

## History and Organization

The Islamic Center of Rochester was established in 1975 to meet the needs of the growing Muslim community in the Greater Rochester area. The Muslim community in Rochester has grown from a few in the 60's to the many thousands that are present today. The Muslims in our community include citizens, immigrants, and converts. Present membership at the Islamic Center exceeds 500 families.

The new building of the Islamic Center was completed in 1985. It is located on four acres of prime land within 10 minutes of downtown Rochester and the major universities in the area. It has over 8,000-sq. ft. of floor space that includes prayer and multipurpose halls, offices, a library and a kitchen. There is a picnic shed adjacent to a pond for recreation. The property is fully paid for. To meet the growing needs of the Muslim community, expansion of the Center is under active consideration.

The Islamic Center has a full time Executive Director / Imam, an elected Board of Directors, and the Council of Trustees. The Council develops the policies and is responsible for long term planning. The Board implements the policies, manages the facilities, programs and day to day activities. The Executive Director provides religious guidance and leadership and is in charge of educational programs at the Center.

## Objectives

The Islamic Center is dedicated to the service of the Muslims and Islam in the greater Rochester area. Major objectives of the Center are:

- Establish and maintain Mosques to serve the Muslim community.
- Provide religious guidance for area Muslims.
- Make known the ideology of Islam, its teachings, culture and philosophy.
- Strengthen the fraternal bonds among Muslims in this community.
- Promote friendly relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in this community.
- Provide needed guidance and assistance to Muslims coming to the community.

- Spread and promote the teachings and understanding of Islam via religious festivities, lectures, symposia, and seminars.
- Establish and maintain Islamic School, Quranic studies and an Islamic library.
- Arrange and provide religious rites for deceased Muslims.
- Establish and support an auxiliary of Muslim students in Rochester.

## Activities

Islamic education, guidance and providing religious services to area Muslims are our primary concern. We are also involved in dialogues with various Christian and Jewish denominations to create better mutual understanding. Following are the major activities at the Center:

- **Prayers:** Daily, Juma (Friday) and Ramadan Taraweeh in congregation. Ramadan program includes community Iftars (fast breaking) and Eid prayers.
- **Weekly Halaqa:** Study of Qur'an and Hadith (traditions of the Prophet) every Friday night.
- **Interfaith Forum:** Representatives from various faiths and denominations participate in monthly meetings to discuss issues of mutual interest. Most of these meetings are held at the Islamic Center.
- **Speaker's Forum:** The Center provides speakers to local schools, colleges, and church groups. Members of other faiths are invited to the Center for dialogues.
- **Muslim Christian Commission:** to develop mutual understanding.
- **Women's Forum:** Involved in meeting the social and cultural needs of the community, particularly women and children. Leading fund raising activities to support the programs and projects of the Center.
- **Financial Support** for area poor and needy. Relief support for national and international disasters.
- **Evening Islamic School:** Mondays - Fridays, 5-7 PM.
- **Muslim Youth Association (MYA) is active in reach out, social and sports activities.**

- **Youth and Adult Education** (open to members of all faiths):
- Introduction to Islam course.
- Arabic courses level I & II.
- **Weekend Islamic School:** Classes for all school age children. The instruction includes, Reading of Qur'an, Fundamentals of Islam, Muslim Ethics, Islamic History, and the life of the Prophet and his Companions (SAWS).
- **Monthly Seminars:** Guest speakers invited to speak on various subjects once every month. A dinner precedes the program.
- **Monthly Publication:** covering current activities and programs at the Center and topics on Islam.
- **Summer School:** Six-week program in July/August for children of school age. Areas covered are Qur'an reading, Arabic language, Islamic studies, and sciences. Program is full of social activities including visits to area recreation spots.
- **Refugees:** Help and support for refugees.
- **The Greater Rochester Council of Masajids:** meets monthly to discuss matters of mutual interest and coordinates group activities.

## Membership

Islamic Center Activities are open to all Muslims, regardless of their national origin, color, or race. Non-Muslims are welcome to participate in activities as invited guests.

Membership of the Center is open to all Muslims, 18 years or older, who are residents of the Greater Rochester Area and have paid the yearly membership dues. Paid membership is a requirement to participate in the decision making process (participating in the General Assembly meetings, and voting in elections).

## Policies

The Islamic Center of Rochester is an independent organization. Its objective is to promote, propagate, and facilitate the practice of Islam in the United States. The emergence of an American

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Muslim identity is its prime goal. The Islamic Center of Rochester is based on the following

- The only authentic sources of Islam are the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah (Practice) of the Prophet Mohammed, the final messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him).
- Sect or schools of thought are a matter of personal preference. They are a private matter and not an Islamic Center policy.
- Islam is the universal message of Allah. Muslims are identified primarily as Muslims and not as an ethnic group, race, color, or tribe. Ethnic activities or overtones are not allowed in the Center.
- Arabic is taught as the language of the Holy Qur'an. The language of communications and conducting of activities of the Center is English, the language of this land.
- Men and women are equally responsible to put in the effort to formalize the policies, design and implement the plans for the Center. Modesty, decency, and observing the prohibitions that Allah and his Apostle has dictated, as well as the purity of the heart and the clarity of the conscience, and not segregation are the guarantee of success. While advocating the codes and ethics of Islamic behavior, we believe that there is no compulsion in religion and the considerations of all human beings is a matter of great personal respect and attention.
- The affairs of Muslims should be handled through consultation (Shura) that results in, and guards discipline and acceptance.
- Political discussions and awareness can be a part of the Islamic activities. However, they should be geared towards the interest of Islam and Muslims in the USA. Preoccupation with outside politics may lead to division among Muslim ranks in America.

### **Facilities Use Guidelines**

- The Islamic Center facilities are open for use by all Muslims of the Greater Rochester area for legitimate religious and social activities.
- The mosque area (prayer hall) can only be used for Salat (individual or group prayers) reflection and contemplation, education, study groups, meetings, lectures and group discussions.

- Islamic Center does not make any judgements on the religious significance of any social functions. All functions are allowed as long as the activities are not in conflict with the fundamental practices and teachings of Islam. Singing, dancing, and music is prohibited on the Islamic Center facilities and ground. Any food and drinks served must comply with Islamic dietary laws.
- With the permission of the Imam, only out of town Muslims in transit and with proper identification, may stay at the Center (provided that they sign a waiver of liability) for a maximum of three nights. Families are not allowed to stay at the Center.
- All requests for the use of the Center must be made to and approved by the Facilities Use Manager who will maintain a calendar of activities. Requests are accepted on a first come basis. Permission can be denied if the purpose of the meeting is in conflict with the stated policies of the Center or the user has a history of non-compliance with the established guidelines. Such a decision can be appealed to the Islamic Center Executive Board, which has the final authority to approve all requests.
- The use of Islamic Center furniture and equipment outside the Center for private use is prohibited.
- Professional or educational meetings requested by any area organizations and sponsored by an Islamic Center member are welcome with prior approval obtained from the Board. Such requests can be denied without stating any cause or reason.
- Shoes must be taken off and stored in the shoe racks. Muslims as well as Non-Muslims guests coming to the mosque must dress modestly. Proper attire for all includes covering of bodies and legs. Women must cover their heads and full arms.
- Program schedules must be arranged to account for breaks during prayer times.
- Reservations for use of the facilities can be made with the Executive Director.
- No material can be posted or distributed on the Center's premises without the specific approval of the Imam.

# *WELCOME!*

to the  
**Islamic Center  
of Rochester**



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