



NFTY Study Theme 2008-2009

V'ahavta L'rei-acha Kamocha - Love Thy Neighbor as Yourself

WHEREAS the 69th General Assembly of the Union for Reform Judaism adopted a resolution on Jewish-Muslim dialogue that will begin a program entitled, "Children of Abraham: Muslims and Jews in Conversation," at the 2007 Biennial in San Diego, California, and;

WHEREAS the aforementioned resolution states, "We as Reform Jews are committed to building relationships and gaining mutual understanding with our Muslim neighbors through dialogue and shared experiences because of our deep conviction that America is different, one of the very few places where the promise of true pluralism is not too wild a hope," and;

WHEREAS there are voices in the North American Jewish community who criticize outreach efforts and the aforementioned resolution states, "We have had quite enough of the shrill voices who profess to speak in our name and who use the slogan of 'unity' to impose their views on the moderate majority. North American Jews remain now what they have always been—centrist, reasonable and ready to reach out to their neighbors," and;

WHEREAS NFTY is the youth movement and voice of the Union for Reform Judaism, and should represent the future of the Reform movement in North America, and;

WHEREAS the 2007-2008 NFTY Study Theme, "Tihyeh Shofeit L'Atzmecha - You Will Be a Judge for Yourself," called for tolerance and acceptance within the Jewish community leading NFTYites to believe that it is time to formally expand our acceptance to those outside of the Jewish faith, and;

WHEREAS the Union for Reform Judaism has pledged to "work with the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and other appropriate partners to promote a new program of Muslim-Jewish dialogue - Children of Abraham: Muslims and Jews in Conversation - based on building relationships through mutual understanding and shared experiences between congregations, and including a structured dialogue guide for use in such conversations," and;

WHEREAS Deuteronomy 10:19 states, "Love the stranger in your midst, for you were once strangers in the land of Egypt," and;

WHEREAS Leviticus 19:18 states, "Love thy neighbor as yourself," and;

WHEREAS hate crimes against Muslims in the Americas have risen exponentially since the 9/11 attacks in New York City, and;

WHEREAS the Jewish people know the feeling of persecution and because of this must try to understand the plight of American and Canadian Muslims in today's world, and;

WHEREAS Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world and NFTYites should be knowledgeable and informed about the religion and culture, and;

WHEREAS the Jewish State of Israel is surrounded by countries all ruled by or influenced by Shariah Law, the Koran and Islam, and;

WHEREAS Jews and Muslims have a violent and egregious past that includes millions of deaths and guerilla attacks, and;

WHEREAS the United States of America is currently involved in a "War on Terror" in Iraq in order to prevent the "clash of civilizations," and;

WHEREAS "NFTY remains committed to learning, caring and making a difference in the world," (<http://www.nfty.org/about/goals>) and inter-religious dialogue has the possibility to make a tremendous impact on the world;

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED that the NFTY Study Theme for the 2008-2009 year be "*V'ahavta L'rei-acha Kamocha*- Love Thy Neighbor as Yourself", and;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that NFTY regions write at least one program pertaining to the Study Theme, Judeo-Muslim relations, historical relationships between the two religions, teen Abrahamic dialogue, overcoming ignorance about Judeo-Muslim disputes, and create an environment that promotes acceptance through the 2008-2009 school year, and;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that NFTY strives to make it possible for all NFTYites to communicate and create dialogue between TYGs and Muslim youth groups, and;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that NFTY continues to focus on "peace in the Middle East" and promote positive Judeo-Muslim relations both in North America, and;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that NFTYites are encouraged to explore the Muslim faith, and;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that NFTY Regional Board Members encourage TYG Board Members to program on the aforementioned Study Theme and produce programs for the annual Tikkun Olam Award, and;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that NFTY will endorse examination of Judeo-Muslim conflicts through programming, and thereby acknowledge the differences and furthermore discover routes to cooperation and peace.

Respectfully submitted,
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Co-signed:

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