

in this issue >>>

Utah Interfaith Power & Light

99 Most Beautiful Names

India Cultural Center Inauguration

All Rivers Website

Jewish / Muslim Panel Discussion

Meet the Board Members



A Newsletter of the Salt Lake Interfaith Roundtable

THE ROUNDTABLE



Ecology and Faith

Utah Interfaith Power & Light

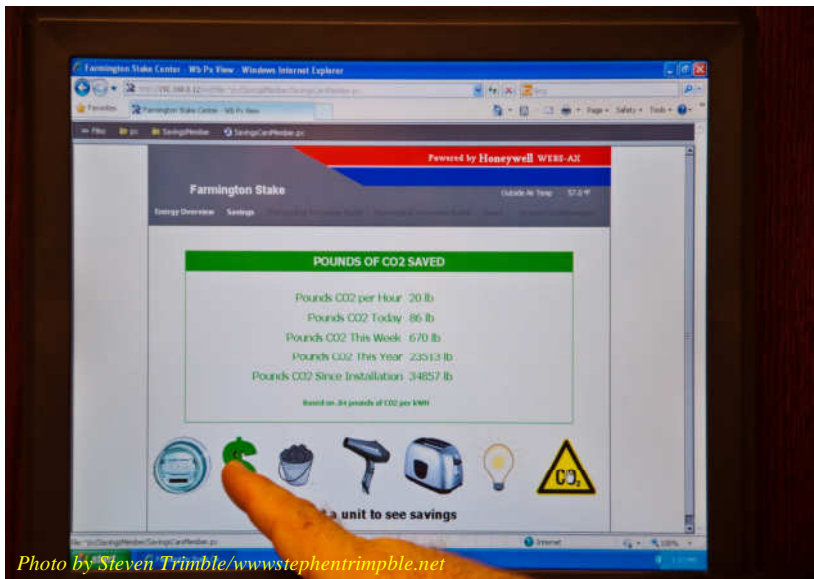
Utah Interfaith Power & Light is an initiative of The Regeneration Project, founded by the Rev. Sally Bingham in 1998. This movement works to deepen the connection between ecology and faith by mobilizing a network of congregations in 38 states seeking to make climate change a moral issue rather than simply a political issue. Member congregations act collectively and individually to protect the earth's ecosystems, safeguard public health, and ensure sufficient, sustainable energy for all. Every major faith tradition calls on people to be good stewards of the Earth and to accept our responsibility to care for Creation. We must respond to the spiritual call to heal the planet. If we act today, we can prevent the most devastating effects of climate change.



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LDS Farmington Stakehouse with solar panels Photo by Steven Trimble/www.stephentrimble.net

Utah Interfaith Power & Light – Ecology and Faith



Jared Doxey, of the LDS Church Architecture Department, explains about the green building methods used in the chapel construction.

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Utah IPL began as an extension of the Salt Lake Interfaith Roundtable. As a result, Utah IPL believes in maintaining an inter-faith focus. Our interim co-directors are Rev. Canon Diana Johnson, an Episcopal priest, and Stephen Trimble, a writer and environmental advocate who is Jewish. Our board chair is Dr. George Handley, a member of the LDS Church who teaches at Brigham Young University.

Utah IPL has numerous individual members and 27 member congregations, all united in their desire to address global warming through faithful congregational environmental stewardship. Our congregations stretch from Logan to Moab to St. George. On joining, congregations receive a free energy audit of their house of worship; Utah IPL currently has five active energy auditors.

We provide congregations with educational resources and our staff and board members lead discussions. Utah IPL supported a major solar project of UIPL member, Christ United Methodist Church. Our public events have included a visit by Rabbi Andrea Cohen-Kiener of Connecticut IPL, who spoke about her book, *Claiming Earth as Common Ground*, to a local middle school, Brigham Young University and the Jewish Community Center. We held a public screening and discussion of an award-winning documentary about Utah's first commercial wind project, *Wind Uprising*.

On February 16, 2011, Utah Interfaith Power and Light sponsored a presentation and tour of the LDS Farmington Chapel that has been built according to LEED standards. LEED is an internationally recognized green building certification system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council. About 20 participants heard Jared Doxey, of the LDS Church Architecture Department, speak about the green building methods used in the chapel and the history of sustainable building in the LDS church worldwide. We toured the building and followed up with a Q & A session. The rigor and care poured into this building's design impressed and inspired us all.

Each spring, representatives of Utah IPL attend the national IPL conference in Washington D.C. and lobby members of Utah's

congressional delegation on issues related to climate change legislation. Utah IPL sends The Light Pages to our email list to keep members in touch with issues, policy discussions, and events.

We partner with conservation organizations in Utah who share our desire to educate and support Utahns in making positive responses to global climate change – most notably Utah Clean Energy, Utah Education Network, Dwelltek (an energy efficiency company), the Episcopal Diocese of Utah, the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance—and of course the Salt Lake Interfaith Roundtable. We invite Interfaith Roundtable members to learn more about Utah IPL at our website www.utahipl.org and to to contact us at director@utahipl.org.



99 Most Beautiful Names

A Sculptural Presentation of the Names of God from the Qur'an

>>> *Andrew Kosorok*



Bestower of Honors

Medals, trophies, awards, and titles: many times we lose ourselves in the seeking for these symbols of accomplishment, to justify our efforts and validate our being. Work and luck bring these earthly tokens of worth, but they are mere and temporary. Moth and rust corrupt, thieves break through and steal—but the Grace of God endures. Recognition in this life is fleeting; true worth and validation comes only as we seek the Divine Will. Presidents, kings, and emperors will all be brought to the knowledge that, in the end, the greatest honor God bestows on any of His creatures is the simple title, “Friend.”



Exalter

Each of us is made for a specific purpose, unique to our individual creation, and it is only through seeking the Divine Will can we discern our true potential. The prayer stone, made from earth of Karbala, represents a prayerful heart and humble submission to God. When we give up our own selfish egos and come before our Creator with complete humility, we are blessed to see through the veils of the mortal world and realize the full purpose to our creation. It is only through kneeling in prayer that we find the path to Paradise.



Reliever

A symbol of God's mercy and grace is the miracle of a life-saving oasis, and the cool healing of the water sheltered there. This glass “medicine cabinet” houses a bottle of burn ointment, made from traditional remedies for healing and spiritual clarity, reflecting on the gift of God to heal the broken hearted, and to save the faithful from the fires of evil.

My Personal Response To Each Name ~ *Andrew Kosorok*

FOLLOWING THE TERRIBLE EVENTS of 9/11, one of the many faiths sheltered in the US, Islam, suddenly became a frightening mystery, and it became important to heal my own ignorance about this major world religion. Religious traditions are intended to help the faithful to become better people and to lead them into a better world; Islam is no different. I am a Christian, not a Muslim, and I determined to learn about a faith so misrepresented as to

no longer be recognizable to its faithful practitioners.

In the US, Islam is commonly understood through lenses of partial and poor information. As I began to learn more about this faith, I discovered the tradition of the 99 Most Beautiful Names from the Qur'an; the 99 Names are an index of God's infinite characteristics, simplified for the benefit of mortal minds. These are attributes of God that help the faithful

navigate their place in the universe relative to God, and provide direction for worship and emulation. They form a practical point from which to start the exploration of another faith.

My personal response to each Name—a synthesis of research and discussion with members of Sunni, Shi'a, and Sufi communities—is sculpted with cold-worked flat glass, a traditionally Occidental medium. The sculptures are built with three

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Compassionate and Merciful

At the opening of many chapters in the Qur'an, God's Names of The Compassionate and The Merciful are invoked; these seem to be among the most widely used of the traditional 99 Names. The sculpture Compassionate is modeled on a simplified mosque, holding an oasis which in turn shelters a vial of the mystical "Universal Medicine" from Islamic alchemical tradition. The dome is covered with phases of the moon, representing the timelessness of God's attention towards His creatures. The sculpture Merciful is modeled after basilica structures—early Islam repurposed many buildings in the areas proselytized, and recycled architectural structures that had fallen into disrepair. The opening of the sculpture directs the viewer to the back walls of the structure, with stylized acanthus leaves and a Fremont-style petroglyph of an open hand. Acanthus leaves growing in a desert environment mark water sources, and became a symbol for early Muslims of the hidden mercies of a benevolent God. The open hand is not intended to be a representation of God, but as in ancient petroglyph use, is a symbol of welcome, acceptance, and invitation.

My Personal Response

Continued from previous page

primary considerations in their design: architectural form, medieval bookbinding techniques, and awareness of mathematical and spatial geometry. One early point I learned as an artist is that in Islam, rather than in my own Christian tradition, it is inappropriate to represent God as having human form, so the sculptures are symbolic abstractions rather than illustrations. In addition to being a tangible record of my personal journey towards understanding, the project is designed to provide a positive, non-confrontational environment to learn about a misunderstood and poorly represented portion of our American neighborhood and the world stage. There will be a total of 100 sculptures, projected to be finished by the close of 2012.

As the works are completed they are displayed in a variety of venues including church and community groups, community art centers, libraries, and traditional galleries, in groups of 5 to 13 works. At each exhibit, I speak about the genesis of the project and my intent, and an invited member of the local Muslim community speaks about the personal meaning of the 99 Most Beautiful Names and what it means to be Muslim; after which, patrons are invited to ask questions. The exhibitions are documented online so members of the international community are able to see the progress of the project and interest in the ongoing process.

For further information on the project or about the exhibits, please visit <http://ghostriverstudios.wordpress.com/> or email me at ghostriverstudios@gmail.com.



At All Rivers we believe that religious and spiritual practices are healthy for individuals and communities. We think people would benefit by attending and supporting their local church, synagogue, mosque, or temple.

All Rivers website, www.allrivers.org, was built to help people to find a path that works for them by providing listings and links to places of worship, as well as actual teachings in the form of videos and articles provided by the religious organizations themselves.

This way, we hope people can quickly find a place of worship that they would like to join. We encourage our listed organizations to make a short video showing the inside and outside of their place, and some scenes of the congregation in service or doing activities, these are very popular with visitors to our site. Video teachings like sermons, lectures, discussions are very helpful as well.

We have no preference, and wish to support all traditions. We encourage all religious organizations to list with us, and provide video and written content that expresses their tradition in their own way. Listing on our site, or posting your news, videos and articles is free for non-profit religious organizations. All Rivers is supported solely by the donations of those who appreciate our work.

If your organization is in need of web design and internet services, or audio and video production, we are very capable and would be happy to discuss your needs and provide a bid for those types of services. Please visit our site at www.allrivers.org or contact Bruce Lambson directly for information.

801-244-4940 or bruce@allrivers.org












India Cultural Center Inauguration

The newly constructed India Cultural Center of Utah (ICCU) in South Jordan was inaugurated by Gov. Gary Herbert on April 1st. He did the honors of ribbon cutting and gave a short speech about the









possibilities the new center would provide within the Indian community. The event consisted of priestly prayers, dances to Ganesh (the Hindu God who brings faith to remove obstacles), and food served by a catering center backed up by the Royal India restaurant. All in all a very successful event.


















April Religious Holidays

-  4th New Year, 12th Ramayana (*Hindu*)
-  4th 52nd True Parents' Day (*Unification Church*) (March 1st by Lunar Calendar)
- 5th Qingming (*Traditional Chinese*) Chinese Traditional day to observe spring and tend graves of the dead
-  14th Baisakhi (*Sikh*) In Sikhi the day commemorates the founding of the Khalsa, a distinctive Sikh brotherhood
-  17th Palm Sunday (*Christian*) Celebration of the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem
- 17th Mahavir Jayanti (*Jain*) Jain festival honoring Lord Mahavira on the founder's birthday
-  18th-21st Theravadin (*Buddhist*)
-  18th Lord's Eve Meal (*Jehovah Witnesses*) Primary annual celebration taking place in the evening
- 18th Hanuman Jayanti (*Hindu*) Hindu celebration of Hanuman who was an embodiment of Lord Rama
-  19th-26th Pesach (Passover) (*Jewish*) Eight day celebration of the deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt
-  21st-29th Start of Ridvan (*Baha'i*) Commemoration of the twelve day period in 1863 when Baha'u'llah declared that he was God's messenger for this age. Work is to be suspended on days 1, 9, and 12 of the festival
-  21st Maundy Thursday (*Christian*) Observance of the first Lord's Supper during Holy Week
-  22nd Good (Holy) Friday (*Christian*) Remembrance of the crucifixion of Jesus and related events
-  24th Easter (*Christian*) Commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ from his death by crucifixion

May Religious Holidays

-  1st Yom HaSho'ah (The Holocaust) (*Jewish*)
-  Beltane (Northern) or Samhain (Southern Hemisphere) (*Wiccan*)
Celebration of the conjoining of the goddess with the energy of the god in the sacred marriage which is the basis of all creation
-  2nd Twelfth Day of Ridvan (*Baha'i*)
- 5th National Day of Prayer - Interfaith USA
-  9th Yom Ha'Atzmaut (Independence Day) (*Jewish*)
-  17th Buddah Day - Visakha Puja (*Buddhist*)
Celebration of the birthday of Buddha
-  22nd Lag B'Omer (*Jewish*)
Jewish observation of the counting of the days – the link between Pesach and Shavout
-  23rd Declaration of the Bab (*Baha'i*)
Baha'i recognition of the declaration in 1844 by Ali Muhammed that he is the anticipated "Coming One" of all religions
-  29th Ascension of Baha'u'llah (*Baha'i*)
Baha'i recollection of the death of Baha'u'llah, the founder

June Religious Holidays

-  2nd Ascension of Jesus Christ (*Orthodox Christian and Christian*) Christian recognition of the departure of Jesus from earth after the resurrection
-  2nd Day of All True Things (*Unification Church*) (May 1 by Lunar Calendar)
-  8-9th Shavuot (*Jewish*) Jewish celebration of Moses' descent from Mt Sinai with the Ten Commandments
-  9th Saint Columba of Iona (*Celtic Christian*) Christian recognition of Columba who began the famous community of Iona off the coast of Scotland in 563
-  12th Pentecost (*Christian*)
-  16th Guru Arjan Dev martyrdom (*Sikh*) Time of remembering those who have suffered for the faith
-  19th All Saints (*Orthodox Christian*) Day for honoring persons with reputations for unusual lives of holiness and devotion to God or who were martyred for their faith
-  19th New Church Day (*Swedenborgian Christian*)
-  19th Trinity Sunday (*Christian*) Honoring the belief in one God with a threefold nature
-  19th Timkat (*Ethiopian Orthodox Christian*) Epiphany celebration of the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River
-  19th First Nations Day (*Canadian Native People*) (Indian, Metis and Inuit) Most sacred day on the summer solstice
-  19th Litha (*Wicca*) Celebration of the sacred marriage in which energy of the gods is poured into the service of life
-  23rd Corpus Christi (*Catholic Christian*) Celebration in recognition of the Eucharist, the Blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ
-  28th Lailat al Miraj (*Islam*) Islamic observance of Mohammed's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and his ascension to heaven
-  29th Saints Peter and Paul (*Christian*) Catholic Christian honoring of the disciples chosen by Jesus to give leadership to the church

The Salt Lake Interfaith Roundtable Meet the Board Members

~ Josie Stone



Josie Stone came to the United States in 1962 from England with her military husband and young family. She grew up in the Anglican Church tradition but frequent moves made it difficult to establish a faith base in the United States complicated by a nurse practitioner career that involved irregular hours. Such was the case until 1982 when she arrived in California and was quickly adopted by a small Mission Episcopalian church whose Minister was an engaging example of faith, diversity and inclusiveness.

In 2003 a move to Salt Lake Valley once again saw her searching for a spiritual base and quickly the Cathedral Church of St. Mark's, a warm reminder of her British roots, became her home. The inclusiveness and respect for all people and the sense of community found there was an inspiration. Through Ministers serving there she was invited to attend the Interfaith Roundtable meetings some years ago and this was to

become an unforgettable experience. With her own small Clinical and Medical Education company she travels frequently around the world providing educational opportunities for people to improve health related issues. She has seen close up just how precious life is and how we must constantly be committed in bringing respect, a sense of worth, and dignity to all peoples of the world regardless of social standing, faith, and cultural differences.

Chairing the Interfaith Month activities this year, she feels, not only exposed her to so many wonderful co-workers on the Committee and the Interfaith Roundtable but allowed an unforgettable experience of seeing firsthand the hard work, the indomitable faith, and spiritual commitment in this, our own community, united in making our world a better place one day at a time. This Endeavour was humbling and unforgettable experience.

Jewish / Muslim Panel Discussion & Interactive Group

In an ongoing effort to find the commonalities in our religious traditions, a committee of Jewish and Muslim leaders and educators met at Congregation Kol Ami synagogue on April 6th, 2011, for a panel discussion and interactive dialogue. Kay Brief of the Social Action Committee of Kol Ami chaired the group.

The panel and group was formed to promote inter-action and dialogue between these two major world religions, who are often as not misunderstood by each other, as well as the rest of the world. It was discovered that there are many traits and points of commonality. The Koran and Torah were referenced, finding agreement on such figures as Ismael, Isaac, Moses, and Abraham. Both traditions believe in a "messianic age" to come; promoting justice to all; worshipping God freely; and doing charitable works in our communities.

Our hope is to better foster tolerance and peace among us. The success of the meeting prompted a future desire for a joint dinner and other interfaith activities.

Be a part of our Interfaith work!

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.

Please mail your check or money order to:

Salt Lake Interfaith Roundtable
P.O. Box 112016
Salt Lake City, UT 84147

or go to <http://www.interfaithroundtable.org> and click on the "Donations" tab to pay through PayPal.

Thank you!



THE ROUNDTABLE

Increasing Harmony and Understanding
in our Communities

Find us at www.interfaithroundtable.org