

ISLAMIC ORGANIZATION of NORTH AMERICA

News Release: February 23, 2021

Imam Steve Mustapha Elturk Recipient of IFLC Interfaith Leader Award

“Do [as you will], for God will see your deeds, and [so, will] His Messenger and the believers.” (9:105)



On Monday, February 22, 2021, the InterFaith Leadership Council of Metropolitan Detroit (IFLC) in their annual special virtual event honored three interfaith leaders for their commitment and contribution to the society at large. They are, Fr. Norman Thomas, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Detroit; DION (Detroit Interfaith Outreach Network); and Imam Steve Mustapha Elturk, president of the Islamic Organization of North America (IONA).

IFLC is “pleased to honor Father Thomas and Imam Elturk as unwavering positive examples of interfaith leadership in our community,” the promotional kit advertised.

The Vice Chairman of IFLC Mr. Robert Bruttell reveals, “Steve took the responsibility very seriously when the Warren community was refusing to accept his mosque.” “Imam Elturk introduced his mosque and Islam to the community in Warren and the larger community in Macomb county.” “Using that energy (he is) set to transform the Warren city government and make it into something more positive.”

In his remarks to Mr. Bruttell, U.S. Representative for Michigan's 9th congressional district, where IONA mosque is located, Rep. Levin wrote, “Imam Elturk is a treasured leader in the 9th district whose work as an Imam and organizer and ally has impacted so many. From his work to promote understanding of Islam to his commitment to organizing across communities to his strong voice on issues like racial justice and clean affordable water, Imam Elturk stands out as a true interfaith leader.” Rep. Levin closed his remarks by saying, “In our own friendship I have always valued the opportunity to hear Imam Elturk’s sage thoughts about the state of the world and what we need to do about it.”

Imam Elturk graciously accepted the award on behalf of IONA and the interfaith community whom without the much needed change in hearts in Warren and elsewhere would not be achieved. Imam Elturk is grateful for this recognition. He attributes his achievements to the collective tireless work of Fr. Gary Shulte of St. Sylvester Church, Rev. Roger Facione of the Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, and Rev. Michail Curro, former Executive Director of the Interfaith Center for Racial Justice.



From L to R: Rev. Michail Curro, Fr. Gary Shulte, Rev. Roger Facione, and Imam Steve Elturk

“My motivation to work for social justice stems from centuries old scripture, the Holy Quran,” Imam Elturk acknowledges. “It would be nice to live in a perfect world but we don’t,” he added. According to Imam Elturk wishful thinking and prayers alone don’t work. “It is through our collective efforts that evil can be controlled and better yet transformed, it is our shared responsibility toward humanity.” He believes that only by acting, things happen. “When we act there is always hope and when there is hope, dreams do come true,” the Imam asserts.

In his final remarks, Mr. Bruttell says, “(He) follows his own Islamic values and gives an example to all of us. It’s been a real honor and pleasure to know and to call Steve Mustapha Elturk my friend.”

The InterFaith Leadership Council of Metropolitan Detroit brings people of many faiths together to work toward a harmonious community based on our highest and best values.

Imam Elturk, Ameer of the Islamic Organization of North America, left his thriving electronics consultancy business in 2007 to dedicate his life to the cause of Justice and social change. He served on IFLC board as Treasurer for eight years. Imam Elturk is an active member of the Religious Leaders Forum, organized and coordinated by IFLC. He serves on the advisory board of the Michigan Coalition of Human Rights (MCHR) and co-founding member of the American Human Rights Council (AHRC). He is active with the People’s Water Board’s Faith Outreach Committee advocating for water affordability plan, safe and clean water.

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IONA’s mission is to transform its members and help transform the surrounding communities to righteous, God-fearing people, who collectively strive for the highest moral standard and constantly seek forgiveness from our Creator to earn His pleasure. We seek His compassion and mercy in this life and in the hereafter. We rejuvenate our soul through internal struggle and spiritual exercise in worship of our creator God. The strength of our belief in God gives us the courage to establish good and forbid evil, thus promoting a system of justice for all mankind.

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