

ISLAMIC ORGANIZATION of NORTH AMERICA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Peace in Gaza: Clergy Unite in Solidarity

[WARREN, MI] A diverse group of interfaith clergy gathered in front of the Henry Ford Centennial Library in Dearborn on Sunday, March 3, for a solemn occasion. Memorial prayers were offered for Airman Aaron Bushnell, who sacrificed his life in protest against the ongoing genocide and ethnic cleansing in Gaza.

Amidst music and songs of peace, the clergy, representing the Christian, Muslim, and Jewish communities, held a prayer vigil advocating for a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war. The event aimed to call upon politicians and world leaders to take a stand for peace.



Key figures in attendance included Imam Mustapha Elturk, Ameer of IONA, and Imam Mohammad Ali Elahi from the Islamic House of Wisdom. Imam Elahi commended Bushnell's sacrifice, declaring him a "pure martyr in this country." The prayer session included appeals for global justice and truth, seeking to establish a lasting peace.

In a heartfelt moment, inspired by the alleged complaint Prophet Muhammad (SAW) made to Allah after facing rejection and persecution at al-Taif, Imam Elturk improvised a prayer specifically addressing the plight of the Palestinians.

"In our vulnerability and stark shortcomings, we implore You, O God, to extend Your divine aid to our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land, especially in Gaza," prayed Imam Elturk.

The Interfaith Prayer Vigil was co-sponsored by the Intercultural Community Center in Dearborn (ICCD), Dearborn Area Interfaith Network (DAIN), and Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA).

End

Imam Elturk's prayer:

To You, our Lord, We complain of our weakness,
lack of support and the humiliation the Palestinians made to receive.
Most Compassionate and Merciful!
You are the Lord of the weak, and you are our Lord.
To whom do You leave The Palestinians?
To oppressors who treat them with hostility?
Or to an enemy You have given power over them?
As long as you are not displeased with them,
As long as you are not displeased with us, we are happy.
We would, however, be much happier with Your mercy.
We seek refuge in the light of Your face by which all darkness is dispelled in both this life
and the life to come help us overcome hate and intolerance.
O God, whose hands hold the hearts of humanity, we beseech You to transform the hearts
of the adversaries and aid in the establishment of justice and peace.
Open their hearts to acceptance, allowing us to turn a new page and embark on a path of renewal.
The resounding cries for a ceasefire and an end to the bloodshed echo like thunder,
yet seemingly fall on deaf ears.
May the sacrifice of Aaron Bushnell on behalf of the Palestinians and all people of conscience pierce
the hearts of the callous guiding them to recognize the shared humanity that unites us all.
Empower the Palestinians with Your formidable strength to overcome and triumph over their Adversaries,
who are not just their foes but adversaries to all of humanity.
In our vulnerability and stark shortcomings, we implore You, O God, to extend Your divine aid
to our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land, especially in Gaza.
To You We submit, until we earn Your pleasure. Everything is powerless without your support.
We humbly refrain from questioning Your wisdom, relying on Your mercy and guidance.
There is much to be done, and without You, we are powerless. We need You, so Help us God.

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.