

About Sacred Space International

The mission of Sacred Space International (SSI) is to encourage interfaith dialogue and explore cultural diversity by sharing sacred space. Founded in 2002 as The Center for Religious Architecture, the organization was a response to the events of September 11th, 2001, and the national climate of cultural misunderstanding and fear. Believing that architecture could serve as neutral ground for discussion of these newly ignited issues of cultural and religious difference, this secular organization educates on religious traditions within the context of each tradition's worship space through a carefully designed process that builds relationships and trust across difference.

SSI operates as an arm of The Parliament of the World's Religions, which is a global organization promoting interreligious harmony through education, programming, and activism. SSI is expanding its programmatic reach nationally and internationally to explore the architectural implications of sacred space in our increasingly global society.

Suzanne Morgan, AIA

The Parliament of the World's Religions Sacred Space Ambassador
Founder and President of Sacred Space International

Vanessa Avery, PhD

Program Director, Sharing Sacred Spaces

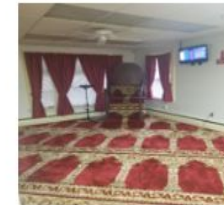
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Executive Assistant

SHARING SACRED SPACES

New Haven

2018-2019



SACRED SPACE INTERNATIONAL
www.sacredspace.world

Sharing Sacred Spaces

This fall, religious and spiritual communities are coming together in partnership to visit one another's sacred spaces, learn about other religions, extend hospitality, equip themselves with some of the tools of interfaith dialogue, and build an interfaith community. The Sharing Sacred Spaces (SSS) program is designed to engage religious diversity within a safe and tested format, and to widen participation in interreligious activity across the Greater New Haven area.

Beginning on October 3, 2018, the first of the participating eight congregations will open its doors to extend hospitality to participating congregations and visitors. Approximately once per month thereafter, until May of 2019, each SSS congregation will open its doors in turn.

Through these visits to spaces where people pray, worship, engage in religious practices and celebrate life's events, participants will be invited to listen, learn, and connect with one another. Each visit will contain specific elements: an architectural /religious tour of the space; an introduction to the religion; sharing from members; a dialogue or a shared activity; and refreshments. Each visit is thus more than a 'tour' or 'open house'; it is an experience. Sharing sacred spaces is designed to deepen understanding of one another to ultimately build trust, generate goodwill, and foster a greater sense of community together.

SSS' second iteration in New Haven is also being run in collaboration with Yale Divinity School. Graduate students at Yale are participating with our New Haven congregations as an integral part of their own spiritual development and their study on sacred space, sacred architecture, and the world's religions.

Why attend?

- Meet your neighbors
- Consider new points of view in dialogue with those of other religions
- Learn about the history and underlying principles of other traditions
- Become aware of community service and outreach programs other traditions are engaged in
- Build relationships with others and find common ground
- Refresh and deepen your own spiritual convictions
- Experience the hospitality, openness, and warmth of all our spiritual partners

We look forward to greeting you over the next few months as you visit each Sacred Space.

How to participate:

- *Attend as many of the Sharing Sacred Spaces events as you can*
- *See the etiquette guide for each sacred space in preparation of your visit*
- *Be respectful of each space and of others*
- *Read the Ground Rules for Dialogue at the end of this booklet and do your best to practice them*
- *Bring your questions and ask them*
- *Enjoy the journey!*

VISIT DATE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2018 6-8:30 PM

New Haven Zen Center

193 Mansfield St, New Haven, CT 06511
203.787.0912 • www.newhavenzen.org



Unique statement about the community:

Perceive World Sound— this is the name of our school. To perceive clearly is to open the heart of compassion.

What are the origins of Buddhism?

Buddhism was founded by Shakyamuni Buddha in India 2,500 years ago. Many threads of Buddhism have evolved over the centuries. In 470 CE Zen appeared in China, founded by Bodhi Dharma on core Mahayana teachings.

How did this sacred space come to be built here?

Our founding teacher, Zen Master Seung Sahn, came to the U.S. from Korea in the early '70s, and established a main Temple in Providence, RI. He then began to teach regionally and was encouraged by some members of the Yale Community to establish a Temple in New Haven. The current building was purchased and donated by an early member of our community, a true fusion of New England and Korean aesthetics.

What is distinctive about this community?

From its inception our school has worked at integrating a 1,600-year-old Asian tradition into contemporary American life. One approach has been to establish a residential community which integrates monastic and householder life styles.

What kind of outreach are we involved in?

Our central outreach is simply to be available to teach meditation to all who are interested. We support regular community meditation practice in our Temple as well as in the wider regional community.

Etiquette for the Zen Center:

- Our Zen Center is a Temple under the umbrella of the Kwan Um School of Zen, founded by Zen Master Seung Sahn with its roots in the Chogye Buddhist Order in Korea.
- Please remove your shoes before entering. You may place your shoes on the shoe rack outside the door.
- Please respect the sanctity of this Temple by maintaining a quiet and meditative environment.
- Please also refrain from the use of alcohol, drugs, meat (including fish and poultry), tobacco and other nicotine products while in the building or on the grounds.
- It is customary, though not obligatory, to wear a robe during practice. The Center will provide a robe if you would like to wear one.
- Sitting meditation is done on a pillow called a *zafu*, which sits upon a square cushion called a *zabuton*; or you may sit on a chair if this is more comfortable. Chairs will be set up as well as zafus.

“Zen means discover your true self and help others.”

Zen Master Seung Sahn

VISIT DATE: MONDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2018 6:30-8:30 PM

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel — “BEKI”

85 Harrison Street, New Haven CT 06515

203.389.2108 • www.beki.org



Unique statement about the community:

BEKI is a participatory, traditional, egalitarian, full-service congregation. Families move to our neighborhoods to be able to walk to services and members' homes.

What is the origin of the Jewish People?

The Jewish People gained self-awareness as a nation with a homeland about 3,300 years ago, when Hebrew slaves returning from Egypt led by Moses and Joshua implemented a law-based tribal confederacy.

What is the history of this synagogue?

Comprising three merged congregations, founded in 1892, 1904 and 1925, by immigrants from Eastern Europe, BEKI moved to Westville in 1959 when “urban renewal” displaced the downtown Jewish community. Our member households live in 26 municipalities; two-thirds live in the City of New Haven, serving as a neighborhood anchor in walking distance for many, at the juncture of the Westville, Beaver Hill, Edgewood and West Rock neighborhoods, and within the New Haven Eruv.

What is distinct about this community?

BEKI adheres to the traditional mostly-Hebrew common liturgy, complies strictly with dietary and Sabbath rules, promotes learning of classical texts and adherence to the mitzvot, the law-based system of daily life. The community seeks to be non-judgmental and friendly, promoting open and respectful discourse, in a non-doctrinal and truth-seeking framework based on conventional Jewish teachings. Questioning is encouraged. BEKI welcomes Jews of all ages, races, and gender identities, without regard to economic status or level of Jewish learning.

What kind of outreach are we involved in?

Fifteen percent of our members are people who converted to Judaism, and 13% are in interfaith households. BEKI welcomes people with developmental disabilities into all activities and seeks to remove barriers to participation. The Tikun Olam – Social Action Committee leads projects with organizations such as Columbus House, Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen, Marrakech, and IRIS.

Etiquette for BEKI:

- The religious leader is called a Rabbi. There is also a synagogue president.
- Modest dress is appreciated.
- Men wear *yarmulkes* or other head covering while women may wear yarmulkes, hats, scarves, or a lace doilie. The synagogue keeps extra head coverings near the entrances for visitors.
- Stay in the main sanctuary when the ark is open or people are standing. The ark is the cabinet that holds the Torah.

“Hillel said: Be a disciple of Aaron – love peace, pursue peace, love humanity and attract them to Torah.” Avot 1:12

VISIT DATE: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2018 6-8 PM

St. Mary Parish

5 Hillhouse Avenue, New Haven CT 06511
203.562.6193 • www.stmarysnewhaven.org



What is the origin of the Catholic faith?

The Roman Catholic faith originated with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The teachings of Jesus are the foundation for all of the traditions and practices of Catholics around the world, and have been for several thousand years.

What is the history of this place of worship?

St. Mary Parish was founded in 1832, making it the first Catholic parish in New Haven and the second Catholic parish established in Connecticut. On October 2, 1882, Father Michael J. McGivney held the first meeting of the Knights of Columbus in the basement of the church. Just four years later on Sunday, May 16, 1886, the first Dominican Rite Mass was celebrated at St. Mary's. The parish and its community has lovingly cared for and been under the guidance of the Dominican Order ever since.

What is distinctive about this community?

Under the guidance of the Dominican Friars of the St. Joseph Province, St. Mary Parish combines the sacramental and missionary activities of St. Mary's Church (5 Hillhouse Ave.) and St. Joseph's Church (129 Edwards St.). St. Mary's Church was one of the first churches in CT and is home to venerable Fr. Michael J. McGivney, founder of the Knights of Columbus. It is also a home to a chapter of the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic. St. Joseph's Church has been serving the East Rock area since 1900.

What kind of outreach are we involved in?

St. Mary Parish, in conjunction with the Dominican Laity, have a series of thriving outreach programs not limited to the Frassati New Haven Young Adult Ministry, feeding the homeless, and women experiencing crisis pregnancies.

Etiquette for St. Mary's:

- The congregational leader is referred to as Father.
- Modest dress is appreciated. Avoid shorts and sleeveless tops.
- Absolute silence is requested when in the church. If you do need to speak, please do so in a soft whisper.

"And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it." Matthew 16:18

VISIT DATE: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2018 5:30-8 PM

Masjid Al-Islam

624 George Street, New Haven CT 06516
203.777.8004 • www.masjidalislam.net



Unique statement about the community:

Masjid Al-Islam has endeavored to be “a model community for humanity” by actively working to improve community life for all people.

What is the origin of this community?

In November 1987 (1408 AH), Masjid Al-Islam was established to provide a place of worship for Muslims in the greater New Haven area. Originally, eight Muslim men and women began this endeavor by renting a small storefront in New Haven where they held the five daily prayers, Friday prayers, and other Islamic activities. Within two years (1989/1410 AH) this multi-ethnic community grew so rapidly that they moved to a large storefront in adjacent Hamden. But it was soon clear that a bigger, more permanent space was needed.

What is the history of this place of worship?

Efforts were made to fundraise and purchase the current Masjid building located at 624 George Street (February 1995/1415 AH). Since then, the Masjid has acquired four adjacent properties which function as a parking lot extension, educational

center, Imam's residence, and a proposed larger Masjid/community center.

What is distinctive about this community?

Masjid Al-Islam is a multicultural center with members from across the globe. As Muslims we believe that we are all created by God and that we are all the children of Adam and Eve. Currently, approximately 250 people from various cultural backgrounds attend Friday prayers, and there are five daily prayers and Islamic education programs conducted every day.

What kind of outreach are we involved in?

In accordance with the Masjid's vision statement which includes “fighting poverty by our presence”, some of our regular long-term activities include: preparing and serving a meal once per month at a local homeless shelter; organizing anti-drug marches and substance abuse prevention efforts; and supporting and participating in the organization of New Haven Police-registered Block Watch #311. We have also partnered with the CT Food Bank; Yale Medical School; the New Haven Health Department; the Hospital of Saint Raphael; and ICNA-Relief. As a result of the work that the Masjid has done in the community, the corner of Gilbert and Greenwood was named *Nabi Muhammad Way* (Prophet Muhammad Way).

Etiquette for the Masjid:

- All are welcome
- The leader of the Masjid is called an Imam
- Please remove your shoes
- Women are requested to dress modestly and cover their hair out of respect for the place of worship

Masjid Al-Islam: “Fighting Poverty by our Presence”

VISIT DATE: THURSDAY, JANUARY 17, 2019 6-8:30 PM

Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church

480 Racebrook Road, Orange, CT 06477

203.795.1347 • www.saintbarbara.org



Unique statement about the community:

The Saint Barbara community is made up of families and individuals growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; with perseverance and Christian agape we worship together and work in the service of our Lord, to the Glory of God.

What are the origins of Greek Orthodoxy?

The Orthodox Church has her origin with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit and can trace her connection to the Apostolic Community called into being by Jesus Christ, and enlivened by the Holy Spirit. The Feast of Pentecost, which is celebrated fifty days after Easter, commemorates the “outpouring” of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and marks the beginning of the mission of the Church to the world. The Orthodox Church believes that she has maintained a direct and unbroken continuity of love, faith, and order with the Church of Christ born in the Pentecost experience.

How did this sacred space come to be built here?

Greek Orthodox immigrants began arriving from Greece in New Haven, Connecticut in 1895. These early immigrants were inspired by the hope of a better life in America. As their numbers in this area grew, they officially founded the Saint Barbara Parish in 1919. The church, originally located in New Haven (Beers Street then Dwight Street) moved to its current location in Orange in 1987. No longer just a community of individuals with Greek heritage, our parish consists of families who can trace their ancestry to countries throughout the world.

What is distinctive about this community?

The Saint Barbara Parish is a vibrant community that welcomes both cradle Orthodox as well as converts, and those who are seeking a living faith in Christ. Our members live in 67 towns throughout the State of Connecticut and are involved in an ever-growing and enriching ministry.

What kind of outreach are we involved in?

The parish is actively involved in philanthropic work locally, nationally and internationally.

Etiquette for St. Barbara's:

- The congregational leader is referred to as Father.
- Modest dress is appreciated. Avoid shorts and sleeveless tops.

“Be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.”

1 Corinthians 16:13-14

VISIT DATE: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2019 6-8 PM

New Haven Society of Friends



Unique statement about the community:

We believe there is that of God or the Light in everyone. We worship in waiting silence to hear the still, small voice.

What are the origins of the Religious Society of Friends?

We, who are called Quakers or Friends, are members of the Religious Society of Friends. The Quaker movement began in mid-seventeenth century England. With the advent of printing, the Bible was becoming widely known. It appeared to many who read it that the early Christian church depended very little on a complex structure, elaborate rituals and formal creeds. Instead, it greatly depended on experiencing the Spirit in the midst of the worshipping group.

In the 1600's the Religious Society of Friends was one of the most radical new Christian sects emerging during the Reformation. It was among the new religious groups seeking to separate themselves from the established church (of England) and from each other. They shed traces of the religious authority, ritual, creeds, icons and symbols of the formal Christian church. Friends have "taken out everything except dependence on the Divine Spirit for guidance and power."

How did this sacred space come to be built here?

New Haven Friends Meeting has been in existence since the 1940's. For decades, members met on Yale University's campus. In the 1980's, the discernment began to consider building a permanent Quaker space. The community was clear in its commitment to remaining in New Haven. The property found by the community had space to build and abuts a city park. The intention was to have the building fit into the surrounding environment.

Etiquette for the New Haven Society of Friends:

- We believe that every person is loved by Divine Spirit. Our Quaker faith community includes people of any age, religious background, race, education, nationality, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or economic circumstance.
- You are welcome to join us as you are. Dress as you feel comfortable.

"Walk cheerfully over the world answering that of God in every one..." George Fox

VISIT DATE: TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2019, 6-8:30 PM

**Chinmaya Mission Fairfield-New Haven
Chinmaya Saraswati Ashram -- Devi Temple**

393 Derby Avenue, Orange, CT 06477
203.701.9117 • www.chinmayafairfield.org



Unique statement about the community:

To provide to individuals, from any background, the wisdom of Vedanta and the practical means for spiritual growth and happiness, enabling them to become positive contributors to society.

What are the origins of Hinduism?

Hinduism has been practiced in India from time immemorial.

How did this sacred space come to be built here?

Chinmaya Mission Fairfield-New Haven was established in 1993 with the blessing of His Holiness Swami Chinmayananda to serve the Hindu community of Fairfield and New Haven counties. The Chinmaya Saraswati Ashram--Devi Temple was established in Orange, CT and sanctified with the installation of its main deity, Saraswati Devi, in 2014.

What is distinctive about this community?

Chinmaya Mission encourages spiritual growth through the study of Hindu scripture. Further, it helps children of all ages with an engaging program for the study of Hindu scripture to

celebrate Holy days, and to learn the cultural traditions including their language of origin, music, and arts. Our center also provides a place of worship to perform all Hindu rituals according to the ancient Vedic tradition for the peace and prosperity of the society at large.

What kind of outreach are we involved in?

As with our mission statement ("producing more than what we consume and giving more than what we take"), we encourage all our members to serve their local community. In addition, we raise funds and collect non-perishable food for the food banks around the Thanksgiving holiday. Our center also serves as a venue and our members volunteer to organize our annual Health Fair -- a free medical camp for the greater community of Orange and Milford.

Etiquette for Chinmaya Ashram:

- Hindu temples have a priest to perform the worship services. They may offer Hindu worship services on behalf of individuals or families for Holy days or any special day of personal interest. In Chinmaya Mission, as a center of spiritual study, there is a Swami ji (a learned person and a monk) who leads study on the Bhagavat Gita and Hindu philosophy.
- Modest dress is appreciated; no shorts, please. Please do not wear hats in the temple; no head covering is required.
- Please remove shoes after entering the building and wash hands in the restroom.
- Greeting people is observed by folding hands together and with the salutation "Namaste".
- Inside the main shrine, observe silence and you may pay respect to the deities by folding hands together.

***"To Give Maximum Happiness To Maximum People For
Maximum Time."***

Swami Chinmayananda

VISIT DATE: THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2019 6:30-8:30 PM

**Dixwell Avenue Congregational
United Church of Christ**

217 Dixwell Avenue, New Haven, CT 06511
203.787.5839 • DixwellUCC@gmail.com



Unique statement about the community:

The United Church of Christ is a distinct and diverse community of Christians that come together as one church to join faith and action. With over 5,000 churches and nearly one million members across the U.S., the UCC serves God in the co-creation of a just and sustainable world. The UCC is a church of firsts, a church of extravagant welcome, and a church where "...they may all be one" (John 17:21).

What are the origins of the United Church of Christ?

The United Church of Christ came into being in 1957 with the union of two Protestant denominations--the Evangelical and Reformed Church, and the Congregational Christian Churches--which were all, in turn, the products of earlier traditions. The UCC was a movement to reunite divided branches of Christ's church. Many different groups have found a home in the UCC over the years, and the UCC celebrates a broad variety of traditions in its common life.

How did this sacred space come to be here?

Dixwell's current building is the third structure, and was designed by celebrated architect John J. Johansen in

1967-1968. It is noted for its "brutalist" design and was an important part of New Haven's Urban Renewal. The Church was founded in 1820 by a group of former slaves who had been worshipping at The First Congregational Church on the Green, but who withdrew due to their being restricted to worship from the balcony. Dixwell is the oldest African American Congregational Church in the world, and is one of five in the Connecticut Conference.

What is distinctive about this community?

Dixwell is a multi-racial, intergenerational church. The Church is a center for the development and understanding of social justice which has been present since its inception. Congregants were significant participants in the Amistad Case and leaders in the Civil Rights Movement, and continue to address present-day issues. It is a self-governed congregation as in the mandates by the United Church of Christ.

What kind of outreach are we involved in?

Dixwell Church provides ongoing services and support to those in need through its local missions, and participates in the UCC's "World Wide Giving" to inform and support national global missions work. The Church's outreach also includes: an innovative program for drug addiction; the "Living Into Legacy" music program (with Yale's ISM) on African-American music; and classes on family history and financial literacy.

Etiquette for Dixwell Congregational UCC:

- The congregational leader may be referred to as Reverend, Pastor, or by his name and title, "Dr. Streets".
- Come as you are.

"Faith in our future." Dixwell Church Council

Schedule of Visits to Sacred Spaces

Wednesday, October 3, 2018 6-8:30 PM

New Haven Zen Center

193 Mansfield St., New Haven, CT 06511

www.newhavenzen.org

Monday, October 22, 2018 6:30-8:30 PM

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel (BEKI)

85 Harrison Street, New Haven, CT 06515

www.beki.org

Tuesday, November 13, 2018 6-8 PM

St. Mary Parish

5 Hillhouse Avenue, New Haven, CT 06511

www.stmarysnewhaven.org

Tuesday, December 18, 2018 5:30-8:00 PM

Masjid Al-Islam

624 George Street, New Haven, CT 06516

www.masjidalislam.net

Thursday, January 17, 2019 6-8:30 PM

St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church

480 Racebrook Road, Orange, CT 06477

www.stbarbara.org

Tuesday, February 26, 2019 6-8 PM

The New Haven Society of Friends

223 East Grand Ave., New Haven, CT 06513

Tuesday, March 26, 2019 6-8:30 PM

Chinmaya Mission Fairfield-New Haven

Chinmaya Saraswati Ashram - Devi Temple

393 Derby Avenue, Orange, CT 06477

www.chinmayafairfield.org

Thursday, May 2, 2019 6:30-8:30 PM

Dixwell Avenue Congregational United Church of Christ

217 Dixwell Avenue, New Haven, CT 06511

DixwellUCC@gmail.com

Finding Common Ground

In June of 2019, all the communities will come together to celebrate. Those communities that feel committed will sign a solidarity pledge, which they will all jointly craft, finding common ground in support of one another.

Go to www.parliamentofreligions.org and click on "Sacred Space" to find out more.

Ground Rules for Dialogue

Vow. Resolve that the space between us will be safe. Resolve that our experience together will be met with openness and compassion.

Listen. 100%. Listening means acknowledging and attending to what is heard, without addition or subtraction. We must be careful not to categorize, define, or otherwise accessorize the already complete truth of what we hear. In other words, if we release our grasp on our supposed “position”, we naturally make room for something new. Practice “deep listening.”

Ask questions. Become curious. Cultivate a willingness to go beyond what we ‘know’ and encounter with genuine interest what arises in the here and now. Invite the wonder of not knowing.

Suspend judgment. Notice reactions and judgments to others and ourselves, and let them go.

Confidentiality. Avoid gossip and protect the confidentiality of our exchange.

Speak from experience. Being ourselves, share the confusion and the clarity; look to our experience rather than our opinions. Avoid leaning on the words of experts and authorities. Use “I” statements.

Become new. Risk showing up as we are in the moment, leaving behind our habit mind and also our habitual storylines, both about ourselves and others.

Trust. Pay close attention, and trust the strength and wisdom of the process. This is cultivating the spaciousness of a wide mind. Refrain from the urge to ‘fix’ or give advice— rather, see and reflect the perfection of each person, situation, and condition, just as it is.

Become equal. Each person speaks with the voice of the whole. Everything that arises within us and within the dialogue is some aspect of the truth.

Adapted from guidelines of Zen Master Jeong Ji, blueheronzen.org.

