

WFWP Denver, CO's Interreligious Sharing Series with Four Religious Leaders

Gale Alves
April 5, 2018



"What is the Purpose of Life?"

This was the guiding question that brought together four religious leaders for the first gathering of the Interreligious Sharing Series in Denver, CO, on the night of Thursday, April 5th. This series was created and organized by WFWP Colorado Co-Chairwoman Gale Alves and her husband, Antonio. They are passionate about visiting places of worship and creating relationships, and they promote the ideals of WFWP and Family Federation for World Peace (FFWP) as they connect with people.

The event occurred at the Lady Fatima Mosque during the mosque's weekly service. More than 50 people were in attendance, including a panel of four religious leaders (see below), as well as twenty members of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints together with their families; two members of the Calvary Apostolic Church; four members of the Denver Family Church; and twenty-four members of the Lady Fatima Mosque. All had a chance to openly express what their faith understands the purpose of life to be.



Panelists

The panelists were:

- **Pastor Haymon from the Calvary Apostolic Church.** He is a born-again Christian who has traveled quite a bit. He hopes to bring 30 couples to our Interreligious Celebration of Marriage and Family event on April 29th at the Colorado Family Church.
- **Jennie Preece, an interfaith leader from The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints.** She brought her husband and their 4 children to our event. The children performed a song for everyone.
- **Imam Massoud Farazan,** originally from Iran, where he grew up in a Muslim, Jewish, and

Christian neighborhood, and so at an early age he saw the beauty of different faiths living in harmony.

- **Pastor Mike Hentrich, Jr. of the Colorado Family Church, which is part of FFWP.** He and his wife, Adonia, pastor the church as a couple. The religious leaders and young Muslim members in attendance were inspired to see a young person taking a pastoral role.

We began the evening by sharing a Halal dinner together in the Muslim tradition. We sat on the floor, side by side, the men together on one side of the mosque and the women together on the other. Connections were easily made and the conversation naturally flowed. Everyone bonded over the delicious food. Breaking bread together is where the heart-to-heart heavenly magic happens.

Gale Alves, WFWP Co-Chairwoman of the Denver chapter, was the emcee for the presentations followed, which the audience received with respectful attention. There was a short time for questions and answers at the end.

The topic of the next Interreligious Sharing Series will be "The Fall of Man: why and how did mankind separate from God?" The Calvary Apostolic Church will host that event.

Thank you to Justino Alves for taking photos during the event! Pastor Haymon described him afterward as "an impressively thoughtful young man."



Imam Massoud Farazan, originally from Iran

As a result of this event, the religious leaders found they have things in common:

- We believe in one Creator
- We believe in life after death
- We believe our earthly life should focus on developing a relationship with a higher power such as God, Allah, and Jesus
- Life is all about relationships and we need to practice giving God-centered love
- Harmony among the world's religions is vital for world peace
- The Mormons and FFWP believe that marriage is eternal and the purpose is to create families centered on a higher power, which is important for building the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth

Some quotes from the participants:

- Prayer Imam Massoud of Lady Fatima Mosque: "Interfaith work is close to my heart. If we could

at least tolerate each other, the world would begin to be a better place. Thank you [Gale and Antonio] for all your hard work to put this night together."



- Pastor Haymon of Calvary Apostolic Church: "A great big thank you for the invitation to participate in tonight's sharing. It was an honor and a privilege. The meeting was definitely a success in my opinion. God bless you both and your visionary efforts!"
- Jennie Preece: "Thank you for tonight's event. It was great. I really enjoyed talking with Pastor Mike Hentrich and like and how he answered a question saying, 'God is bigger than religion.'"
- Pastor Mike Hentrich, Jr.: "It was great to meet so many wonderful people and share on an important topic. I look forward to the next one."

On April 29th, the Colorado Family Church will host their 2nd Interreligious Celebration of Marriage and Family event, along with WFWP. Religious leaders will give their perspectives on marriage and family as part of the program. **The underlying vision is that together we can create a true culture of peace, transcending race, religion, culture, and language. God-centered marriages between a man and a woman are an important cornerstone for a peaceful society.**

