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From: Geotrees/CS <anjinsan@geotrees.com>
Subject: "CONVERTS AND CONVERSION" - A JEWISH-ISLAMIC DIALOGUE:
Fwd: [JIDS](#): Announcement of August Dialogue
Cc:
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Attachments:



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GEOTREES' EDITOR'S NOTES:

1. Since this announcement was originally made, the time and venue have been determined:

Sunday, August 13, 2017
2:00 to 5:00 PM

Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation

1441 [Wiehle](#) Avenue, [Reston](#), Virginia 20190
2:00 to 5:00 PM.

2. [JIDS](#) is a 501(c)(3) organization, and accepts donations.



Delivered-To: anjinsan@
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Date: Sun, 9 Jul 2017 14:10:57 -0400 (EDT)
From: "creedroom danielspiro.com" <creedroom AT danielspiro. com>
To: " danielspiro.com" <@danielspiro.com>
Subject: JIDS: Announcement of August Dialogue
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Salaam Aleikum/Shalom:

I am thrilled to announce for the first time that on the afternoon of Sunday, August 13th (the exact time and venue will be announced in a subsequent e-mail), the Jewish-Islamic Dialogue Society of Washington (JIDS) will be holding a dialogue on the topic of "Converts and Conversion." Please save that date.

The concept of conversion has been a fascination of mine since my late adolescence, when I came to know certain individuals who converted to my faith as well as others who left it for another religion. I remember having a strong emotional reaction to both of these types of conversions and later came to realize that I was not alone. Truth be told, how each of us reacts emotionally to conversion tells us a lot about who we are as individuals and how we feel about our faith. Further, what our respective religions have to say about what it means to convert, either to or away from our faith, tells us a lot about our faith communities. We're going to explore these topics in August in a way that only a plain-spoken but civil dialogue society can.

Plus, in this same event, in addition to talking about conversion as a general matter, we'll also hear the inspiring stories of four local converts – two who converted to Judaism and two who converted to Islam. Here are our four panelists:

Farhanahz Ellis was born and raised in Panama in an interracial and interfaith family. She holds Law and Political Science degrees and has years of experience in the corporate world. A convert to Islam, she has served as the Interfaith & Outreach Director at the All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS), a chaplain for the Muslim Campus Ministry at George Mason University, and a member of the Board of the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy. Currently, Farhanahz lectures about Islam in the Greater Washington DC Area.

Dr. M. Catherine (Cate) Bennett has been a neuroscientist for over three decades who has devoted her career to the study of learning and memory, neuroplasticity and neurodegenerative diseases. She has served in different positions at the NIH, including as unit leader of the Clinical Pharmacology section of the Neurology Institute. Cate has a lifelong interest in the

origins and meaning of our existence and views these issues through the lenses of physics, biology and religion. This interest led her long ago to convert to Judaism after having been raised Episcopalian.

Abdullah Jimmy Marr works in the instrument manufacturing department of a biotech company. Having grown up in a Catholic family in Massachusetts, Abdullah considered himself an agnostic as a young adult. Prior to 9/11, he paid scant attention to Islam. However, during the period immediately following that date, when Islam became such a national topic of interest, Abdullah began to study the faith. He quickly came to experience reading the Qur'an as a transformative experience – as if he was having a conversation with God. Indeed, it was not long after 9/11 that he formally converted to Islam.

Curt Ritter is a lawyer by trade who is now retired. He was raised a Lutheran but has lived a "Jewish Life" for four decades and formally converted to the faith 12 years ago. He is the proud father of two adult children, both of whom had their b'nei mitzvahs at the Northern Virginia synagogue where Curt and his wife are presently active. Indeed, Curt is a fixture at his shul, serving on different committees and singing in its choir.

I look forward to seeing you then – and earlier, if you're coming to the Syrian Refugee event on the evening of the 17th that I discussed in our previous e-mail.

Dan Spiro
President
JIDS (<http://www.jids.org>)

