

A Friendly Note from Your Muslim Neighbor:

Muslims, Christians and Jews have much in common.

- All worship the one God, Creator of the Universe. Allah is the Arabic word for God.
- All consider themselves spiritual heirs of Abraham.
- All pledge themselves to prayer, peace with justice, harmony, cooperation, compassion, charity, family responsibility, tolerance toward people of other faith traditions, and respect for the environment.

We want you to know --

- Islam and democracy are compatible and complementary. Both rest on accountability, consultation, open discussion, delegation and consensus. The opening words of the U. S. Declaration of Independence express deeply felt Islamic sentiments.
- Muslims honor Judaic prophets, accord special esteem to Jesus and the Virgin Mary, and recognize as sacred the scriptures revealed to Moses and Jesus, namely the Torah and the Bible.
- Muslims are united in Islam, literally, "submission." To them, submitting to God and doing good define piety. The Quran is the final divine revelation, providing a complete guide for human behavior. Its text was revealed directly to the Prophet Muhammad between 610 and 632 A.D. Though revered by Muslims as the last of God's prophets, Muhammad is not worshiped.
- Muslim women, like men, have the right to obtain an education, own property and engage in business, professional and public life. Both women and men wear modest dress out of respect for public morality. If a society oppresses women or discriminates against them, it is in spite of Islam, not because of it.
- The Muslim husband has the primary responsibility for family support, his wife for the household and children. Divorce is discouraged. Procedures vary by country, but either husband or wife may petition to dissolve a marriage. Polygamy is subject to restrictive conditions and is seldom practiced, never where it violates public law, as here in America.
- Muslims assume personal responsibility for relatives and others in need. In Islam, a woman or an elderly person is almost never obliged to live alone.
- Muslims are committed to rules. Sadly, some people who say they are Muslims -- like some professed Christians or Jews -- grossly violate these rules and the rights of others. In doing so, they do not act as Muslims. It is erroneous to call them fundamentalists, a term unknown in Islam and used mostly in false stereotyping.
- Jihad has two meanings: one, non-violent struggling within oneself for a life of virtue; the other, fighting for justice, a supreme goal of Islamic teachings. Islam eulogizes moderation and abhors extremism, terrorism, fanaticism, oppression and subjugation.
- Muslims are proud to be Americans. They wish to be good citizens and neighbors by practicing their commitment to tolerance, charity, hard work, cooperation, and interfaith activities for community betterment.