

Bridgebuilding: An Interfaith Collaboration Video Series

Training Workbook

Spring 2024



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13:13

May
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"And say, 'My Lord
let me land at a
blessed landing
place, and you
are the best to
accommodate us.'
-The Holy
Quran

MAY God bless
you, your family
and your new
home. We wish
you all the best
in your new
journey!
The Islamic
Society of
Colorado Springs

Bridgebuilding: An Interfaith Collaboration Video Series Training Workbook

*Pikes Peak Habitat's Project for the Team Up
National Initiative: A Collaboration between
YMCA of the USA, Habitat for Humanity
International, Catholic
Charities USA, and Interfaith America*

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Video Training Series by Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity,
360, & the Interfaith Build for Unity Subcommittee

PikesPeakHabitat.org

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A Word From Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity's Interfaith Build for Unity Subcommittee



Dear reader,

Thank you for your interest in the Bridgebuilding: An Interfaith Collaboration Video Training Series. Since 2020, our Interfaith Build for Unity (IBU) Subcommittee has brought together a group of leaders representing diverse faiths and beliefs to support Pikes Peak Habitat's IBU and related interfaith initiatives as we seek to work toward a world where everyone has a decent, affordable place to call home.

We hope that this video training series and supplemental workbook are helpful to you as you work toward creating and implementing your own interfaith project and/or continue to refine your interfaith skills to build bridges across lines of faith. We are cheering you on in your efforts!

-Members of the IBU Subcommittee

Video Series and Session Overview

1

How to Use This Video Series

This section introduces this eight-part video series and how it might be used – either chronologically as a full series or a single video as applicable to your context.

3

How Do You Initially Reach Out to Faith Groups?

When you are interested in building bridges with individuals from diverse faiths, where do you begin? What are some helpful tips for reaching out to faith leaders from various belief systems? How do you assess potential needs in the community? This module discusses these questions to equip those at the very start of the interfaith project process.

2

Planting Interfaith Seeds: The Why Behind Interfaith Work

Pikes Peak Habitat CEO Kris Lewis, affiliate leaders, and a homeowner provide context including local affordable housing needs, the importance of interfaith collaboration, and the Interfaith Build for Unity as a potential model for interfaith work.

4

What Do Different Faiths and Belief Systems Say About Service?

Numerous faith traditions and belief systems discuss the importance of helping others, or the Golden Rule. This module explores the importance that helping others plays in a variety of faith traditions. You will also have space to consider the values or beliefs that propel you to engage with interfaith work.

Video Series and Session Overview

5

Getting Started on an Interfaith Project

How do you identify a core human need that will translate across faith traditions, become a realistic motivator, and act as a unifying goal for an interfaith project? In this session, local faith leaders share their perspectives on how to get started on an interfaith project.

6

What Challenges Have You Faced Pursuing Interfaith Work?

This session highlights some of the challenges Pikes Peak Habitat's interfaith subcommittee has faced over the years and provides tips on how to address them for other organizations facing similar challenges.

7

How Do You Build Sustainability Over Time with Your Interfaith Project?

How do you keep momentum going over time? How can the collective power of diverse communities putting faith into action be harnessed, perhaps for future projects? This session delves into how to create sustainability with an interfaith project.

8

What Does an Interfaith Dialogue Look Like? A Conversation on Interfaith Collaboration

This module provides a real-life example of a natural, organic interfaith dialogue for viewers to analyze. Reflection space is also provided so participants can analyze the interfaith listening skills utilized by conversation participants and then practice these skills in groups.



"I like to think of all cultures -- the brilliance of different people coming together -- in a kaleidoscope. If you put each of these gemstones into a kaleidoscope you can't always see the individual crystals. Sometimes they're blurry. But then when you turn just one more knob, you see a brilliant pattern, kind of like a very colorful snowflake. This is what we are striving to do with our Interfaith Build. We want to acknowledge the brilliance, the gifts [and] the dignity of each and every person."

Kris Lewis

CEO

Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity

Session

1

**How to Use This
Video Series**

Ideas for Using This Training Series

We are excited that you are interested in learning more about interfaith work! Whether you have been building bridges across lines of faith for decades or are just starting to consider interfaith work in your place of business, faith community, or in another context, we are excited you are pursuing this training. Here are some potential ways to use this series:

- If you are just starting your interfaith journey and are looking to start your own interfaith project, we recommend watching the videos chronologically. After viewing each video, complete the reflection exercises, then take weekly actionable steps to put each session's teachings into practice as you develop your project.
- If you are further along in your interfaith journey, feel free to skip to the videos and lessons that best suit your needs.
- Use this series to train your staff at your business, class, or nonprofit on how to best serve and engage with clients or customers from different faiths.
- Gather a group of five to seven individuals from two different faith traditions and go through this curriculum together for eight weeks to build up your interfaith skills and practice engaging in interfaith dialogue.

“I filled out the application, and my fingers were crossed. Habitat for Humanity listened to me and wanted to hear my story, and we’ve been partnering ever since. It was amazing and I couldn’t believe it. Prayers have been answered.... It is great to know that [we] have a future place to rest our heads and call home forever.”

*-Jessica
Interfaith Build for Unity Homeowner*



Session

2

**Planting Interfaith Seeds:
The Why Behind
Interfaith Work**

Reflection Questions

- What reflections do you have about Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity's mission and/or homeownership program?
- Were there any misconceptions about Pikes Peak Habitat that you previously held that you now see differently?
- What is sparking your personal interest in creating an interfaith project? What made you want to engage with this training series?
- Are there any elements about the structure of the Interfaith Build for Unity that you would like to incorporate into your own interfaith project? If so, what and why?
- If you are watching this video to train a staff, what does your organization's mission say about working with individuals from diverse backgrounds or faiths?



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Learn more about Pikes Peak Habitat's Interfaith Build for Unity



More Information on Pikes Peak Habitat

- [Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity Website](#)
- [Pikes Peak Habitat Current Builds](#)

Interfaith Build for Unity Resources

- [Interfaith Build for Unity Webpage](#)
- [Pikes Peak Habitat Faith in Action Webpage](#)
- [Why Habitat for Humanity's Theology of the Hammer Offers Hope in Polarized Times \(Religion News Service, May 9, 2023\)](#)
- [Jessica Shares Her Story at 3rd Interfaith Build for Unity Launch \(Pikes Peak Habitat blog, June 15, 2023\)](#)



Ways to Get Involved

- Bring a group of five individuals from your belief system to come volunteer on Pikes Peak Habitat's construction site.
 - Reach out to Chloe@PikesPeakHabitat.org and/or volunteer@PikesPeakHabitat.org to get involved.
- [Sign up for Pikes Peak Habitat's monthly Faith in Action Newsletter](#)
- [Fill out the Interfaith Build for Unity Faith Community Involvement Form and check out all the ways you can put faith into action](#)



“Either you’ve been in the interfaith arena for many years and you are experienced, or you are new to the project and you are learning and meeting people from a faith tradition you’ve never met before. Going in with an open mind [and] being able to dissipate any misconceptions or misunderstandings that you may have about the faith is very important.”

*-Feda Jodeh
Islamic Society of Colorado Springs*

Session

3

**How Do You Initially
Reach Out to Faith
Groups?**

Reflection Questions

- What do you think might prevent someone from getting to know an individual from a different faith?
- What faith communities are in your local community? If you aren't sure, where could you find this information?
- What practical, actionable steps will you take to reach out to local faith communities for your project?



- What are you personally most nervous about when reaching out to someone from a different faith? What excites you the most about the idea of engaging with someone from a different faith?
- Was there a viewpoint represented in this video that you resonated with? What piece of advice from our faith leaders did you find the most helpful?

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Advice from Our Faith Leaders

What specific, tangible advice would you have for individuals trying to reach out to a faith community for the first time?



Tips on Attending a Religious Ceremony

“Currently a guest [attending a service] would need to sign up online as a guest for security and can reach out to our office administrator for more information.”

-Member of a Jewish Temple

“You might check to see if communion is offered to all attendees during the service. You don’t have to take communion if you don’t want to. Stay seated or let other folks out of the pew and then sit back down.” -Member of an Episcopal Church

“If you are going to visit, please adhere to our modest dress. Women are expected to please wear long maxi skirts, jeans, or pants, and long sleeves -- no tank tops, miniskirts, or shorts, or low-cut shirts. Men can wear pants, jeans, t-shirts, or long sleeves.

Please be respectful of our space when visiting.

We have a space for men and one for women.

Attend our service quietly and keep questions until the end.”

-Member of a Muslim Mosque



Reaching Out to a Faith-Based Liaison

“I would advise calling the church office during work hours and ask who would coordinate service and/or interfaith activities and how to contact them. This will probably be a pastor or local engagement director.” -Retired Lutheran Church Pastor



“Either phone or email work.... Identify yourself, your organization, and reason for contact.” -Member of a Jewish Temple

“With Native American communities, it is a good idea to arrange a one-on-one meeting to discuss what is expected or wanted. It would be recommended for some of the group to attend Native American events such as a pow wow.” - Member of a Native American Group

General Tips for Working with Diverse Communities

Be mindful of the Jewish calendar.
You can add a Google calendar of Jewish holidays to your phone so you know when the holidays are that year.”

- Jewish Rabbi

“In Judaism, we have this concept called ‘Tikkun Olam,’ which means ‘repairing the world.’ We have a legend that when God created the world, the world was this solid ball of pure light and goodness. Then, for whatever reason, God literally drops the ball and it shatters into a million pieces. Every time we do a good deed -- when we help another person -- we help repair the entire world, and we put a little piece of that shattering back together.”

*-Rabbi Iah Pillsbury
Temple Beit Torah*



Session

4

**What Do Different Faiths
and Belief Systems Say
About Service?**

Reflection Questions

- What does your personal belief system or ideological perspective say about service and helping others?
- How does your personal belief system compare with another faith tradition you learned about in this video?
- What is one thing that you wish others knew about your belief system or one misconception you would like to dispel?



- What is one thing you learned about a faith tradition highlighted in the video?
- How can you use the knowledge you have learned through this video to continue to develop relationships with individuals from different backgrounds? What does this look like at your place of business or in your personal life?
- How can you be hospitable to others while maintaining your own convictions?

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Words from Our Faith Leaders

What is one thing that you wish the public knew about your particular belief system or faith tradition?



“The Native American people are from many tribes, and traditions vary. Native Americans are alive and well and are endeavoring to strengthen their language and cultures.”
-Member of a Native American Association

“No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome.”
-Member of the United Church of Christ



“God loves us all regardless of our belief system.”
- Member of a Roman Catholic Parish

“Christianity is not the judgmental stereotype. Most Christian communities are welcoming and won’t question your walk. We all fall short of the Jesus standard that’s expected in our faith.”
-Member of a Non-Denominational Christian Church

“We are very community-focused and have no secret rituals or agendas, as is often thought.”
-Member of a Jewish Temple



“We are a peaceful religion with peaceful followers who seek to represent the religion to the best of their ability according to the teachings and practices of the Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him.”
-Member of a Muslim Mosque

“There are many spiritual paths throughout native communities. Love binds us all, and we are all related.”
- Member of a Native American Association



“The one other thought with interfaith work is to equip your community with the difference between theological debate and respectful curiosity. We don't have to avoid talking about religion, but we need to do it respectfully and [acknowledge] that other religions are perfectly acceptable.”

*-Jeff Mawhirter
Christ City Church*

Session

5

**Getting Started on an
Interfaith Project**

Reflection Questions

- What are some of the common issues you see facing members of your community? What issues are currently being unaddressed?
- What role can faith communities play in addressing community needs? What role can businesses play?
- What core human need will your interfaith project work on addressing?
- If you are planning to bring together diverse faith leaders, how can you design your first meeting to be welcoming to people of all faiths and/or no faith?
- Take some time to outline your pitch to faith leaders. How are you asking them or their congregants to participate?
- If you are training staff using this curriculum, how can your organization be more accommodating to people of diverse beliefs? What protocols are currently in place, and what may need to change?



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Words from Our Faith Leaders

What actionable steps did you take to get people involved in interfaith work in your faith community?



“We use e-mails to our membership and discuss [events] at our monthly meetings [with a sign-up sheet].”
-Member of a Native American Association

“I send text messages to my community members.”
-Chaplain at the U.S. Air Force Academy

“Set up a booth for after services to recruit.”
-Member of an Episcopal Church



“We make announcements, mass broadcast texts, and personal phone calls and texts to individuals.”
-Member of a Muslim Mosque

“I reach out to the missions team, then to the men’s group.”
-Member of a Non-Denominational Christian Church



“1. Putting [the opportunity] in the weekly and monthly bulletin. 2. Calling people who I think might be interested. 3. Announcing information about Habitat during the information portion after our services.”
-Member of a Jewish Temple

“I have been making coffee dates with various clergy and inviting them to identify members who may be a good fit and give them contact information.”
-Liaison for Faith-Based Advocacy Organization



“Hesitation is a really natural human response. We hesitate all the time, whether it's out of fear, out of self-consciousness, which is probably rooted in fear, or just not knowing. Practicing together in a Zen sangha, we dig into hesitation.... Hesitation is actually seen as a common natural thing. Can I experience fear and just see it? Oh, this is fear. And then do what is called for and not become identified by those feelings, [and] not become locked up and unable to help.”

*-Frank Actis
Springs Mountain Sangha*

Session

6

**What Challenges Have
You Faced Pursuing
Interfaith Work?**

Reflection Questions

- If you have started your project, what specific challenges are you facing? Brainstorm some ways to address these challenges.
- If you haven't started your project, what challenges do you imagine might arise when bringing together individuals of diverse beliefs?
- When disagreements arise between individuals of different beliefs, how could you respond?
- How do you typically respond to conflict?
- What might make someone from your particular belief system or place of work hesitant to engage across religious divides? How might you address these concerns?
- How did you see the speakers in the video address hesitation in their own faith communities?



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“I think we're going to have to continue balancing the bonding and the bridging. We're going to have to balance how much we're deepening our relationships with the people actively involved and how much we're branching out to, especially, other faith communities and communities of no faith who have not yet joined us, who haven't been introduced to what we're doing, so that [our interfaith work] is not static.”

*-Paula Stecker
Liaison to Faith Table, an Interfaith Advocacy Organization*

Session

7

**How Do You Build
Sustainability Over Time
with Your Interfaith
Project?**

Reflection Questions

- What long-term outcomes would you like to see from your interfaith project and/or this training?
- As you're developing your project, what mechanisms will you put in place for program evaluation?
- What positive outcomes are you hoping to see from this training series?
- What would you consider most important to keep momentum going for your interfaith project?
- Think of a time when you had to make adjustments to your initial plan. How did you pivot to address changing circumstances?
- What community stakeholders will you seek input from to debrief about your project?
- If you are training staff, how will you ensure that the changes you implement in your organization lead to the outcomes you desire?



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“We have so much more in common. We all want a place to live. We all want food. We all want to be respected and have dignity.”

*-Stephanie Sparks
Grace & St. Stephen's Episcopal Church*

Session

8

**What Does an Interfaith
Dialogue Look Like?**

A Conversation on Interfaith Collaboration

Reflection Questions

- What interfaith skills did you see the speakers utilize in this video?
- What is one of your key takeaways from this video?
- If you have a specific question for a person from another faith, how would you begin the dialogue?
- Take 2-3 minutes to practice having an interfaith conversation with someone from a different belief system.



- When engaging in a conversation, how can you show the other party that you are actively listening?
- What do you think the essential components of a good dialogue are?

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Resource Library



Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity: Interfaith Build for Unity Resources

- [Interfaith Build for Unity webpage](#)
- [“Why Habitat for Humanity’s theology of the hammer offers hope in a polarized time.”](#) (Religion News Service, May, 9, 2023).
- [Capacity Building Grant Thank You Video](#)
- [Together As One: Introducing the Interfaith Build for Unity Video](#)



Interfaith Training Resources

- [Interfaith Build for Unity webpage](#)
- [Interfaith America's Faith in Elections Playbook](#)
- [The Golden Rule & the World Religions](#)
- [United We Stand: Episode 2 Pikes Peak Habitat Interfaith Build for Unity \(Video\)](#)
- [Harvard University: The Pluralism Project Selected Resources](#)
- [Interfaith America's 7 Popular Interfaith Student Events](#)
- [How to Host an Interfaith Potluck](#)
- [Interfaith America's Shared Values Facilitation Guide Exercise](#)



Recommended Reads

- [Interfaith Leadership: A Primer by Eboo Patel](#)
- [Out of Many Faiths: Religious Diversity and the American Promise by Eboo Patel](#)
- [How to Know a Person by David Brooks](#)
- [Christian Muslim Relations in a Tribalized America: Strategies for Healing by Asma Uddin](#)

Thank You!

Thank you for using this training series. Whether you are starting your own interfaith project in your local community or continuing to develop your interfaith bridgebuilding skills, we hope this training series has been helpful.

If you are interested in learning more about Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity's Interfaith Build for Unity or would like to financially support our next interfaith build, please scan the QR code.

