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Brooklyn United in Faith: Interfaith Leaders Gather to Celebrate Ramadan, Passover, and Easter

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Brooklyn, NY – March 15, 2026 – In a powerful demonstration of unity amid global challenges, hundreds of community leaders, clergy, elected officials, NYPD representatives, and residents came together at The Bridge Multicultural & Advocacy Project (The Bridge MCP) in Brooklyn for the annual United Interfaith Celebration honoring Ramadan, Passover, and Easter.



The event, held at 1894 Flatbush Avenue, brought together people from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds to pray, reflect, and reaffirm their commitment to building bridges rather than walls. Organized under the visionary leadership of Mark Meyer Appel, Founder of The Bridge MCP, the gathering emphasized shared values of renewal, service to others, peace, and solidarity in the face of division, hate, and uncertainty.



Speakers highlighted the "fierce urgency of now," drawing inspiration from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and stressed the importance of transforming society through faith, love, and mutual respect. One opening prayer invoked God as a guide through weary years and silent tears, calling for unity across traditions and urging participants to act as "thermostats" that change society rather than mere "thermometers" recording its realities.



Elected officials praised the event's role in fostering understanding and combating prejudice. Queens Borough President Donna Richards (a longtime friend and colleague of some attendees) greeted the crowd, noting Queens as the most diverse county in the U.S. with over 190 countries and 360 languages spoken. She condemned recent hate crimes, including an antisemitic incident at Temple Israel, and stood firmly against antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism, and all forms of bigotry. She reaffirmed New York City's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), declaring, "Our diversity is our strength," and emphasizing that the city builds bridges while others may build walls.



Other speakers, including NYPD Assistant Commissioner (representing community affairs), highlighted progress in representation and collaboration within law enforcement, particularly for Muslim communities post-9/11. They noted increased diversity in leadership roles and ongoing efforts to build trust across communities.

Public Advocate and City Council members echoed the call for rejecting fear, disunity, and hate-based leadership. They stressed that biases exist but must not be projected, and that true progress comes from including everyone without exception. The speaker warned against complacency, noting that crises affect all groups eventually, and the only path forward is collective action and mutual humanity.



Public advocate Jummane Williams, Councilwoman Farah Louis, Councilwoman Mercedes Narcisse and UN Ambassador, Dr Sima also made remarkable statements on Unity, Faith and Religious Harmony.

The evening featured calls for interfaith cooperation, with references to common themes across Ramadan, Passover, and Easter: spiritual renewal, serving others, and pursuing peace. Participants described the gathering as a microcosm of New York City's strength—people from different "trains" heading to the same "Grand Central Station" of shared humanity.



Mark Meyer Appel was repeatedly thanked for his tireless work in creating innovative programs that unite faiths and ethnic groups. Attendees joked affectionately about his lasting impact, with humorous remarks like "there's a housing shortage in heaven" and "you're destined to stay here for all eternity" to keep building bridges.

The event concluded with blessings of shalom, happiness, and joy, reinforcing that true peace (sima) comes from coming together in real unity rather than grief. In a time of trauma and division, speakers affirmed that faith communities hold the key to leading society toward a promised land of understanding and care.

The Bridge MCP continues its mission to ensure truth, respect, and dignity for every community with a public voice, proving once again that New York City's greatest asset is its people coming together across differences.

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