

Neighbors in Need Working Group

Welcoming Our New Neighbors

In the face of an unprecedented humanitarian crisis, this group is coordinating some 60 faith communities addressing the plight of refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants. The guide *"How Faith Communities in Montgomery County Can Welcome Our New Neighbors"* describes the ways faith communities and families can make a difference. People deepen their understand of other faith traditions, races and ethnicities by assisting in finding housing, welcoming families and foster children fleeing violence, raising funds and advocating for the Dreamers.

Healthcare and Hunger

A collaboration among faith communities, nonprofits and government leads to better understanding the issues and roles each plays in overcoming inequities and improving the quality of life. Examples include working with the Montgomery County Food Council on the five-year strategy for making the County hunger free; helping Healthy Montgomery assess community-based health needs and setting future goals; and collaborating with Maryland Healthcare for All, local hospitals, nonprofits and faith communities in reducing costs and improving healthcare.

Religious Land Use Working Group

This group serves as a resource to faith communities seeking to buy, renovate and rent property within a complex system of County policies and regulations. It provides education to assist faith leaders and government departments and agencies in working more effectively together. Its advocacy on behalf of faith communities has changed some policies and regulations, better serving the interests of faith communities. It holds regular training for faith communities with County departments and agencies to ensure a more productive process that saves precious time, energy and expense.

Become a Member

You may sustain the groundbreaking initiatives of the Faith Community Advisory Council working in partnership with Interfaith Works through the Interfaith Network of Montgomery County by making a tax-deductible donation.

You can donate by mail with your check made out to Interfaith Works marked INMC to:
114 West Montgomery Avenue Rockville, MD 20850

Founding Member:	\$2,500
<i>(These members will be noted in all our publications)</i>	
Community Partner:	\$1,000
INMC Affiliate:	\$500
INMC Supporter:	\$250
INMC Friend:	\$100

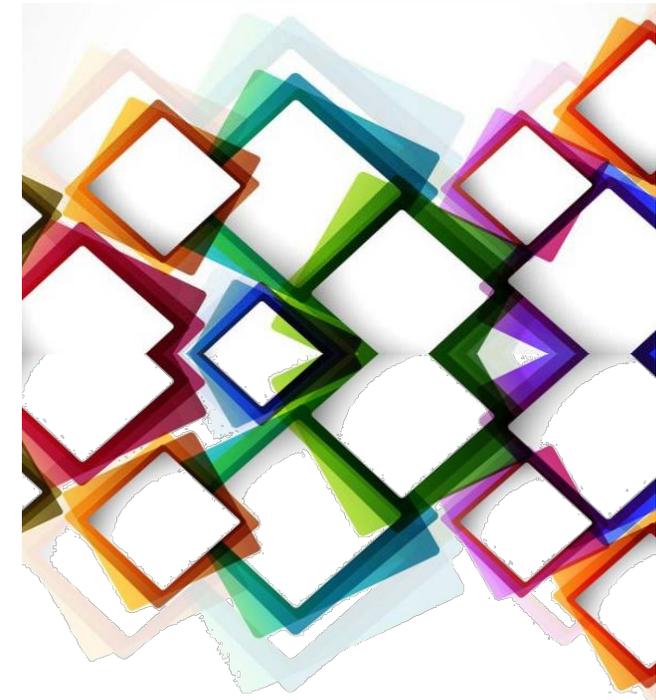
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INTERFAITH
NETWORK
of MONTGOMERY COUNTY



***A public-private partnership
between the
Faith Community Advisory Council
and Interfaith Works***

About INMC

The Interfaith Network of Montgomery County (INMC) is a member-based, public-private partnership created through the collaboration of Interfaith Works and the Montgomery County Faith Community Advisory Council (FCAC). The INMC provides administrative support for creating a more beloved community where every basic human need is met and every human right respected. The aim is to embrace diversity and become a more resilient, inclusive, healthy and happy county.

Interfaith Works was founded by a coalition of faith communities more than 45 years ago to respond to homelessness in Montgomery County. Today, with community support, Interfaith Works helps neighbors in need lift themselves out of poverty and homelessness through 14 programs that prevent, stabilize and empower. These include housing, shelter, access to free clothing, vocational services, referral services and job-readiness classes.

The Faith Community Advisory Council has three working groups that engage government, nonprofits and faith communities to have a greater impact in overcoming inequities and establishing justice. These groups are the:

- ❖ **Faith Community Working Group,**
- ❖ **Neighbors in Need Working Group,** and
- ❖ **Religious Land Use Working Group.**



Faith Community Working Group

Creating Social Cohesion and Public Safety

The Faith Community Working Group and the Montgomery County Interfaith Community Liaison have developed an internationally recognized Montgomery County Model for creating social cohesion and public safety. It is based on the extraordinary collaboration of elected and appointed public officials working with faith leaders in engaging immigrant and minority communities to create trust, empower their initiatives and move from being diverse to becoming inclusive. The following programs and teams illustrate how it works.

Faith Leaders Response Team

This team of interfaith leaders meets quarterly with security related departments and agencies in County government to strengthen solidarity, review past engagements and preparing for what may await us. The team is on call 24/7 to respond to acts of hate and violence. The responses include caring for victims through meeting with their faith communities, counseling, and advising related to issues of physical as well as personal security.



Emotional Spiritual Care Volunteers

These interfaith leaders have been trained and certified to work as first responders to emergencies and natural disasters, collaborating with the Police, Fire and Rescue Services, County Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security and the Red Cross. They meet quarterly for continued training and coordination that deepens appreciation for their respective faith traditions.

Muslim Advocacy Group

The Muslim Advocacy Group consists of faith-based Muslim leaders concerned with the needs and interests of their community and how to advocate for them in solidarity. They do this as Muslim leaders, and in partnership with the Faith Community Advisory Council and the Faith Community Working Group. Issues addressed include security for mosques and families, bullying in county schools, and advocacy with elected and appointed public officials.



Education Committee

The Education Committee brings diverse faith groups together, working collaboratively with public schools to assure respect for all religious traditions and secure an environment free of discrimination, bullying and harassment. Outcomes include development of an Interfaith Calendar for use by Montgomery County Public Schools; publication of "Guidelines for Respecting Religious Diversity"; hosting of Parent Academies to help parents navigate the public-school system; and co-sponsorship of an art contest on the theme "Together We Learn."

