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FORUM

# EVERY ONE

Together for Peace in a Time of Outrage

OCT 22-23, 2023 • PHOENIX, AZ

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## PRESS RELEASE

# Multi-Faith Neighbors Network to Host 'EveryONE: Together for Peace in a Time of Outrage' Global Faith Forum Gathers Christian, Jewish and Muslim Communities in Phoenix, Oct. 22-23

**PHOENIX, Ariz., Oct. 10, 2023** — To address the topics of civility, citizenship and how to be a good neighbor from a variety of religious perspectives, Multi-Faith Neighbors Network (MFNN) today announced its annual Global Faith Forum, to be held Oct. 22-23, 2023 in Phoenix, Arizona. With a theme of "EveryONE," the event will discuss how everyone, individually and as a whole, can work to build peace in a time of outrage.

"The Global Faith Forum will spearhead a discussion that is so important in today's world: building bridges in our communities and promoting collaboration for the common good," said Pastor Bob Roberts, Jr., co-founder of MFNN. "This will require recognizing and embracing diversity, seeking out opportunities for partnership, being willing to have difficult conversations and taking risks. As we work towards these objectives, I believe we can build stronger, interconnected communities that reflect the richness of God's love and grace."

Outrage is consuming our society, with anger and hostility permeating every facet of life. Recent studies report that political polarization in the U.S. has reached a record high, resulting in an epidemic of cancel culture and a breakdown of empathy and understanding. Kindness and accountability have been abandoned in favor of political expediency and discrimination among religions is still high.

"It is time to reverse these trends. We must engage in civil discourse and embrace diverse perspectives, before it's too late," said co-host Imam Mohamed Magid, executive Imam of All Dulles Area Muslim Society. "Honest dialogue leads to communities that are more interconnected and resilient to hate, violence and polarization."

The Global Faith Forum will be co-hosted by Multi-Faith Neighbors Network and Dr. Mohammad Al-Issa and The Muslim World League. Sunday night will highlight speakers from each faith group and a keynote from Dr. Al-Issa and US Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom Rashad Hussain. There will be break-out sessions on Monday, including: Religion and Race; Religion and Women; Religion and Citizenship; and Religion and Media.

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## PRESS RELEASE

Phoenix is a great location for this year's Global Faith Forum. It is a great example of a MFNN city that has experienced religious tension yet has seen the tremendous impact of multi-faith partnerships," said Micah Fries, director of programs for MFNN.

Featured speakers will include:

- Dr. Mohammad Al-Issa, secretary general of Muslim World League;
- Co-Founder Amb. David Saperstein, former Ambassador of International Religious Freedom
- Co-founder Bob Roberts, Jr., founder of GlocalNet, co-founder of Multi-Faith Neighbors Network, President of Institute of Global Engagement and Global Senior Pastor of Northwood Church in Keller, Texas;
- Co-founder Imam Mohamed Magid, executive Imam of All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS), chairman of International Interfaith Peace Corps (IIPC) and former president of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA);
- Amb. Rashad Hussain, U.S. Ambassador for International Religious Freedom;
- Amb. Dr. Suzan Johnson Cook, former U.S. Ambassador for International Religious Freedom;
- Rev. A.R. Bernard, Christian Cultural Center;
- Paige Alexander, The Carter Center;
- Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, Skinner Leadership Institute;
- Nadine Maenza, Secretariat, International Religious Freedom;
- Rabbi Cassi Kail, Temple Beth El;
- Dr. Yasir Qadhi, Fiqh Council of North America;
- Dr. John Azumah, Sanneh Institute;
- Jo Anne Lyon, The Wesleyan Church.

Whether you're a religious leader like a Pastor, Imam or Rabbi, or a person of faith, the Global Faith Forum presents an opportunity to understand the issues related to faith and culture in the 21st century.

"Our hope is that this event will be a model for the very kind of society and world that all of us are trying to build – one where community, cooperation, and the common good are respected," said Rabbi David Saperstein.

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The event will be held at Central Christian Church, located at 933 N Lindsay Rd, Mesa, Arizona, 85213. Tickets may be obtained with a \$5.00 donation per person or \$10 per family. Registration is required as there are limited spots available.

To learn more about the Global Faith Forum and to register, visit [globalfaithforum.com](http://globalfaithforum.com).

### **About Multi-Faith Neighbors Network**

Multi-Faith Neighbors Network (MFNN) is co-founded and led by Pastor Dr. Bob Roberts, Jr., Imam Mohamed Magid and Rabbi David Saperstein to bring together an imam, pastor and rabbi in each local city across America to do good works, spread love to one another and establish resilient communities. MFNN builds mutual trust and respect among faith leaders through civic engagement, authentic relationships, and honest dialogue leading to resilient, compassionate, and flourishing communities – communities that are more interconnected and resilient to hate, violence, and polarization. The co-founders of MFNN were honored by the White House as “Uniters” in 2022 for building relationships across faiths. Currently, MFNN has engaged more than 180 congregations working together across disciplines - Religious Freedom and Multi-Faith Engagement. To learn more about Multi-Faith Neighbors Network, visit [mfnn.org](http://mfnn.org).

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## BACKGROUND

Founded by Pastor Bob Roberts Jr., Imam Mohamed Magid and Amb. David Saperstein, the Global Faith Forum is a gathering of unlikely allies committed to working together to build flourishing communities in our nation and across the world. The event's goal is to move from having a conversation about others to having a conversation with others. The Global Faith Forum brings together distinct and conservative bodies of faith for greater understanding while approaching differences with grace and humility.

In the tumultuous years following September 2001, Bob Roberts was doing mission trips in Afghanistan and Iraq, helping to set up clinics, orphanages, and schools. Roberts met a number of local Muslim clerics and began to work them. This inspired Roberts to bring the same type of collaboration, even with those who believe differently, back to the United States.

Evangelicals have historically had skeptical feelings about Muslims, particularly since the events of September 11, 2001. In 2014 and 2017, the Pew Research Center noted the negative and suspicious feelings Evangelicals hold toward Muslims. Yet, the same studies showed that feelings toward other religious groups became warmer when someone was personally familiar with a person in that faith group.

To help better understand those who believe differently and end the suspicion and fear amongst religious groups, the Global Faith Forum was established, with events held previously in 2010, 2013, 2015 and 2022. The gathering was covered by the Dallas Morning News, Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN), Religion News Service, American Muslim Today, The Jerusalem Post and Christianity Today, among other media outlets.

Together, the Global Faith Forum and Multi-Faith Neighbors Network aim to build resilient and flourishing communities that work together for the common good.



## FACT SHEET

### Event Overview:

Outrage is consuming our society, with anger and hostility permeating every facet of life. Recent studies report that political polarization in the US has reached a record high, resulting in cancel culture and a breakdown of empathy. Kindness and accountability have been abandoned in favor of political expediency, putting the very foundations of our democracy at risk. The Global Faith Forum is a step toward reversing this trend, engaging in civil discourse and embracing diverse perspectives before it's too late. Our future depends on it.

The event will be co-hosted by Pastor Bob Roberts, Jr. and Imam Mohamed Magid, co-founders of Multi-Faith Neighbors Network.

### Event Theme:

EveryONE - Together for Peace in a Time of Outrage

### Event Details:

- Sunday, October 22, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., featuring keynote speakers:
  - Amb. Rashad Hussain, U.S. Ambassador for International Religious Freedom
  - Dr. Mohammad Al-Issa, secretary general of Muslim World League
- Monday, October 23, 2023, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., featuring breakout sessions, including:
  - Religion and Race
  - Religion and Women
  - Religion and Citizenship
  - Religion and Media.

### Location and Ticket Information:

Central Christian Church  
933 N Lindsay Rd.  
Mesa, AZ 85213

Tickets may be obtained with a \$5.00 donation per person or \$10 per family. Registration is required as there are limited spots available.

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# FACT SHEET

## Featured Speakers:

- **Dr. Mohammad Al-Issa**, secretary general of Muslim World League;
- **Co-Founder Amb. David Saperstein**, former Ambassador of International Religious Freedom
- **Co-founder Bob Roberts, Jr.**, founder of GlocalNet, co-founder of Multi-Faith Neighbors Network and Global Senior Pastor of Northwood Church in Keller, Texas;
- **Co-founder Imam Mohamed Magid**, executive Imam of All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS), chairman of International Interfaith Peace Corps (IIPC) and former president of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA);
- **Amb. Rashad Hussain**, U.S. Ambassador for International Religious Freedom;
- **Amb. Dr. Suzan Johnson Cook**, former U.S. Ambassador for International Religious Freedom;
- **Rev. A.R. Bernard**, Christian Cultural Center;
- **Paige Alexander**, The Carter Center;
- **Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner**, Skinner Leadership Institute;
- **Nadine Maenza**, Secretariat, International Religious Freedom;
- **Rabbi Cassi Kail**, Temple Beth El;
- **Dr. Yasir Qadhi**, Fiqh Council of North America;
- **Dr. John Azumah**, Sanneh Institute;
- **Jo Anne Lyon**, The Wesleyan Church.





## Pastor Bob Roberts, Jr.

Pastor Bob Roberts, Jr., is the founder of GlocalNet, a nonprofit dedicated to church-planting and mobilizing the church to transform the public square; founder and chairman of Glocal Ventures Inc. (GVI), an organization dedicated to socio-economic growth in Vietnam & other nations around the world; and co-founder of Multi-Faith Neighbors Network (MFNN), a multi-faith organization who aims to create international religious freedom through intentional cross-cultural relationships. He currently serves as the Global Senior Pastor of Northwood Church in Keller, Texas and host of the Bold Love podcast.



Over the past 20 years Roberts has been a trailblazer in the multi-faith peacemaking and international religious freedom arenas, frequently being called upon by the U.S. Department of State, United Nations, U.S. Islamic World Forum, World Economic Forum, ambassadors, international royal families, diplomats, policy leaders and others for his groundbreaking work in this emerging field. He seeks to build and execute a model whereby multi-faith and church planting combine to create flourishing and resilient cities. Roberts has had the honor of engaging in bridge-building efforts in Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Israel, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Egypt, The West Bank, Iraq, Kuwait, Iran, Mexico, Brazil, Australia and other nations.

Roberts is the author of six books: Transformation, Glocalization, The Multiplying Church, Real Time Connection, Bold as Love and Lessons from the East. He has also been published in the New York Times, Washington Post, Christianity Today and other leading national newspapers and publications.

Roberts is a graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary (Doctorate of Ministry), Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (Masters of Divinity) and Baylor University (BA). He married his high school sweetheart, Niki, and together they have two children and three grandchildren.





## Imam Mohamed Magid

Imam Mohamed Magid is the Executive Imam of All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS) Center in Sterling, Virginia. He is the Chairman of International Interfaith Peace Corps (IIPC) and the former President of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA). He is also the Chairman of Muflehun, a think tank that focuses on confronting violent extremist thought through research-driven preventative programs within a religious paradigm. Imam Magid has a long history of commitment to public service through organizations, such as The Peaceful Families Project.



Imam Magid has co-authored three books: Before You Tie the Knot: A Guide for Couples, Reflections on the Qur'an, and Change from Within. He has helped in organizing training and workshops for Imams and religious leaders, domestically and internationally, on the issue of violence against women. Imam Magid is also leading an initiative to protect religious minorities in Muslim majority countries through seminars and Imam training workshops. He has written for the Washington Post and Huffington Post and has been profiled in Time Magazine and Wall Street Journal. He is the recipient of the Washingtonian of the Year 2009 and the Human Rights Award 2005 from Fairfax County.



## Amb. David Saperstein

Designated by Newsweek Magazine as the most influential rabbi in America and by the Washington Post as the “quintessential religious lobbyist on Capitol Hill,” David Saperstein, for decades, directed the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, representing the Reform Jewish Movement, the largest segment of American Jewry, to Congress and the Administration.



For over two years (2015-2017), Rabbi Saperstein served our nation as the U.S. Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, carrying out his responsibilities as the country’s chief diplomat on religious freedom issues. Also an attorney, he taught seminars on Church –State law and Jewish Law for 35 years at Georgetown University Law Center.

During his career, Rabbi Saperstein has served as the chair or co-chair of several national interreligious coalitions including the Coalition to Preserve Religious Liberty and served on the boards or executive committees of numerous national organizations including the NAACP, People for The American Way, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the National Religious Partnership on the Environment and the World Faith Development Dialogue.

A prolific writer and speaker, Rabbi Saperstein has appeared on a number of television news and talk shows including Oprah, Nightline, Lehrer News Hour, ABC’s Sunday Morning, Crossfire, the Rachel Maddow Show, Hardball, Meet the Press, and the O’Reilly Factor. His articles have appeared in the Washington Post, New York Times, and Harvard Law Review. His latest book is Jewish Dimensions of Social Justice: Tough Moral Choices of Our Time.

He currently serves as a Senior Fellow at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service’s Center for Jewish Civilization as well as the Senior Advisor for Strategy and Policy for the Union for Reform Judaism.



## SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What is the purpose of the Global Faith Forum?
- What inspired you to create an event that brings together leaders from evangelical, Jewish and Muslim faiths?
- How did you become interested in being a bridge builder of faiths?
- Please share examples of how the Global Faith Forum has brought together unlikely allies to bring about transformational change in communities.
- What do you hope attendees will take away from the 2023 Global Faith Forum?
- What is the significance of this year's theme "EveryONE"?
- How have you personally overcome preconceived judgments or ideas about other religions?
- Have you seen evidence that people's hearts and minds can be changed, specifically relating to other religions?
- Where should people go if they're interested in supporting or getting involved in the work you're doing?
- How can someone find out more information about the Global Faith Forum?



# WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

## **Global Faith Forum:**

- Website: [www.globalfaithforum.com](http://www.globalfaithforum.com)

## **Multi-Faith Neighbors Network:**

- Website: [www.mfnn.org](http://www.mfnn.org)
- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/mfnnetwork](http://www.facebook.com/mfnnetwork)
- Instagram: [www.instagram.com/mfnnetwork](http://www.instagram.com/mfnnetwork)