

**Meeting from the „House of Religions in Stuttgart“
and the Universal Peace Federation
„Important Religious Celebrations“
Stuttgart, Germany, 8th December 2012**



Hubert Arnoldi, Chairman of the UPF Stuttgart and the House of Religions in Stuttgart, greeted the 35 guests and invited them to share coffee and various Christmas snacks together.

Christoph Wenzel inspired the audience with a lively song titled “Christmas Time” and then the main program could begin.

Ludwig Scharnreithner, born and raised in Austria, spoke about the central tradition of Christmas for him being the celebration of the birth of his savior, a celebration of love and peace. The time leading up to Christmas is known as “Advent” and the Christians see this as a time to prepare for the birth of Jesus, their savior and to prepare for the second coming of Christ.

After a short period of questions and answers, Christoph Froehner played 3 music pieces from South America on his flute.

Ursula Roehm explained about her mother who was raised in the Jewish tradition and converted later in her life to Christianity. She remembers the Chanukka Celebration in the house of her grandmother with its nine candles, the festive meal and special traditional songs. This celebration originates from the miracle after the Maccabean Revolt when the lamp in the temple was able to burn 8 days with almost no oil, enabling the temple to be continuously sanctified.

After a short break for questions and answers, Samir El Midani, former chairman of the Moslem Chapter in Stuttgart, explained about the Feast of Sacrifice (Eid-ul-adha) in his religion.

He quoted from the Bible about Abraham, Sara and her servant Hagar. The Koran reports that Hagar and Ismael experienced miracles in the desert near Mecca and that God tested Abraham by asking him to offer Ismael on the altar.

He then sang us a special part referring to this out of the Koran. The miracle of Ismael being saved from death from the goat that God sent in his place to be the offering is celebrated during this Offering Celebration over a period of 3 days. Every family is asked to slaughter a goat and give most of it away to the poor.

The program ended with questions and answers and a group photo.

We were able to gather donations of 130 Euro and to give it to a children's hospital in North Korea, as we had decided together before.



Samir El Midani reports about the Offering Celebration – Ursula Röhm speaks about the Jewish Chanukka Celebration - Christoph Fröhner playing the flute – Ludwig Scharnreither speaks about Christmas - – Christoph Wenzel offers a song - Hubert Arnoldi welcomes the guests -