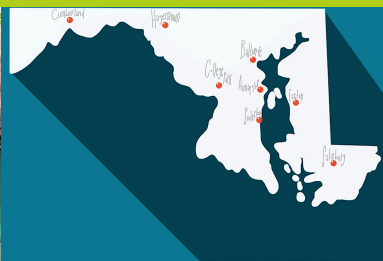


2013 “We Are One Community” Clergy Beyond Borders (CBB) Caravan



Van and participants in Easton, MD



The Itinerary

Annapolis	Easton
Baltimore	Frederick
College Park	Hagerstown
Cumberland	Rockville
Salisbury	Sunderland



“We can make out of pain a story of love and success.”

*-Imam Yahya Hendi,
CBB President
with Rev. Sandra Mackie*

Maryland Caravan of Reconciliation: Report & Overview

Over four days, Thursday, October 24-Sunday, October 27, 2013, Clergy participants and staff traveled in a twelve-passenger van filled with educational materials promoting dialogue and highlighting commonalities and messages advancing religious pluralism. The bus presented 15 separate programs in 10 communities, traveling over 750 miles. Eleven different clergy participants, women and men, joined at one time or another. They represented a diverse spectrum of voices in each of the faiths tracing their origins to Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar. The audiences were even more diverse, representing the rainbow of

religious difference which exists within the state of Maryland.

More than 900 people attended programs and tens of thousands followed local news coverage and local radio broadcasts of the caravan. CBB offered programs at four colleges and universities, mosques, churches, and various diverse public venues including a public library in Hagerstown, a police training academy in Fredrick, and a dental clinic open to the public in Cumberland.

The program’s conceptual title (“We are One Community - A Caravan of Religious Leaders for Reconciliation) reflects the

concept implicit in the name of Clergy Beyond Borders. We do have meaningful, some would say God-given, borders between our various religious communities; however, we can reach across them by building bridges rather than walls between us.

The caravan’s long-term purpose was to prevent interreligious and racial conflict and to address conflict where it has emerged. The strategy utilized by the caravan involved creating a series of events, modeling multi-faith participation to highlight a state-wide commitment to pluralism and diversity.

“The CBB caravan rolled into Cumberland, Maryland with humility, acceptance and a soulful enthusiasm of encouragement for us to open our hearts to those of different races and religions within our community. Leading by example, the religious leaders of the caravan, showed those they encountered what acceptance of our neighbors who may be very different than us truly looks like. With CBB to facilitate our discussions, a diverse group of Christians, Muslims, Jews and community members of various ages, races, and religions came together to share our hopes and fears for the future. -Dr. Diane Romaine, Allegany County

A Pledge of Respect for All Residents of Maryland

I/we pledge to do the following with prayerful attention:

- 1) Help create and support Rapid Response Networks to address bigotry and discrimination and to promote a positive vision of pluralism.
- 2) Report incidents of discrimination when I encounter them to appropriate authorities.
- 3) Support programs for young people to learn about other faiths and communities.
- 4) Educate myself about other religious traditions and communities by reading, watching videos, inviting a speaker to my house of worship, etc.
- 5) Uphold American values which guarantee freedom of speech and religion as enshrined in our Constitution.
- 6) Share this "pledge and promise" with at least five of my friends and associates.



“...there is a thirst for religious leaders who will venture Beyond Borders.”

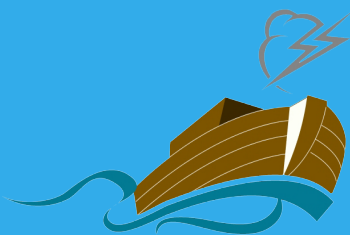
There were three primary objectives:

- Expose a broad cross section of Maryland residents to the resources for conflict resolution which exist within the texts and traditions of religious communities.
- Encourage various models of **“Rapid Response Networks”** (RRN) in the communities visited, and to organize broad based participation at the scheduled initiation of a state-wide network to address bigotry and discrimination.
- Circulate and gather signatures on a **“Pledge and Promise of Respect for Residents of Maryland”** asking signers to pro-actively engage in interreligious dialogue and to support the creation of the state-wide RRN.

Symbolically, the caravan kicked off with prayer and musical reflections offered in a church blocks away from the State Capitol in Annapolis. Joining the participants and contributing blessings and hopes for its success were the Mayor of the Annapolis, Joshua Cohen, as well as Rev. Bill Hathaway, of First Presbyterian Church. The assembled clergy then proceeded to the steps of the Capitol in order to provide a clear identification of their mission with the institutions of the State. Among the sponsors of the caravan were the Center for Dispute Resolution and the University of Maryland School of Law (C-DRUM) and the Maryland Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office of the State Judiciary (MACRO.)

The caravan brought more than information and inspiration. In addition to listening to panels, lectures and workshops, hundreds of

Clergy Beyond Borders



***One Ark.
One Humanity.
One Maryland.***

individuals also signed a “pledge and a promise” to learn more about faiths different from their own, to educate their children and others in their community, and to challenge and interrupt bigotry when they hear it or see it expressed. In each community there was a mix of clergy and community members. In Frederick, which has a strong history of positive and proactive interfaith cooperation supported by public officials, CBB awarded certificates of recognition to Mayor Randy McClement and Police Chief Thomas Ledwell for their work advancing pluralism in their community.

The caravan visited communities both where there were active interfaith associations and also where interfaith activities were rare.

In Montgomery County which has recently organized a “Clergy Response Committee” as part of a county-wide Faith Community Working Group, the CBB team was the featured program at a gathering of over a dozen local interfaith dialogue and community social service projects. In areas like Calvert County (Sunderland) and Cumberland there have been few broad based opportunities for various religious to meet, let alone work toward a common goal. In every case CBB leaders offered to return with educational programs or as part of efforts to resolve conflicts.

The caravan spent most of one day at the University of Maryland in College Park, where student leaders had invited CBB to help initiate

an “Interfaith Council.” This council had formerly been active but was currently not functioning due to tensions among various groups. Students from Christian, Hindu, Jewish, and Muslim backgrounds joined CBB leaders at a working session to reestablish the council. In addition dozens of Christian and Jewish students were welcomed into the hall where Muslim students held their Friday prayer. That same evening a like number of Muslim students attended Hillel for evening services, Sabbath dinner and conversation. Many students were overcome with emotion as they spoke with students from other faiths for the first time, many of whom they recognized from their classes but had been afraid to approach.



As we came to know one another as clergy and human beings... where once there were misconceptions now there was appreciation, where once there was fear, now there was understanding - in essence, where once we were strangers, representatives, figureheads - now we were real friends.
-Rabbi Rachel Gartner



Audiences of all ages and religions were longing for a tangible experience of seeing and hearing... not to mention feeling the spirit of our sacred texts being chanted. We need this caravan everywhere.
-Imam Bashir Arafat



Every story I heard, whether scriptural, national or personal had so many diverse perspectives. And each variation adds clarity, mystery, and joy in the pursuit of justice and human kindness.
-Rabbi Devorah Lynn



There is a thirst for religious leaders who will venture Beyond Borders. This is a thirst which has gone unquenched and largely unrecognized, it must be satisfied for the sake of the struggle for justice and peace.
-Rev. Sandra Mackie

The Frederick News-Post | THE KALEIDOSCOPE GROUP | To Free the Human Potential

Religious reconciliation caravan starts 10-city tour of Maryland

24 Oct 2013 | Uncategorized

Easton Maryland Newspaper Headlines

ANAPOLIS — Clergy Beyond Borders, a nonprofit housed by a rabbi and an imam, began a 10-city tour through Maryland Thursday morning in Annapolis to promote tolerance and compassion among religious groups.

Washington Jewish Week | **Faston Maryland** | **Newspaper**

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Clergy Beyond Borders

"We Are One Community" Caravan of Reconciliation

Event Date: October 26, 2013 at 2:30 pm
Event Location: Washington County Free Library, 100 S. Potomac Street, Hagerstown

Clergy Beyond Borders

Clergy Beyond Borders, Center For Dispute Resolution of the University Maryland Law School (C-DRUM) and the Maryland Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office (MACRO) present Caravan of Reconciliation, stopping in 13 cities across Maryland this month. The main objective is to create "Tha'bil Response Network" (TRN) in the communities visited and initiate a statewide network. The Maryland TRN will promote positive pluralism and respond to acts of discrimination and bigotry.

Frederick Chief Of Police & Mayor To Be Honored By Caravan Of Religious Leaders

I had the honor of hearing Clergy Beyond Borders speak at Maryland Hillel. I was so inspired by the courage, passion and open-mindedness these people possessed. They renewed my faith in the power of encountering the "other" through discussion and dialogue to heal the deep and historical wounds of our world.
-Ahuva Sunshine, Univ. of Maryland, College Park

Interfaith group educates Maryland communities

AN INTERFAITH group recently embarked on a 10-city Maryland tour, titled "We Are One Community: A Caravan of Religious Leaders for Reconciliation," with a goal of educating communities about preventing religious and racially motivated hate crimes.

Sponsored by Clergy Beyond Borders (CBB), the caravan stopped at synagogues, churches, mosques and public venues in cities such as Annapolis, Salisbury, College Park and Frederick. On Oct. 27, the caravan, which had clergy of Muslim, Christian, Jewish and other faiths, ended its five-day tour with visits to Rockville and Baltimore.

The caravan is, in a way, the mobile version of CBB, an organization promoting interfaith tolerance, headed by its president, Imam Yahya Hendi and its executive director, Rabbi Gerald Serotta. Both were members of the caravan and Serotta serves as the

CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE
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Newspaper articles covering the caravan across Maryland

(center: CBB awards Mayor McClement & Police Chief Ledwell of Frederick, MD for interfaith engagement)

Special Thanks to our 2013 Co-sponsors:

The Center For Dispute Resolution of the University of Maryland Law School (C-DRUM), The Maryland Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office (MACRO), & The Central Maryland Ecumenical Council (CMEC).

Clergy Beyond Borders

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2013 Clergy Beyond Borders Caravan Leaders:

Imam Yahya Hendi
President

Reverend Steven Martin
Vice President

Rabbi Gerry Serotta
Executive Director

