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**2022-2023**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

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# Speaker Series

## Book Talks

Book Talks feature prominent authors from a variety of disciplines in a platform where they can present their latest publications and engage in discussions with a diverse audience.

## Panel Discussions

Panel Discussions are aimed to address key spiritual and social issues by offering an academic platform. These discussions bring together scholars and experts with different perspectives on a certain topic.

# Book Talks

## Hearts and Minds: Hizmet Schools and Interethnic Relations

The poster features the title "HEARTS AND MINDS" in large blue letters at the top, followed by the subtitle "HIZMET SCHOOLS AND INTERETHNIC RELATIONS" in smaller blue letters. On the left is a portrait of Dr. Vincent N. Parrillo. In the center, it says "IN-PERSON BOOK TALK by Dr. Vincent N. Parrillo" and "Thursday, September 29 6:30 pm EST". On the right is the book cover, which shows a red heart floating over a landscape. At the bottom, the venue is listed as "National Press Club - Liaagar Room, 529 14th St. NW, 12th Floor, Washington, DC".


Rumi Forum hosted an in-person book talk with **Dr. Vincent Parrillo** about a comparative and qualitative study of an educational phenomenon, Hizmet, functioning worldwide. In their book, Dr. Parrillo and Dr. Ansari present a cross-cultural study of Hizmet schools in seven countries of varying histories and ethnic compositions. Some are fairly homogeneous, while others are longstanding multicultural and multiracial societies.



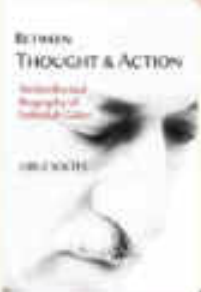
# Book Talks

## Between Thought and Action: An Intellectual Biography of Fethullah Gulen

**BETWEEN THOUGHT & ACTION**  
AN INTELLECTUAL BIOGRAPHY OF FETHULLAH GULEN



**IN-PERSON  
BOOK TALK**  
by  
**Dr. Ori Z. Soltes**  
Wednesday,  
October 26  
6:30 pm EST



**Venue: National Press Club - Zenger Room**  
329 14th St. NW, 12th Floor, Washington, DC

Rumi Forum hosted an in-person book talk with **Dr. Ori Z. Soltes** on Fethullah Gulen's intellectual biography of thoughts, words, and actions including interviews with Hizmet movement followers. A brief discussion of his life and thought has been supplemented by the voices of more than 70 interviews conducted over several years, with individuals intimate and more distant but all inspired to be part of the process of serving humanity.



# Book Talks

## Profiles in Peace: Voices of Peacebuilders in the Midst of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The poster features a portrait of Rabbi Dr. Ron Kronish on the left. The text in the center reads: "PROFILES IN PEACE VOICES OF PEACEBUILDERS IN THE MIDST OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT IN-PERSON BOOK TALK by Rabbi Dr. Ron Kronish Tuesday, May 2 - 7:00 pm Lutheran Church of the Reformation 133 East Capitol St NE, Washington, DC 20002 Light refreshments will be served." On the right is a small image of the book cover. At the bottom are logos for Rumi Forum, allmep, and the Lutheran Church of the Reformation.

Rumi Forum hosted an in-person book talk with **Rabbi Dr. Ron Kronish** who traced the lives of Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs in Israel and Palestine who have dedicated their lives to building peaceful relations among the two peoples and between individual people who seek to live in peace and harmony with one another. These people have acted courageously and consistently in their work for peace.



# Panel Discussions

## Interfaith Bridges, Intrafaith Divides, and Polarization



**Rumi Forum** and the **Braver Angels D.C. Project** organized a special America's Public Forum event.

Discussants were **Rich Tafel**, Minister of the Church of the Holy City in downtown Washington, D.C., and **Ibrahim Anli**, Executive Director of Rumi Forum. **Luke Nathan Phillips** of Braver Angels hosted a conversation with them examining the ongoing divides in and between religious communities, the lasting common ground and prospects for new bridges among them, and the ways religious communities' navigation of these divisions might inform approaches to American polarization as a whole.



# Interfaith Engagement

## Community Events

Community Events is where we unite efforts with a large array of stakeholders. Together with our partners, we collaborate on occasions like iftars, concerts, and unity walks as opportunities for people of all walks of life to meet their neighbors in an interfaith context.

## Religious Literacy

Religious Literacy gatherings provide space for members of different religious communities where they can learn about each other's faiths and strengthen the sense of cohesion through cordial conversations

## Scriptural Reasoning

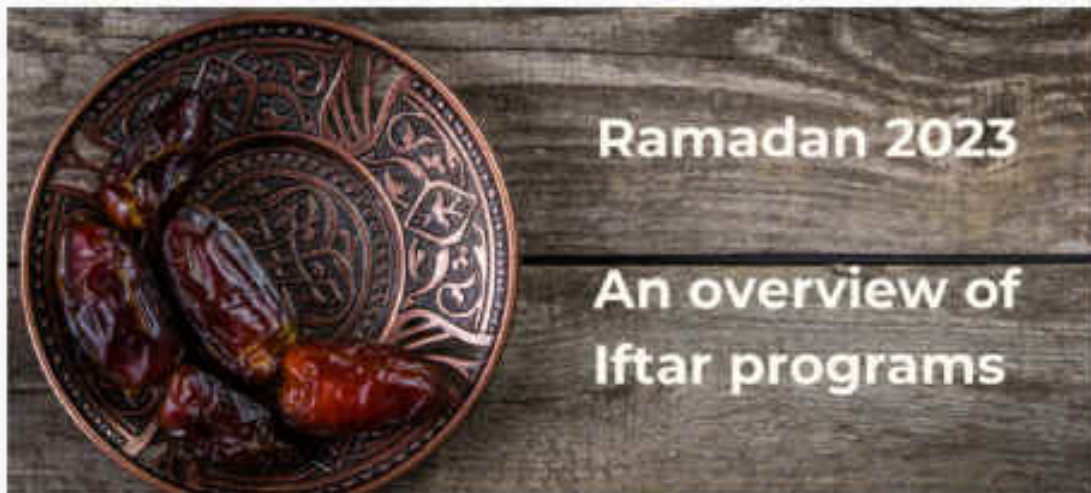
Scriptural Reasoning is a practice where Christians, Jews, and Muslims study each other's sacred texts. SR participants meet once a month to read short passages from their respective scriptures on a certain topic. Moderated by a study leader, each session is an opportunity to listen and share various perspectives. SR session thereby helps participants reflect on a curious list of topics within the Abrahamic tradition. The result is often a deeper understanding of others' and one's own scriptures, as well as the development of strong bonds across faith communities.

# Community Events

## Ramadan Iftar Series

Ramadan 2023 was an extraordinary time for Rumi Forum and its community partners. After three years of social distancing, this special period was the moment to reconnect with our friends and allies, sharing the joy of Iftar while engaging in fruitful conversations regarding future endeavors. Ramadan also became the opportunity to carry our monthly Scriptural Reasoning series into an in-person format, which we would like to continue in the future.

We thank all of our community partners, allies, friends, and volunteers for making Ramadan an invaluable opportunity for reinforcing existing friendships and building new ones.



**Ramadan 2023**

**An overview of  
Iftar programs**



# Ramadan Iftar Series

## Reunion Iftar



## GMU Carter School



# Ramadan Iftar Series

CUA Interreligious Study&Dialogue Students



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Alexandria, VA)



# Ramadan Iftar Series

**St. Mark Presbyterian Church (Rockville, MD)**



**Burke United Methodist Church (Burke, VA)**



# Ramadan Iftar Series

## Adat Shalom Reconstructionist (Bethesda, MD)



## Sikh Foundation of VA



# Ramadan Iftar Series

## Interfaith Encounter Association (IEA)



## IFC, Shoulder 2 Shoulder & Baptist Joint Comm.



# Ramadan Iftar Series

Scriptural Reasoning-Virginia Theological Seminary



Braver Angels-DC - "America`s Public Forum"



# 2022 Annual Gala and Dialogue Awards Ceremony



A traditional component of Rumi Forum's endeavor is to recognize the lifetime dedication of inspirational public figures who have championed its cause. **Rumi Forum Dialogue Award** honors successful practitioners with outstanding track records in interfaith engagement, community service, human rights, and education.



# 2022 Annual Gala and Dialogue Awards Ceremony

## 2022 Rumi Forum Dialogue Award Honoree



**Rev. Mansfield "Kasey" Kaseman**

Interfaith Community Leader  
Pastor Emeritus, Rockville United Church

## Award presented by



**Josephine Garnem**

Executive Director, Healey International Relief Foundation  
National Council, Pax Christi USA

## MC of the Night



**Noa Baum**

Speaker, Storyteller, Author & Coach



## Exhibit:

# “Un-Muted – The Silent Voices of Political Persecution in Turkey”



This exhibit and presentation was a powerful and moving visual experience of a highly harsh reality happening in Turkey now.

The artifacts in this exhibit, consist of around 40 pieces and their detailed stories, were generously donated by the families of voices silenced by torture, persecution, and death. We are grateful for this opportunity to unmute their voices and share their stories through this presentation.



# Rumi Night:

## A Journey of Sufi Music and Rumi Poetry



Rumi Forum organized a live Sufi music performance by "Sufi Melody" together with Rumi poetry by Dr. Sara Towe Horsfall.

**Sufi Melody** is a spiritual music ensemble that aims to establish a web of love and a sense of connectedness through music among cultural groups. Before joining the academia, **Dr. Sara Towe Horsfall** worked as a foreign correspondent and international journalist. She worked as a music teacher while completing her Ph.D. in Texas, and is currently a member of the Baltimore Classical Guitar Orchestra. She also teaches part-time at Frederick Community College in Frederick, Maryland, and is the organizer of the monthly Rumi Poetry Reading and Sharing group around the Baltimore region



# Lox & Vodka and Tabla for Two: Klezmer sounds & Afghan/Indian beats



Rumi Forum organized a special evening crossing cultures, welcoming the Klezmer sounds of **Lox & Vodka** and the Afghani and Indian beats of **Tabla for Two**. Tabla for Two's motto of "playing for peace" was a good tagline for a show of healing music that lifted spirits and calmed souls, promoting understanding and connection through music.

**Lox & Vodka**'s Klezmer music, which they define as Jewish soul music, has existed since the Middle Ages and is played for Jewish weddings and other celebrations. They also teach fun and simple Israeli folk dances, an incredibly memorable experience for everyone.

**Tabla for Two** plays traditional and classical music from Afghanistan and India, old Bollywood favorites, and Omari's original compositions blend classical Eastern beats with Western-style beats – a fusion of East and West mirrored in their partnership. They call it "New Music for the New World."

# Religious Literacy

## Interreligious Communities Project



The **Interreligious Communities Project (ICP)** is designed to engage religious diversity within a safe and tested format and to widen participation in interreligious activity in Northern Virginia.

Participants will be invited to **listen**, **learn**, and **connect** through these visits to spaces where people **pray**, **worship**, **engage** in religious practices, and celebrate life's events. Each visit will contain specific elements: an architectural/religious **tour** of the space, an **introduction** to the religion, a communal **history**, **sharing** from members, a dialogue or a shared **activity**, and a delicious **meal!**

Each visit is more than a 'tour' or 'open house': it is an experience. The ICP is designed to **deepen understanding** of one another to **build trust**, **generate goodwill**, and foster a greater **sense of community**.

# Scriptural Reasoning

Monthly Study Sessions  
w/ Virginia Theological Seminary  
and Peace Catalyst International



## *Scriptural Reasoning*



### Monthly Topics

- Gates and Doors - 2
- Joseph
- Leadership
- Light
- Marriage
- Mediation
- Migration
- Neighbors
- Noah

# Interfaith Leadership Forum

## 4th ILF



Rumi Forum, Interfaith Council of Metropolitan Washington, and Washington Theological Consortium presented the **4th Interfaith Leadership Forum: "Interfaith Engagement with the Environmental Crisis"** on May 31, 2023. The program features keynote speaker **Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb**, an interfaith panel, and an opportunity for small group dialogues.

# Interfaith Leadership Forum



## Panel: "Sacred Texts, Sacred Earth"

- Rev. Dr. Gilson Waldkoenig**, United Lutheran Seminary
- Sevim Kalyoncu**, Green Muslims
- Rajwant Singh**, EcoSikh
- Kristin Barker**, One Earth Sangha

## Breakout Session Themes

- Interfaith/Ecumenical Resources and Collaboration
- Work and the Environment
- Environmental Education
- Translating Spiritual Values into Caring for Creation
- Natural Emotions: Transforming Eco-distress Into Engagement

# Partner Event

## IRF Summit 2023

**Rumi Forum** was a proud **Convening Partner** and **Steering Committee Member** of the **IRF Summit 2023**, which brought together a broad coalition that passionately supports religious freedom around the globe for a two-day in-person event in Washington, D.C., January 31st-February 1st.

Bringing attention to the plight of religious adherents who are **persecuted, individually and collectively**, will grow the grassroots and global movement for religious freedom. **Breakout sessions** hosted by the convening partners will go deep on important IRF topics.

Rumi Forum welcomed participants at the booth and supported the '**Documenting After IRF Violations**' panel.





# Partner Event

## Parliament of the World's Religions

**Rumi Forum** was a proud **Partner** of the **2023 Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago, IL**. The panel, **Embracing the Other in Unwelcoming Times: Examples of Interfaith Pioneers**, included Dr. Ori Z. Soltes, Rev. Rob Schenck, Rabbi Morris Zimbalist, and Rev. Ron Rooney.

Moderated by Ibrahim Anli from Rumi Forum, other partners included **Alliance for Shared Values (AfSV)**, **Niagara Foundation**, and **Congregation Beth Judea**.



# Center for Faith, Identity and Globalization (CFIG)



The **Center for Faith, Identity, and Globalization** (CFIG) is the interdisciplinary research and publication unit of Rumi Forum. Through Rumi Forum, CFIG hosts scholarly exchanges, engages fellows, creates publications, and generates media. CFIG contributes **academically-informed analysis** that **enriches public discourse** and **advances actionable work** at the intersection of faith, identity, and globalization.

## Research Areas:

- Interfaith Engagement
- Religious Nationalism
- Conflict Resolution
- Religious Freedom
- Globalization
- Spirituality

# Center for Faith, Identity and Globalization (CFIG)

## Senior Fellow Paper

Faith and Identity in the Global Era:  
What has Changed and What has Endured

by **Mark Juergensmeyer, Ph.D.**



**Faith and Identity in the Global Era:**

What has Changed and What has Endured

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Mark Juergensmeyer, Ph.D.  
Senior Fellow

# Senior Fellow Paper

## Religion and Nation: The Political Consequences of a Modern Differentiation

by **Jocelyne Cesari, Ph.D.**



### **Religion and Nation:**

The Political Consequences of a Modern Differentiation

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Jocelyne Cesari, Ph.D.

Senior Fellow

# Research Fellow Paper

## Pathways to Hope: Engaging Faith in Contemporary Suicide Prevention

by **Kate Kelly Middleton**



### **Pathways to Hope:** Engaging Faith in Contemporary Suicide Prevention

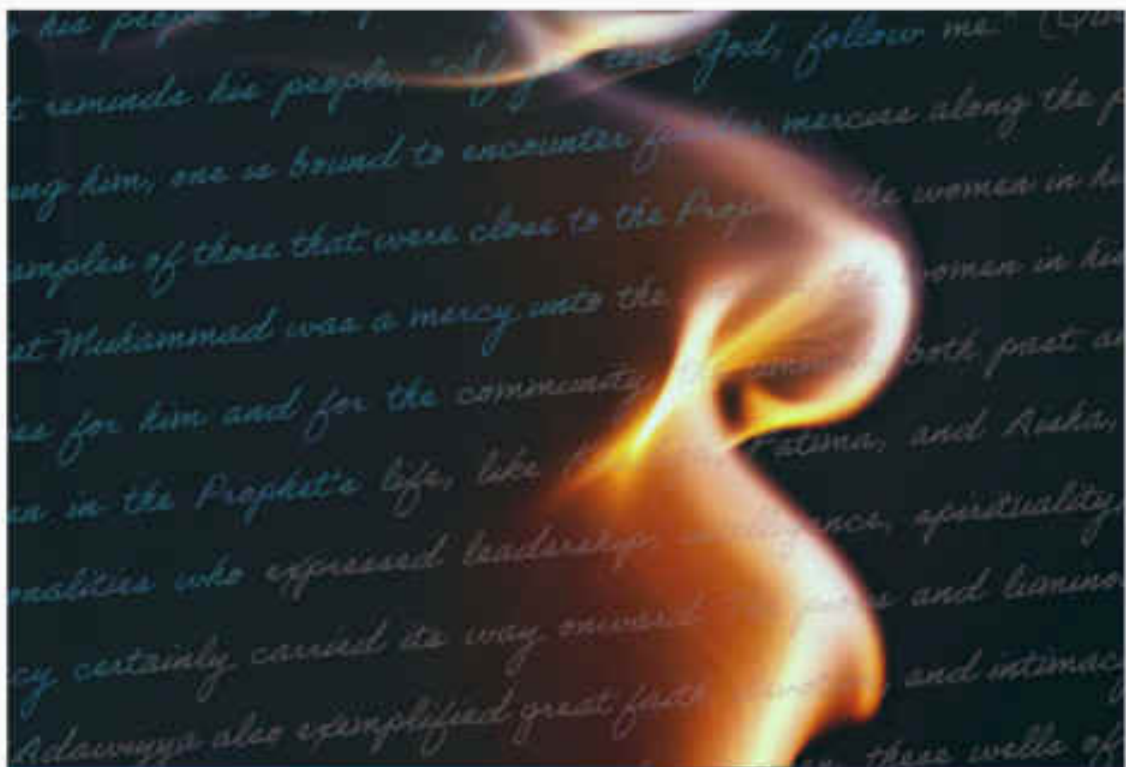
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Kate Kelly Middleton  
Research Fellow

# Research Fellow Paper

## A Legacy of Love: From Early Muslim Women to Rabi`a al-Adawiyya

by **Aisha Subhan**



### **A Legacy of Love:** From Early Muslim Women to Rabi`a al-Adawiyya

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Aisha Subhan  
Research Fellow

# Associate Paper

## Abraham and Covenants in the Quran: A Scriptural Analysis with Biblical References

by **Dana Sultan**



### **Abraham and Covenants in the Quran:**

A Scriptural Analysis with Biblical References

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Dana Sultan  
Associate

# Associate Paper

## Chaplains in Healthcare Settings: Exploring Their Roles and Resources

by **Jose Serna**



### Chaplains in Healthcare Settings:

Exploring Their Roles and Resources

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Jose Serna  
Associate



# Special Rumi Issue

Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi

by M. Fethullah Gulen



Special Rumi Issue:

**Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi**

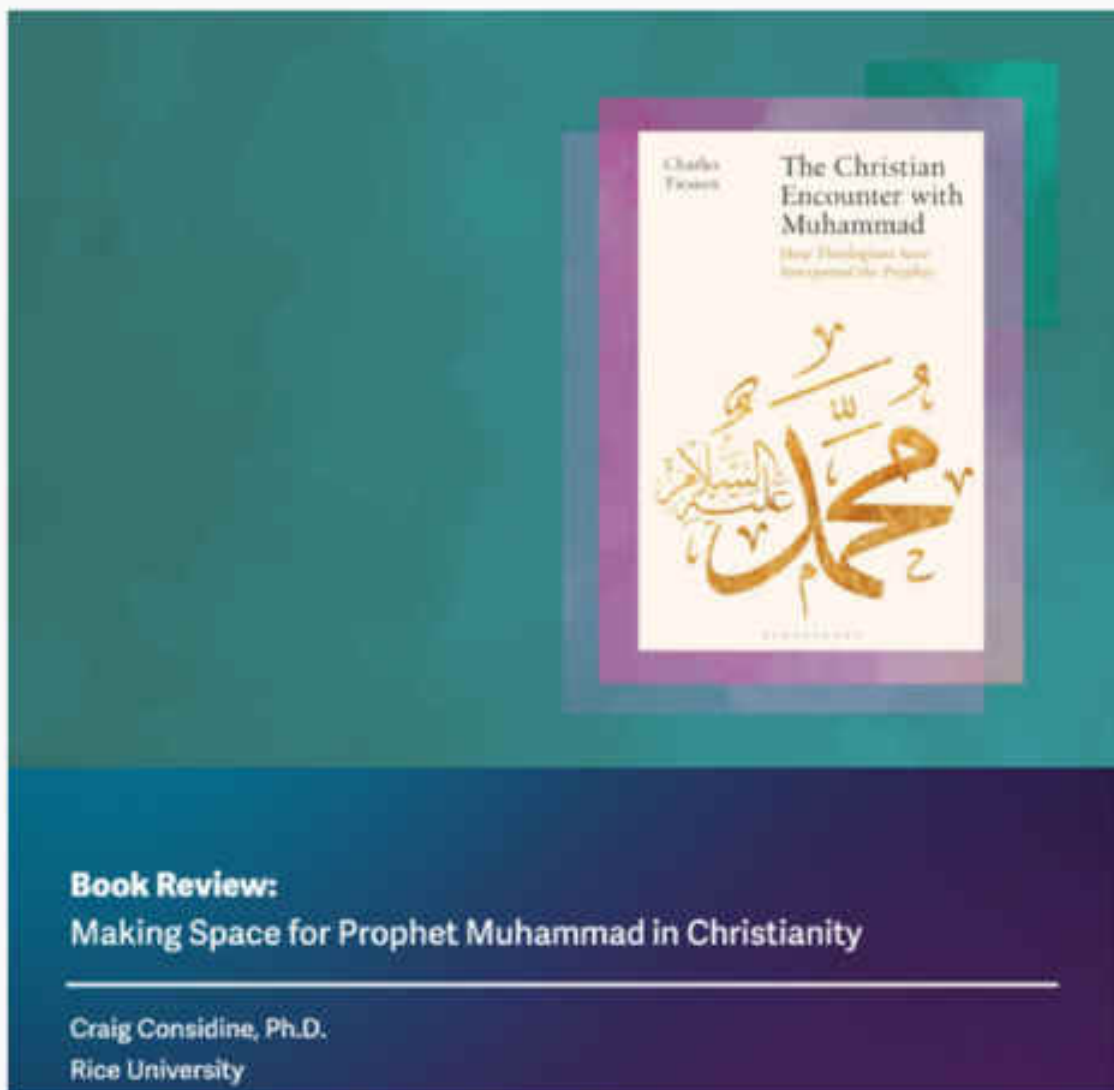
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M. Fethullah Gulen  
Honorary Chairman, Rumi Forum

# Book Review

## Making Space for Prophet Muhammad in Christianity

by **Craig Considine, Ph.D.**



**Book Review:**

Making Space for Prophet Muhammad in Christianity

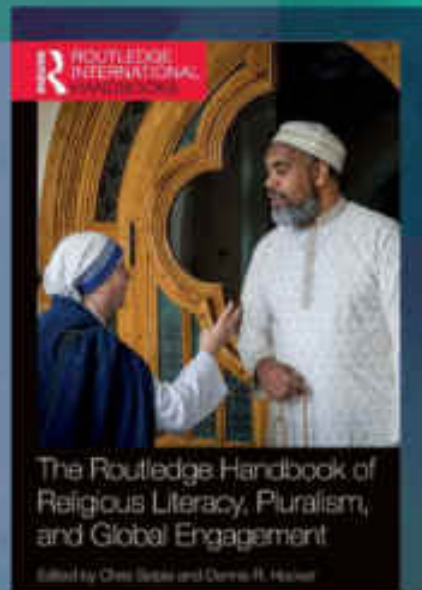
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Craig Considine, Ph.D.  
Rice University

# Book Review

## A New "Bible" for Religious Literacy and Engagement

by **Knox Thames**



### **Book Review:**

### A New "Bible" for Religious Literacy and Engagement

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Knox Thames  
Institute for Global Engagement