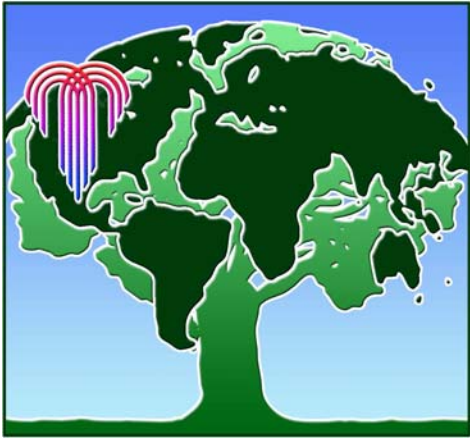


The Kansas City Interfaith Council — *Deepening our own faiths by learning about others*



Shaping the Future of Religion in the Kansas City area

The Gifts of Pluralism

In a World Without Direction We Find the Sacred

CONCLUDING CONFERENCE DECLARATION

This is a historic moment because never before have people of so many faiths in the Kansas City area convened to explore sacred directions for troubled times. Especially after the events of September 11, the need for our support for one another and the larger community is clear and commanding.

As members of the greater Kansas City community and guests, we have assembled October 27 and 28, 2001, and worked together, worshipped together, enjoyed each other, and learned from each other.

Receiving suggestions made throughout this meeting for enlarging and improving this statement, we celebrate the gifts of pluralism we have begun to offer to one another.

We do hereby declare our resolve to work towards making Kansas City a model community, where interfaith relationships are honored as a way of deepening one's own tradition and spirituality, and where the wisdom of the many religions successfully addresses the environmental, personal and social crises of our often fragmented world.

¶ The gifts of pluralism have taught us that nature is to be respected rather than controlled; nature is a process that includes us, not a product external to us to be used or disposed of. Our proper attitude toward nature is awe, not utility.

¶ We have also learned that our true personhood may not be the images of ourselves constrained by any particular social identities. When we realize this, our acts can proceed spontaneously from the duty and compassion, and we need not be unduly attached to results beyond control.

¶ Finally, when persons in community govern themselves less by profit and more by the covenant of service, the flow of history toward to peace and justice is honored and advanced.

We declare that through our encounter we have discovered that clearer directions for our several faiths and for our society at large are needed and possible. In the names of our faiths too often prejudice and injustice have been perpetuated, and we know that bias and bigotry continue.

The work we have done this weekend is a turning point to overcome the misunderstandings that separate persons and communities of faith. We resolve to deepen our commitments to our own faith communities and to enlarge our understanding of kinship by honoring the faiths of others. This conference, "The Gifts of Pluralism," is thus the beginning of an expanded conversation by which we may show both our humility and our gratitude in offering service to that which is Infinite and Ultimate, which we call by many names but identify in our hearts as the Source from which come, to which we return, and which holds us in this present opportunity.

Approved unanimously at the end of the Conference with each person ceremonially adding his or her signature while receiving the waters of the world mingled with waters from fountains of the Kansas City area to take home to water a plant to grow as a way of reminding us to help the community grow with the wisdom and relationships from the Conference.