



NEWSLETTER

Volume 17 | Issue 11

November 2023 | Rabi al-Akhar - Jumada al-Awal 1445

You are indeed the best community evolved for mankind, enjoying what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. [Aal Imran, 3:110]

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*"The greatest struggle (jihad) is to speak the truth in front of a tyrannical ruler."
[Abu Dawud]*

Press Release

IONA Condemns Attack on Hospital in Gaza

[Warren, 10-17-2023] — The Islamic Organization of North America (IONA) strongly condemns and is deeply saddened and outraged by the horrific massacre perpetrated by the Israeli government....

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First Friday sermon starts at 12:10 PM and the second one starts at 1:20 PM



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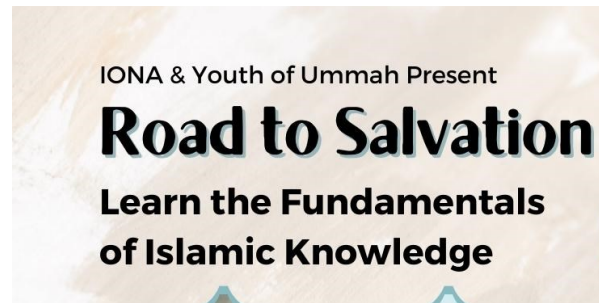
Monthly Family Dinner November 17th, 7:00PM

Bring your family and friends to spend an evening with your community.



A Cry for Justice ... | More on page 4

In the turbulent seas of global politics, there are moments when we must pause and reflect on the profound implications of certain events and actions....



IONA & Youth of Ummah Present

Road to Salvation Learn the Fundamentals of Islamic Knowledge

Road to Salvation

Special program for ages 14 and up.

| More on page 2

Announcements

We are excited to announce a new YOU Director. Br. Sayed Khan has been appointed to lead the Youth of Ummah (YOU), taking over from Br. Shafi Uddin. This transition marks a new and promising chapter for our community and its youth.

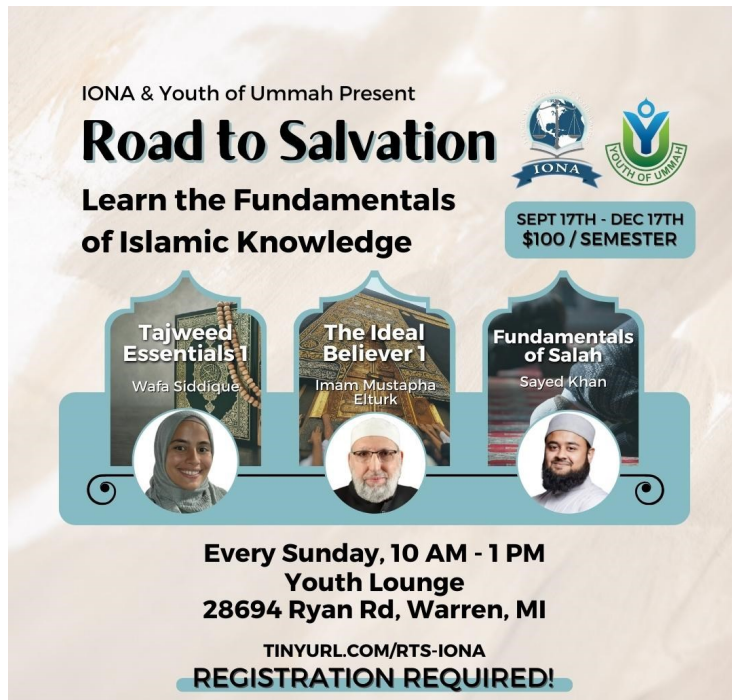
On behalf of the IONA board and our entire community, I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Br. Shafi Uddin for his dedicated efforts in reorganizing and revitalizing the youth community, especially after a long pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic. His commitment and leadership have laid a solid foundation for the growth of the Youth of Ummah.

Br. Sayed Khan brings a wealth of experience and a deep connection to our community. He has been an integral part of the YOU since 2014, during which he led the Junior basketball and soccer leagues. His commitment to nurturing the youth extends to teaching fundamental Islamic knowledge through the YOU Road to Salvation program.

We are enthusiastic about the positive impact that Br. Sayed Khan will undoubtedly bring to our youth community and the broader IONA family. The youth are the cornerstone of our future, and with his leadership, we are confident that the YOU will continue to flourish and thrive.

Please join us in extending a warm and wholehearted welcome to Br. Sayed Khan. We look forward to the exciting journey ahead as we empower and inspire the youth of our community.

Imam Mustapha Elturk



IONA & Youth of Ummah Present

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Imam Mustapha Elturk

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Sayed Khan

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Press Release

IONA Condemns Attack on Hospital in Gaza

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IONA Strongly Condemns Barbaric Attack on Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital in Gaza

[Warren, 10-17-2023] — The Islamic Organization of North America (IONA) strongly condemns and is deeply saddened and outraged by the horrific massacre perpetrated by the Israeli government as it launched a devastating bombing campaign on the Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital in Gaza. This abhorrent act has resulted in the tragic loss of over 500 innocent lives, among them children, women, doctors, and nurses. The hospital, once a place of healing, has been transformed into a heartbreaking graveyard.

This barbaric and heinous attack on civilians in Gaza is an affront to the principles of humanity and must be condemned by all people of conscience. We call on individuals, institutions, and governments across the world to unite in strong condemnation of this act of violence.

We urge the Biden administration to exercise its influence and employ diplomatic means to pressure the Israeli government to halt the ongoing violence, thereby bringing an end to the conflict that has caused immense suffering.

Our heartfelt condolences and prayers go out to the families of the victims, who are enduring unimaginable pain and loss. In these trying times, we fervently pray for an end to the ongoing carnage and for the establishment of lasting peace in the region.

IONA remains committed to advocating for justice, peace, and the well-being of all individuals. We stand in solidarity with the innocent victims and their families, and we will continue our efforts to promote a world where such senseless violence has no place.

END



Mustapha Elturk
Ameer

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Sayed Khan

How to Taste the Sweetness of Iman? - Part 2

A true believer will never reject any of Allah's commands despite his infallibility or inability to enforce all of Allah's commands. While recognizing our weaknesses one should never despair from Allah's grace. One must implore Allah (SWT) for help believing that He alone can help. One develops the sense of conviction (*yaqin*) and confidence that He, the almighty, will take care of him or her. The sweet taste of iman comes from the constant struggle against one's baser self for the sole purpose of obeying Allah (SWT).

Sadly, God has been stripped from His authority. The sweetness of iman may be tasted through the strenuous struggle exerting maximum effort to re-establish Allah's authority in this world making Islam a concrete historical reality.

Surah al-Shura lays this responsibility upon the believers, the same responsibility that was once enjoined upon the great willed and determined messengers. *"In matters of faith, He ordained for you that which He enjoined upon Noah, that which We have revealed to you (O Muhammad), as well as that which We had enjoined upon Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, that you establish the deen and divide not therein."* [al-Shura, 42:13] Conscious believers do their very best to uphold Islam in their lives wherever they may be.

Believers who are mindful of their duties promote and disseminate the ideology and worldview of Islam to the masses sharing this great blessing as our Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his noble companions did. It is through such efforts; treading the footsteps of Allah's last and final noble, upright, honest, and truthful Prophet and Messenger Muhammad (SAW), one may taste the sweetness of iman. Thus, I am pleased with Muhammad (SAW) as a Messenger.

Being pleased and content with Muhammad (SAW) as a messenger implies:

Complete obedience to him: Allah (SWT) has commanded the believers to obey Muhammad (SAW) *"O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the messenger."* [al-Nisa', 4:59]. Similarly, *"Say (O Prophet), 'Obey Allah and the Messenger.'" [Aal 'Imran, 3:32]*

As a matter of fact, obeying Allah's Messenger (SAW) is in essence obedience to Allah (SWT). *Whoever obeys the Messenger has indeed obeyed Allah."* [al-Nisa', 4:80] Believers who obey Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW) will be in the best company in the hereafter. *"And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger will be in the company of those whom Allah has blessed among the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous. And what an excellent companionship!" [al-Nisa', 4:69]*

Unconditional love for him: It is incumbent upon the believers to love Muhammad (SAW) more than any-

one including oneself besides Allah (SWT). In an agreed upon hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah found in sahih al-Bukhari and Muslim, he (SAW) says, "None of you attains faith until I become dearer to him than his own son, father and all mankind."

Another authentic hadith found in the two sahih says, "[There are] three traits and whoever possesses them shall experience the sweetness of iman; to love Allah and His Messenger more than anyone else; to love people only for the sake of Allah; and to hate to return to disbelief after Allah has saved him from it as much as he hates to be thrown into Fire."

Follow his example: Contrary to obedience, one who is truly pleased and content with Muhammad (SAW) as Allah's Messenger would want to follow him in every aspect of one's life including the arduous journey he undertook to making His Lord Supreme. In one of His instructions, Allah (SWT) says, *"Say (O Prophet), 'If you love Allah, follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you your sins,' for Allah is Forgiving, Merciful"* [Aal 'Imran, 3:31].

Defend him: It is not a choice to defend our noble Prophet (SAW). Allah (SWT) commanded us

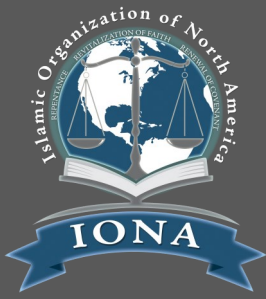
to do so, *"O you who believe! Obey Allah and His Messenger and do not turn away from him now that you hear (his message)" [al-Anfal, 8:20].* The Prophet of Allah survived many attacks in the past and will continue to triumph over the bigots and hate mongers who slander him and attack Islam. We must be proactive in our approach to dawah. The least we can do is convey to the masses one ayah on his behalf as he (SAW) instructed.

Therefore, in order to taste the sweetness of iman, one must unconditionally be pleased and content with Allah as the Master and Lord, Islam as the only true deen and way of life and to be pleased with Muhammad (SAW) as the seal of all prophets and Messengers who continued the legacy of his predecessors, preached, there is no god but Allah, and established Islam as a concrete historical reality.

The Prophet (SAW) instructed the believers, "Whoever says, when one hears the call to prayer (adhan) I testify that there is no god except Allah alone with no partners and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger. I am pleased with Allah as my Lord, with Muhammad as my Messenger, and with Islam as my deen, his/her sins will be forgiven" (Muslim).

May this statement move our hearts whenever it is uttered. Ameen

A Cry for Justice – How Black-Palestinian Solidarity is Rooted in Shared Trauma & Oppression



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In the turbulent seas of global politics, there are moments when we must pause and reflect on the profound implications of certain events and actions. As a writer, a Muslim, and above all, a human being, I find myself drawn to the haunting truth encapsulated in the following quote:

Each provocation and counter-provocation is contested and preached over. But the subsequent arguments, accusations and vows all serve as a distraction in order to divert world attention from a long-term military, economic and geographic practice whose political aim is nothing less than the liquidation of the Palestinian nation.

These words cut through the cacophony of rhetoric, exposing the heart of a matter overshadowed by debates, accusations, and political maneuvering. They serve as a stark reminder of the enduring suffering of the Palestinian people and the urgency of addressing the ongoing genocide and apartheid conditions in Gaza and the occupied territories.

The current violence began with a Hamas attack on Israel, this is true. But underlying it is decades of oppression, land stealing, the snuffing out of Palestinian lives, subjugation and an apartheid system that continue to be disproportionately ignored.

As a writer, I believe in the power of words to shed light on the darkest corners of our world. I am responsible for using my voice to raise awareness about the injustices perpetrated against the Palestinian people. To remain silent in the face of such atrocities would betray my duty as a writer and a human being.

But this issue goes beyond my identity as a writer; it resonates with me as a Black Muslim woman. It strikes at the core of my faith as a Muslim. In Islam, we are taught to stand up for justice, to speak out against oppression, and to show compassion and solidarity with those who are suffering. The plight of the Palestinian people is a moral issue that transcends borders and ideologies. It is a test of our humanity, and we must respond.

The situation in Gaza is often described as an "open-air prison," underscoring the inhumane conditions under which Palestinians are forced to live. It is a place where fundamental human rights are routinely violated, families are torn apart, and the essence of hope is continually eroded. Regardless of our backgrounds, it is incumbent upon all of us to bear witness to this injustice and demand change.

In this dark time for Palestinians, it is also crucial to acknowledge the importance of Black-Palestinian solidarity. The historical and ongoing oppression faced by both communities forms a powerful bond, highlighting the interconnectedness of their struggles:

1. Historical parallels: Black and Palestinian communities have endured a history marred by systemic discrimination and violence. For Black communities, this includes the legacy of slavery, segregation, and ongoing racial profiling. Palestinians, on the other hand, have faced forced displacement and occupation for generations. Recognizing these historical parallels allows us to empathize with the shared pain of oppression.

2. Solidarity as a source of strength: Black and Palestinian communities amplify their collective voices by joining forces and standing in solidarity. This unity fosters resilience and fortitude in the face of adversity. Together, they can draw from a rich tapestry of shared experiences and strategies for resistance, reinforcing their commitment to justice and equality.

3. Global impact: The alliance between Black and Palestinian communities extends beyond their respective regions. It resonates with marginalized communities worldwide, creating a global movement for justice and human rights. This solidarity is a potent reminder that the fight for equality is a universal struggle transcending borders, races and religions.

Want to learn more? Below are books and essays by writers and activists about Black and Palestine struggles:

[1. Freedom Is a Constant Struggle:](#) Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement

IONA's statement on the Ongoing Violence in the Holy Land

IONA Endorses the Imams Council of Michigan's Statement on the Ongoing Violence in the Middle East

Warren, 10/10/2023] — The Islamic Organization of North America (IONA) endorses the statement issued by the Imams Council of Michigan (ICM) regarding the ongoing violence and loss of innocent lives in the Middle East.

Imam Mustapha Elturk, Ameer of IONA and a dedicated member of the ICM, stands with the Council to express their profound sorrow and grief over the tragic loss of innocent lives in the ongoing conflict.

“The loss of innocent lives, including children, women, and civilians, is a tragedy that deeply saddens our hearts,” said Imam Elturk. “Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims, their families, and all those who are suffering during this challenging time,” he added.

The Imams Council of Michigan's Statement:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Ongoing Crisis in Gaza: A Call for Peace and Justice

(Detroit, MI, 10/13/2023) - The Imams Council of Michigan is deeply saddened by the ongoing violence in the Middle East and the tragic loss of civilian lives. Our hearts go out to the innocent Palestinian and Israeli civilians who have been affected by the recent events. We are especially concerned about the well-being and safety of the Palestinian people in Gaza, whose suffering under racial subjugation is [once again] being compounded by the Israeli war effort.

We acknowledge that the situation leading to this offensive is complex and multifaceted, and we urge all parties involved to consider the following factors:

- 1. Illegal Settlements:** The issue of illegal settlements in the West Bank remains a significant point of contention. The approval of over 5,000 settlements under the current government has fueled tensions and clashes between Israeli soldiers, settlers, and Palestinians in the West Bank.
- 2. Al-Aqsa Mosque:** The intrusion of Israeli settlers into the Al-Aqsa Mosque complex, one of the holiest sites in Islam, has been a source of deep concern and has resulted in heightened tensions.
- 3. Violence at Al-Aqsa:** Ongoing confrontations at the Al-Aqsa Mosque involving peaceful worshippers and Israeli security forces have further escalated tensions.
- 4. Political Developments:** Statements made by political leaders, such as the recent map presented by Prime Minister Netanyahu at the United Nations General Assembly, have raised concerns regarding the future of Palestine and the welfare of its people.
- 5. Gaza Blockade:** The enduring 16-year blockade of Gaza by Israel and Egypt has had severe socio-economic consequences for its residents, causing immense hardship.

The cycle of violence in the region has persisted for decades, and the loss of innocent lives remains a painful reality. While we recognize the right of any people to self-defense when all peaceful means are exhausted, we firmly believe that the killing of innocent individuals, regardless of their identity, is unacceptable. Human lives are sacred, and their protection is of paramount importance.

A lasting and just peace in the region is the only path forward, one that guarantees security and dignity for both Israelis and Palestinians. It is our sincere belief that the Israeli Government must engage in constructive dialogue with all relevant stakeholders to chart a course for lasting peace.

The Imams Council of Michigan stands in solidarity with the vulnerable Palestinian population, whose lives are continually threatened by unjust policies and the most recent blockade of food, water, fuel, and shutting off electricity in Gaza by the Israeli Government. We urge individuals, faith leaders, interfaith partners, and people of conscience to join us in advocating for the rights and dignity of all affected by this crisis. We call upon the international community to intervene and bring an end to the conflict. It is essential [that we raise our voices altogether] to insist on a resolution that prioritizes justice and peace.

As Americans, we are deeply concerned about how our tax dollars are being used to support actions that may violate human rights and international law. We call upon our government to be an arbiter for justice and take a principled stand that reflects the aspirations of both Palestinians and Israelis for a peaceful coexistence.

In closing, we offer our heartfelt condolences to the families who have lost loved ones and our prayers for justice, peace, and the safety of all residents in the region.

END

Youth Corner

Junior Seekers

Jr. Seekers has embarked on a journey to revive the Sunnahs of our Prophet (SAW) this semester. As part of the lessons, the children have learned about the sunnah of servicing family & community. In addition, they learned that servicing is not only limited to Muslims, but non-Muslims as well.

Service is a broad concept and each of us have a different role & impact in our community, which with the



right intentions can become an act of charity. When one role or person falls, the entire community is affected because in the grand scheme of things, we are all part of a greater human family; in service to humanity.

In an effort to turn what's learned into actions, the Jr. Seekers children collectively donated 435 non-perishable food items to the IONA Soup Kitchen; which feeds the less fortunate people of the community and is open to serve people of all backgrounds & faith.

May Allah SWT accept from & bless all the students, their families and our volunteers. May he continue to allow us to be in the service of others for his sake, Ameen.

Kids Corner

Backbiting and the Dead Donkey

Once two people were backbiting about a person who had committed adultery. Prophet Muhammad (saw) heard their conversation and kept on walking quietly. After a while, they came across a dead carcass of a donkey with

scattered legs. Rasoolallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said to them, "Go and eat the flesh of this dead donkey." They said, "How can the flesh of a dead donkey be eaten?" Rasoolallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "You insulted your brother, which is worse than eating the flesh of a dead donkey."

The above incident has been extracted from a hadith narrated by Abu Dawud.

We learn from this incident that the foul effect of backbiting is even worse than eating the meat of a dead rotten animal. Backbiting is sweet to the tongue but it is similar to smoking. The smoker enjoys when he is smoking but at the same time, he is destroying his lungs. In the same manner, when a person backbites, he/she is destroying their own good deeds by giving them away to the person they are talking about.

Moreover, if someone backbites a lot, do not trust them with your secrets. That's because, if they can talk about other people without any hesitation, they can certainly talk about you with others.

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By giving your generous contribution to IONA masjid, you can empower the heart of our community, fostering spiritual growth, educational opportunities, and a place of solace for all. Together, let's build a stronger foundation of faith and service. Donate to the masjid today and make a lasting impact on the lives of countless individuals.

A Cry for Justice – How Black-Palestinian Solidarity is Rooted in Shared Trauma & Oppression (cont'd)

by Angela Y. Davis

2. "[The Interconnectedness of Black and Palestinian Struggles](#)"

by Ajamu Amiri Dillahunt

3. "[Black-Palestinian Solidarity: Struggle and Intersectionality](#)"

by Kristian Davis Bailey

As we acknowledge the deep bonds forged between these communities, we must remember that their collective efforts not only stand as a beacon of hope but also as a testament to the enduring human spirit in the face of adversity. Through this solidarity, we find the strength to challenge the injustices that persist, not only in Gaza but in countless corners of the world where oppression seeks to silence the voices of the marginalized.


The fight for justice in Palestine is part of a broader struggle for equality and human rights worldwide. Together, we can amplify our voices and work towards a more just and equitable future for all.

As I write these words, I offer my prayers for the liberation of the Palestinian people. I pray for an end to the suffering, for the restoration of dignity and self-determination, and a just and lasting peace. My heart aches for the countless lives lost and the dreams deferred. I hope that through awareness, advocacy, and solidarity, we can help bring about a brighter future for Palestine and its people.

Addressing the genocide and apartheid conditions in Gaza is not just a political issue but a moral imperative. As a writer, a Muslim, a Black woman and a human, I am committed to using my voice to shine a light on this injustice and to stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people. With unwavering determination and a shared commitment to justice, we can work towards a future where the Palestinian nation is no longer subjected to the horrors of oppression and violence.

Layla Abdullah-Poulos
Courtesy of Haute Hijab

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IONA Masjid
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NOVEMBER 2023

IONA Masjid - Salah and Iqamah Timing

Date	Fajr	Iqamah	Sunrise	Zuhr	Iqamah	Asr(S)*	Asr(H)*	Iqamah	Maghrib	Iqamah	Isha	Iqamah
Wed 1	6:32	6:45	8:05	1:21	2:00	4:01	4:43	5:00	6:28	6:33	7:50	8:00
Thu 2	6:34	6:45	8:06	1:21	2:00	4:00	4:42	5:00	6:27	6:32	7:49	8:00
Fri 3	6:35	6:45	8:07	1:21	2:00	3:59	4:41	5:00	6:26	6:30	7:48	8:00
Sat 4	6:36	6:45	8:08	1:21	2:00	3:58	4:39	5:00	6:25	6:29	7:47	8:00
Sun ~ 5	5:37	6:30	7:10	12:21	2:00	2:57	3:38	4:00	5:23	5:28	6:46	7:45
Mon 6	5:38	6:30	7:11	12:21	1:00	2:56	3:37	4:00	5:22	5:27	6:45	7:45
Tue 7	5:39	6:30	7:12	12:21	1:00	2:55	3:36	4:00	5:21	5:26	6:44	7:45
Wed 8	5:41	6:30	7:13	12:21	1:00	2:55	3:35	4:00	5:20	5:25	6:43	7:45
Thu 9	5:42	6:30	7:15	12:21	1:00	2:54	3:34	3:45	5:19	5:23	6:42	7:45
Fri 10	5:43	6:30	7:16	12:21	1:00	2:53	3:33	3:45	5:18	5:22	6:41	7:45
Sat 11	5:44	6:30	7:17	12:21	1:00	2:52	3:32	3:45	5:17	5:21	6:40	7:45
Sun 12	5:45	6:30	7:18	12:21	2:00	2:51	3:31	3:45	5:16	5:20	6:40	7:45
Mon 13	5:47	6:30	7:20	12:21	1:00	2:50	3:30	3:45	5:15	5:19	6:39	7:45
Tue 14	5:48	6:30	7:21	12:22	1:00	2:50	3:29	3:45	5:14	5:18	6:38	7:45
Wed 15	5:49	6:30	7:22	12:22	1:00	2:49	3:28	3:45	5:13	5:18	6:37	7:45
Thu 16	5:50	6:30	7:23	12:22	1:00	2:48	3:27	3:45	5:12	5:17	6:37	7:45
Fri 17	5:51	6:30	7:25	12:22	1:00	2:48	3:27	3:45	5:11	5:16	6:36	7:45
Sat 18	5:52	6:30	7:26	12:22	1:00	2:47	3:26	3:45	5:10	5:15	6:35	7:45
Sun 19	5:53	6:30	7:27	12:23	2:00	2:46	3:25	3:45	5:10	5:14	6:35	7:45
Mon 20	5:55	6:30	7:28	12:23	1:00	2:46	3:24	3:45	5:09	5:14	6:34	7:45
Tue 21	5:56	6:30	7:30	12:23	1:00	2:45	3:24	3:45	5:08	5:13	6:34	7:45
Wed 22	5:57	6:30	7:31	12:23	1:00	2:45	3:23	3:45	5:08	5:12	6:33	7:45
Thu 23	5:58	6:30	7:32	12:24	1:00	2:44	3:22	3:45	5:07	5:12	6:33	7:45
Fri 24	5:59	6:30	7:33	12:24	1:00	2:44	3:22	3:45	5:06	5:11	6:32	7:45
Sat 25	6:00	6:30	7:34	12:24	1:00	2:43	3:21	3:45	5:06	5:11	6:32	7:45
Sun 26	6:01	6:30	7:35	12:24	2:00	2:43	3:21	3:45	5:05	5:10	6:32	7:45
Mon 27	6:02	6:30	7:37	12:25	1:00	2:43	3:20	3:30	5:05	5:10	6:31	7:45
Tue 28	6:03	6:30	7:38	12:25	1:00	2:42	3:20	3:30	5:04	5:09	6:31	7:45
Wed 29	6:04	6:30	7:39	12:25	1:00	2:42	3:19	3:30	5:04	5:09	6:31	7:45
Thu 30	6:05	6:30	7:40	12:26	1:00	2:42	3:19	3:30	5:03	5:08	6:31	7:45
Fri 1	6:06	6:45	7:41	12:26	1:00	2:42	3:19	3:30	5:03	5:08	6:31	7:45

* S = Shafi'i, H = Hanafi | **Athan is 10 minutes** before Iqamah except for Maghrib

~ Time is adjusted for **DST**.

First Friday sermon starts at 12:10 PM and second sermon is at 1:20 PM



IONA aims at transforming its members and surrounding communities to righteous, God-fearing people, who collectively strive for the highest moral standard and constantly seek God's forgiveness to earn His pleasure. IONA members seek His mercy and grace in this life and in the hereafter. They rejuvenate their souls through internal struggle (jihad) and spiritual exercise in worship of the Creator, God most glorified. The strength of their belief in God almighty gives them the courage to promote good and forbid evil, and to engage in the struggle to establish social, political, and economic justice.

