

From: Dr. Hassan Amoud
Sent: Wednesday, January 26, 2019, 9:39 AM
To: Janne Eller-Isaacs; Rob Eller-Isaacs
Subject: Request to rent Unity space for use as mosque

Dear Reverend Eller-Isaacs,

I am writing on behalf of a group of 25 of your Muslim neighbors living in the apartment building at Farrington Ave and N. Ravoux Street, not far from your church. For several years we have met for Friday night prayers in the basement of our apartment building, but our faithful group is now too large for that space. We are seeking a hall or room to use every Friday. The time will change somewhat throughout the year, as sunset is affected by the seasons and the hour by Daylight Savings time. We have had trouble finding another space willing to rent to our group. We can pay a modest amount of rent. Thank you for your consideration. Please let us know if this arrangement might be possible.

Salaam,
Dr. Hassan Amoud

From: Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs
Sent: Wednesday, January 26, 2019 10:56 AM
To: Dr. Hassan Amoud
Subject: Re: Your request

Dear Dr. Amoud,

I write as a representative of the Unity Church Executive Team to tell you how delighted we are to have received your request. Unitarianism owes a great debt of gratitude to Islam. Our tradition was born in 16th century Transylvania during the time when that small principality was under the protection of Suliman the Magnificent. It was the disciplined respect of the religions of others which marked his reign and that of his successors which made it possible for our faith to be founded. We are honored to be able to return some small portion of that respect by providing your community with a place to pray.

I have been asked to invite you and anyone you would like to bring with you to tour the building and meet to discuss your needs. I have every confidence that we will be able to come to an arrangement. I would be glad to meet with you this coming Wednesday at 4:00pm. We also invite you and others you may choose to bring to dine with us at 6:00pm when we gather for our weekly Wellspring Wednesday program. I look forward to meeting you and welcoming you and your community to Unity Church.

Yours,
Rob Eller-Isaacs

... and here is what that announcement might look like in the monthly church newsletter:

CommUnity: Local Mosque Will Share Our Space

Building on a long tradition of service to the larger community, Unity Church is delighted to welcome Warasheen Majidul to our church. This local Mosque serves a small community of our Muslim neighbors. They will be using the Ames Chapel for Friday prayers. Our faith was founded in 16th century Transylvania under the protection of the Suliman Turks. The Board and Ministers of Unity Church see welcoming our Muslim neighbors as an opportunity both to live out our values and in some small way to acknowledge our historic debt to the spiritual ancestors of our neighbors.

Here is what Janne said she would announce during worship on Sunday:

Recently we were approached by a group of Muslims who are looking for a place to hold Friday evening worship. They have requested using the Ames Chapel for their services. I am excited about this possibility and want to communicate my enthusiastic endorsement. Having been on the receiving end of another congregation's hospitality, I know how it feels to be welcomed with genuine warmth and good will. I believe that our inclusive faith informs our decision and supports moving forward. I propose a sub-group made up of Unity folks (lay and professionals) and folks from the Muslim group meet to clarify what issues need to be addressed if we are to share space and that group make recommendations to both congregations. This is exciting and we will all learn from the relationship.