



2019-2020

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

Rumi Poetry Circle

1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th



Rumi Forum held monthly Rumi Poetry Circle. With the guidance of Sara Ellen Swatt, participants practiced heart-focused breathing, had a memorable opportunity to explore two ecstatic poems of the 13th c. scholar & mystic, exchanged latent qualities and wisdom within his poems,

Abrahamic Discussion and Eid Reception

Rumi Forum of Maryland and America Turkish Friendship Association organized an Abrahamic Panel-interfaith discussion and Eid-al-Adha (Feast of Sacrifice) reception. Religious Freedom and Minority Rights were addressed from the lens of Abrahamic faiths' perspectives.



Unity Walk 2019

Rumi Forum participated in the 14th annual Unity Walk where over 1000 people of all faiths and backgrounds came together to celebrate the diversity of the DC metro area. Participants had the opportunity to visit 11 different houses of worship, actively engage with other participants as well as with members of the clergy, taste delicious traditional foods, and partake in service projects.



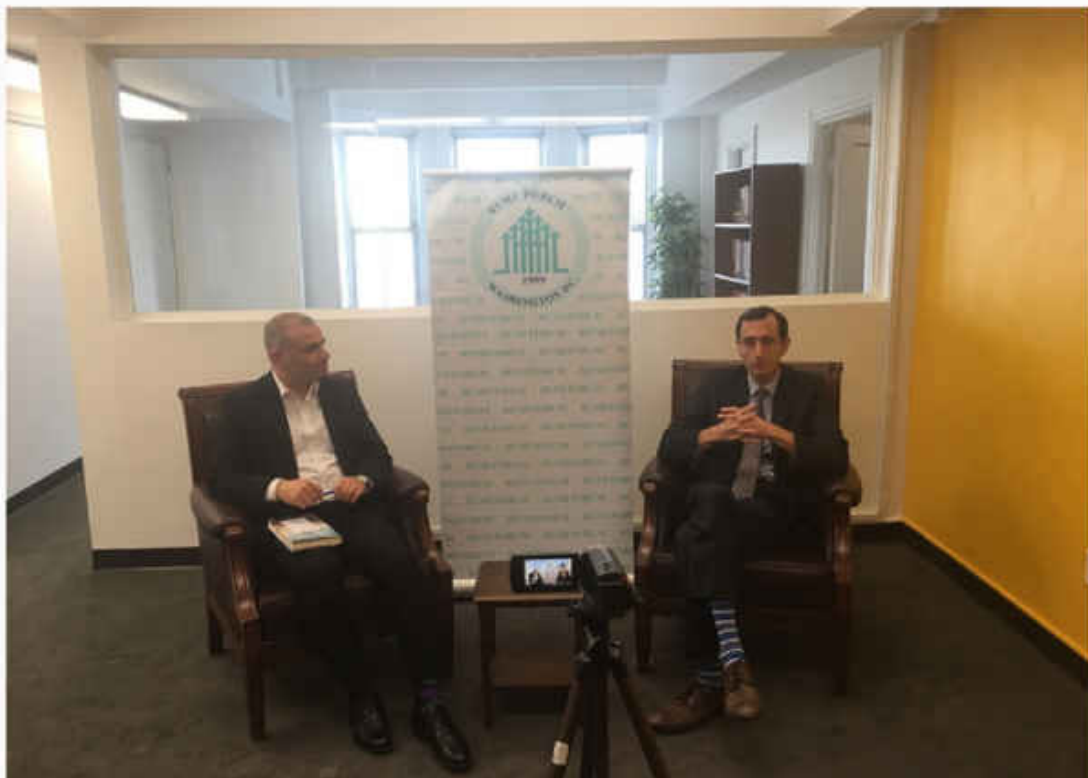
Book Talk and Discussion: Fethullah Gulen: A Life of Hizmet

Rumi Forum hosted author Dr. Jon Pahl for a book talk and discussion on his recent biography of Rumi Forum's Honorary President Fethullah Gulen. The event was moderated by Ori Z. Soltes from Georgetown University.



Free to Believe: The Battle Over Religious Liberty in America

Rumi Forum had the honor to host Luke Goodrich of Becket Law for a talk about his latest book, *Free to Believe*. Goodrich discussed why religious freedom is important and how it can be defended in contemporary America.



Comparative Reading on Two Masters of Spirituality: Rumi and Emanuel Swedenborg



Rumi Forum presented a comparative reading on the prominent 13th-century Sufi mystic Jelalludin Rumi and renowned 18th-century Swedish scientist, philosopher, and theologian Emanuel Swedenborg. With Ori Z. Soltes from Georgetown University and Richard Tafel from the Church of the Holy City as speakers, we will discuss personal philosophy, legacy, and impact of these two prominent luminaries.

Religious Literacy Series: Sikh Foundation of Virginia

Throughout this series, we aim to adapt the fundamental but basic understanding of religions through numerous lenses. As participants gain an informed understanding of belief systems and other world-views different from their own, religious literacy series will enable them to hear first hand. It should be noted that this series does not intend to educate the participants but designed to assist the progress of recognition of history, central texts (where applicable), beliefs, practices, and manifestations of several world traditions.



Living Harmoniously in an Interfaith World: A Muslim Contribution



Rumi Forum and its' key partners, George Washington University Interfaith Council, United Nations Association-National Capital Area, and Twelve Gates Foundation, celebrated the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week with a panel discussion about "Living Harmoniously in an Interfaith World: A Muslim Contribution".

The purpose of this program, then, was to raise awareness of the theological and spiritual resources that empower a life of faith in harmony with a world of diverse beliefs and practices and to encourage the development and dissemination of these resources within each faith tradition as a way to elevate the minds, hearts, and actions of people everywhere.

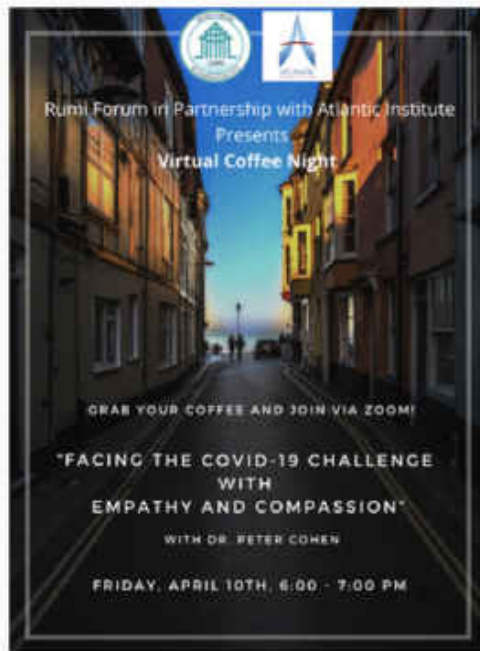
Interfaith All Night

Rumi Forum co-sponsored the 2020 9th Annual DMV Leadership Summit, hosted by the Interfaith Council of Metropolitan Washington. This year Interfaith Leadership Summit explored “Building Resilience in our Communities and in Ourselves” and questioned how we could contribute to, cultivate and support resilience in ourselves, our society and each other.



Virtual Coffee Night Series

Facing the COVID-19 Challenge with Empathy



Dr. Peter Cohen talked about ways to project empathy and compassion during these testing times.



Americans Immersed in COVID-19 News



Republicans give the news media lower marks in their coverage of the COVID-19 outbreak than Democrats

% of U.S. adults who...

Statement	Rep/Lean Rep	Dem/Lean Dem	Diff
News items following news about the COVID-19 outbreak are fairly accurate	78%	82%	-4%
Top news outlets have covered the outbreak with care and fairness	72%	76%	-4%
Top news outlets have ignored facts about the outbreak and its impact	17%	11%	+6%

Participants: Rouney, hatara, Ruth Hamilton, J

Rumi Forum featured Baxter Oliphant from Pew Research Center to talk about up to date Pew Research findings of how American public opinion responds to COVID-19 news in the media for the second Virtual Coffee Night speaker series.

Faith in American Public Life: Confronting Controversies, Cultivating Common Ground



For the third Virtual Coffee Night speaker series, Melissa Rogers, a leading expert and scholar on religion in American public life, gave a fascinating talk on how the First Amendment encompasses common ground, and for sharing insights on controversies about religion in public life.



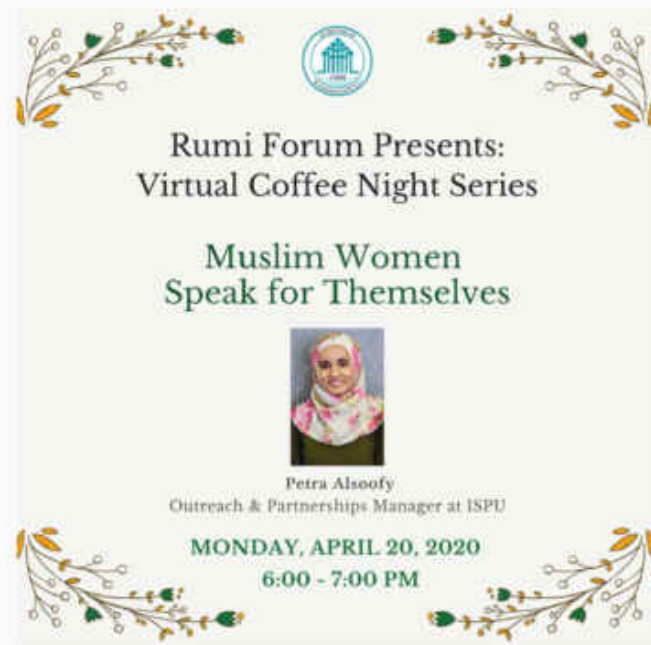
The Humanity of Muhammad: A Christian View



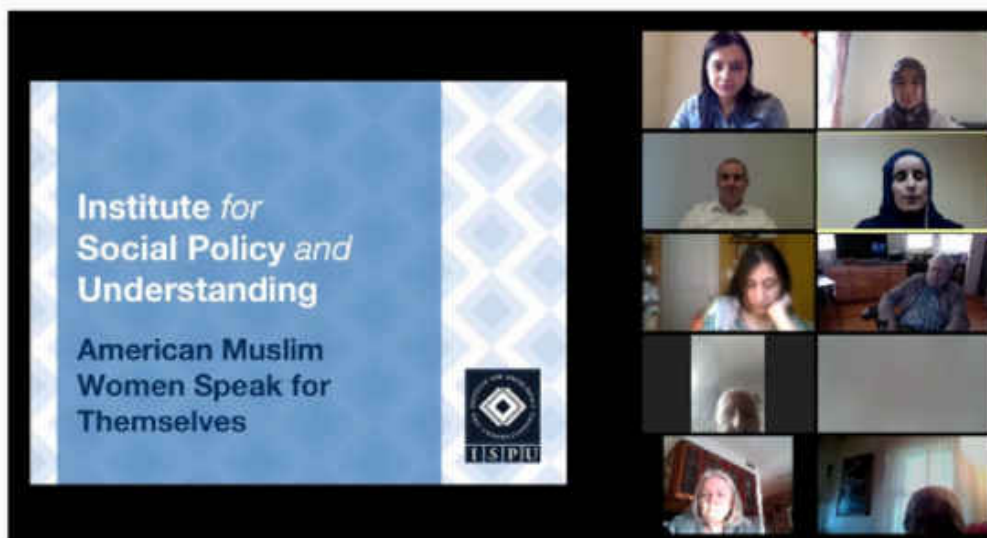
Dr. Craig Considine from Rice University was with us to talk about the humanity of Muhammad from a Christian view with an emphasis on the Identification with All Humanity (IWAH) as a moral concept. It was the fourth Virtual Coffee Night speaker series.



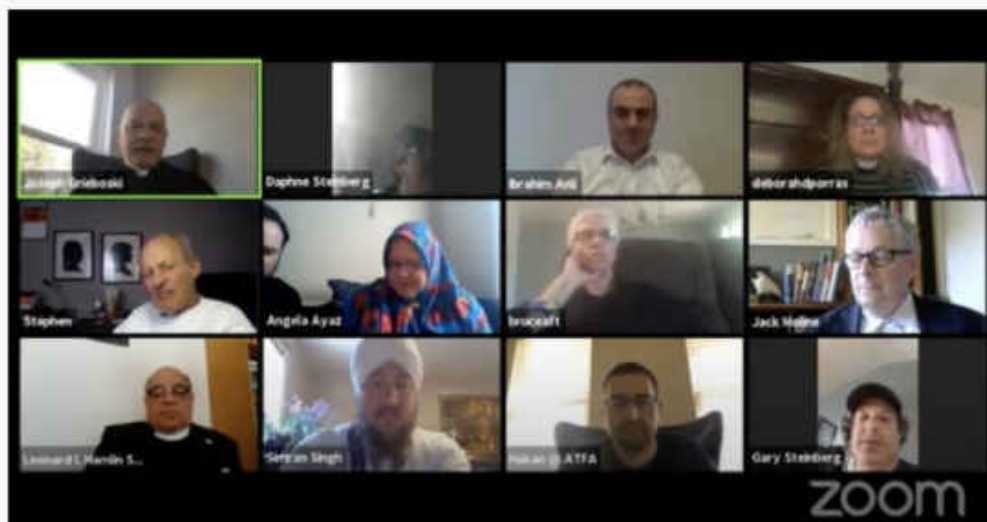
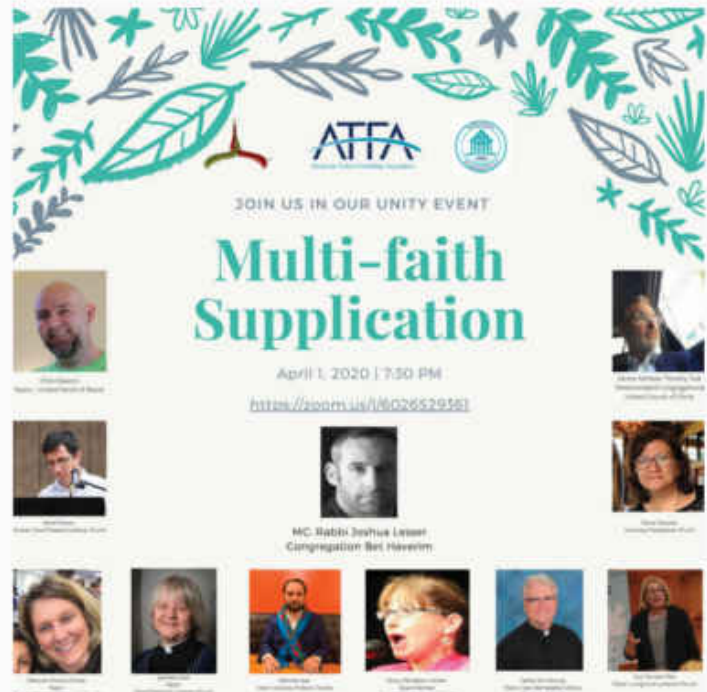
Muslim Women Speak for Themselves



Petra Alsoofy gave an illuminating data-based presentation about Muslim women the US in a variety of dimensions; including family, education, wellness, and institutional capacity.

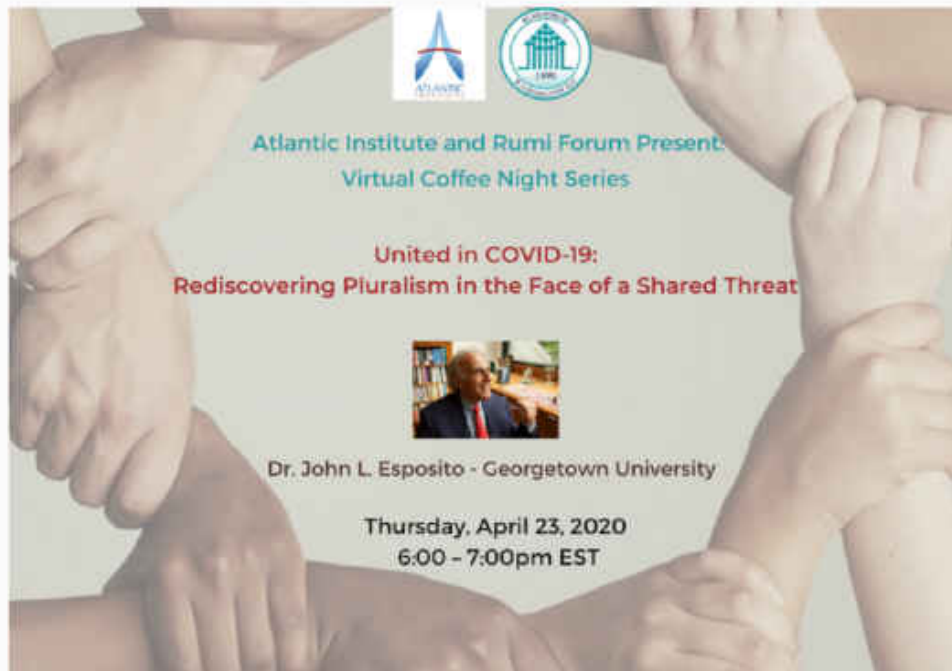


Multi-faith Supplication



Rumi Forum in collaboration with the American Turkish Friendship Association (ATFA) and Institute of Islamic and Turkish Studies (IIST) brought leaders from various faiths to offer blessings and prayers to ask for the deliverance of humanity from troubles during these testing times.

United in COVID-19: Rediscovering Pluralism in the Face of a Shared Threat



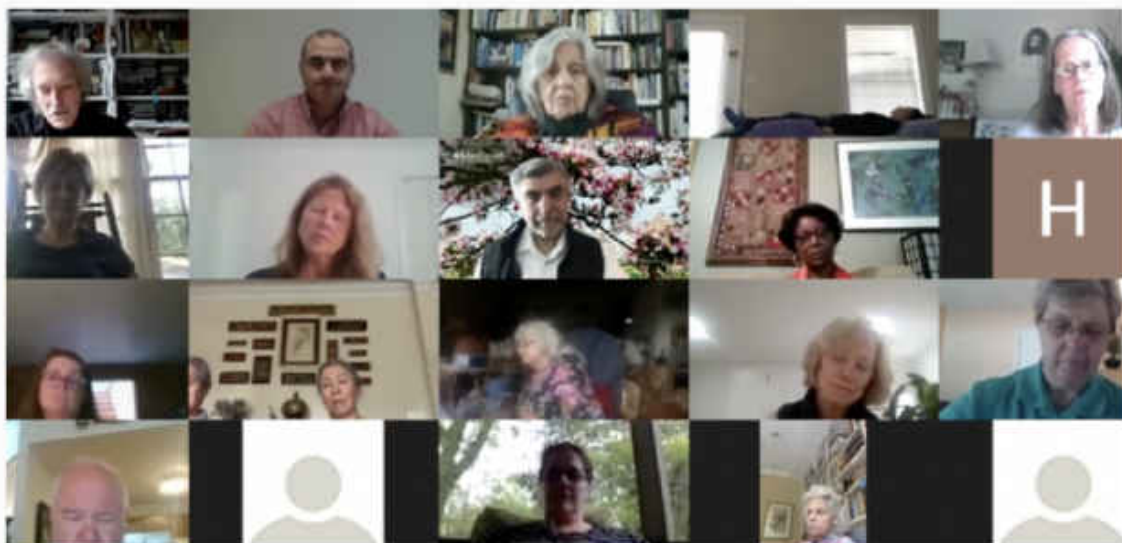
Rumi Forum in collaboration with Atlantic Institute hosted Dr. John L. Esposito from Georgetown University, who gave a great talk about pluralism in the US, recent trends in the social landscape, and the particular impact of COVID19.



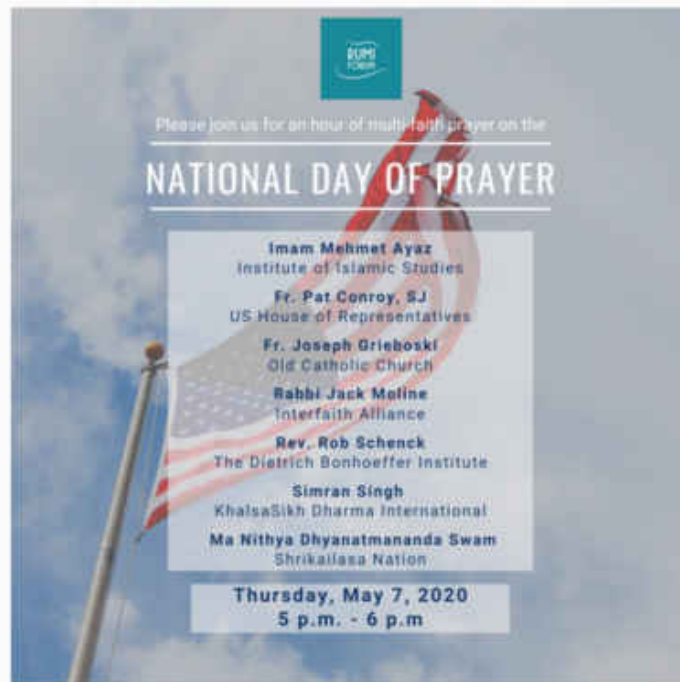
Healing with Rumi

The poster features a woman in a vibrant red dress spinning on a green, textured floor. Text on the poster includes: 'Rumi Forum' in a blue circle, 'Rumi Forum Special Day of Unity Event', '— Healing with Rumi —', 'Sunday, May 3, 2020 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.', and three speakers: Ori Soltes (Georgetown University, 'Rumi's Universalist Message'), Sara Towe Hurlfall (Frederick Community College, 'Rumi's Healing Words'), and Zeal Sarinprak (John Carroll University, 'Rumi on the Healing Power of Love'). The 'GIVINGTUESDAY | NOW' logo is at the bottom left.

Rumi Forum participated in the Day of Unity coordinated by Inter with its special event, "Healing with Rumi". Three leading scholars walked us through the legacy of Rumi with a particular focus on healing during difficult times.



National Day of Prayer



Rumi Forum participated in the National Day of Prayer with its third prayer event. A diverse group of leaders and clergy participated in the exceptional hour of healing words, blessings, and prayers.



Interfaith Encounters: A model of building bridges in Israel and Palestine



Rumi Forum hosted Dr. Yehuda Stolov, the executive director of the Interfaith Encounter Association (IEA), for a discussion about IEA's outstanding story of building interfaith bridges in Israel and Palestine. He highlighted an inter-communal model where ongoing groups of interfaith encounters prevail the opportunity to meet the 'other'.



Virtual Ramadan Iftars

In the very spirit of Ramadan in 2020, Rumi Forum coordinated the virtual iftar series throughout Ramadan. We cordially invited everyone as we matched Muslim and non-Muslim friends, families, students, and professions to build new friendships and break bread together at iftar time. We had the pleasure of meeting with members and friends of Beth El synagogue, St. Anne's Episcopal Church, Sikh Foundation of Virginia, Ohel Sholom Temple, and many more.



Rumi Forum
cordially welcomes you to

VIRTUAL RAMADAN IFTAR

Let's make this time of spatial
distancing an opportunity for socially
connecting.

While we can't be together in person,
we can still connect heart to heart,
break bread, share friendship &
conversation, and learn about each
other.

Virtual Ramadan Iftars

Sikh Foundation of Virginia



Ohel Sholom Temple



St. Anne's Episcopal Church



Beth El Synagogue



Monthly Scriptural Reasonings Study Group



Scriptural Reasoning

WE PUT SCRIPTURES AT THE CENTER OF OUR
CONVERSATION



Be part of a global community!

Communities across the world move beyond the interfaith dialogue and foster religious literacy via a fresh approach to modern world. Scriptural Reasoning.