presentation that explained Methodist



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beliefs and history. It was interspersed with hymns of praise, accompanied by Scott on the soon-to-be renovated pipe organ in the chapel. Church leaders and parishioners have been raising funds for more than three years to renovate the organ and chapel, and according to Rev. Lee, construction will soon start.

It was an informative tour and a great way to learn about the rich Baptist, Presbyterian, and Methodist faith traditions in Salt Lake City.

Rev. Eun-sang Lee



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Traditional Shrove Tuesday Supper Marks Eve of the Easter Season

The Cathedral Church of St. Mark

March 4, 2014

Parishioners, friends, and guests from many faith traditions met at The Cathedral Church of St. Mark for the traditional Shrove Tuesday supper.

Nearly 200 adults and children enjoyed an evening of food, conversation, beads, masks, and a children's Mardi Gras parade (complete with a fierce "lion" in a circus wagon).

Traditionally, the Shrove Tuesday supper consists of meat, pancakes, and syrups. However, the highlight of this year's meal was the English pancakes with fresh lemon juice and sugar.

The name "Shrove Tuesday" is derived from the word "shrive," which means to confess and receive absolution. In the Christian tradition, the 40-day period of Lent (which begins the next day, Ash Wednesday) is a time for study, self-examination, and spiritual growth. Lent was historically a time of cleansing, abstinence, and self-sacrifice, which included fasting. Some still say



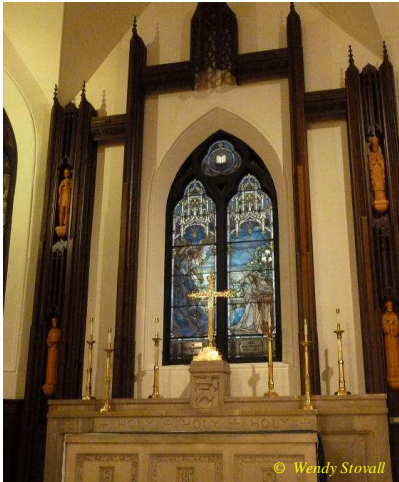
they are "giving up television for Lent," or "going on a diet for Lent." Today, it is usually more about taking on something, such as charitable acts, a spiritual practice, a new book about faith, journaling, etc., rather than giving up something.

Shrove Tuesday originated during the Middle Ages. The religious practice



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Traditional Shrove Tuesday Supper Marks Eve of the Easter Season



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still continues in many households, and restricts the eating of fats, meat, fish, eggs, and milk during Lent. As food was valuable, one could not afford to waste items that could not be kept for 40 days, so households prepared a feast for Shrove Tuesday in order to eat all the foods that would be forbidden for the next 40 days.

The Cathedral Church of St. Mark has adopted the English tradition of making pancakes on Shrove Tuesday; what better way to use up milk, oil, butter, syrup, meats, and eggs before Lent begins? In France, the day is called Mardi Gras, or Fat Tuesday, as their households feast on fats and fatty foods.

In England the day is celebrated with pancake races, where contestants run a course while holding a griddle and flipping a pancake. Points are awarded for time, number, height of flips, and number of times the pancake turns over. There are, of course, penalties for dropping the pancake.

Following supper, The Very Reverend Ray Waldon, Dean of the Cathedral, led a tour of the 140-year old building and its undercroft (basement level), where framed illustrations from the book, "A World of Faith," (authored by Peggy F. Stack, and illustrated by artist Kathleen B. Peterson) are displayed. The book was co-sponsored by



Dean Ray Waldon



the Interfaith Roundtable for the 2002 Salt Lake Olympic Committee.

The tour also included the recently exposed wall of the Cathedral, which

will have interpretive signs to describe the exterior stones, mortar, evidence of the 1935 fire, and interesting historical facts about the Cathedral's construction.



THE ROUNDTABLE

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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