



Faith Leaders Call for Unity and Respect in Georgia

See signatories below

As faith leaders, we have a clear and pressing responsibility to help guide our nation and begin the healing that is needed now that a new president has been duly elected. Despite our political differences, there is far more that unites us than divides us, including our love of country, our freedom to worship, and our respect for the rule of law. As people of faith, we share the conviction that we should strive to love our neighbors as ourselves, that we are all God's children, and that it is the peacemakers who are blessed, and not the dividers.

On the weekend of October 18-20, 2024, faith leaders, lay leaders, and people of faith in Georgia and five other states came together in Days of Prayer for our Nation in an effort to reduce the temperature throughout the election season. We invite you to continue joining together in your own place of worship and in your own way to lift up the values of peace, respect, and compassion.

The calling for our country to disagree in healthier ways is not the domain of any one faith or political group. Rather, it is a requirement for us all so that we can live together well. In recent years, polarizing politics has taken a powerful grip on our hearts and minds. We should not forget that the commands of our sacred texts should remain stronger. Politics is temporal, but our sacred guidance is eternal.

Now that the election is behind us, the nation needs to find a path to heal and depolarize. We must ask our leaders to be at the forefront of this. But each one of us has a critical role to play, beginning with the recognition that our differences are real, human, and complex, and seldom right or wrong. Rather than interacting only with people with whom we agree, we can consciously reach out to people outside our comfort zone with open hearts and open minds. We can ask people why they think as

they do and hear their hopes and fears. Listening to someone's story does not mean agreeing with them, but it does create understanding and extends the hand of common humanity. We can disagree with someone without being against them. Building relationships across our differences matters, in the same way that dehumanizing language creates division and precedes violence. As people of faith, we have the choice between love and hate in all of our thoughts and actions.

Making our society work requires a constant commitment to the complex and messy business of compromise, a principle on which our constitution is based. Democracy, for all its imperfections, is the best available guarantee of our freedoms and rights.

We encourage you to join us and lift up this call for peace and prayer in your own place of worship and in your own way. Our work is to shape our future with integrity and respect for all. Together, we can show that Georgia is a place that embraces both the highest democratic and spiritual norms. This is our choice.

To learn more about the Days of Prayer and its supporters, visit <https://georgiadrn.org/faithforward/>

Sign on today:

<https://forms.gle/Cc1gE9fqwMfchNDn8>

A version of this statement was published in an op-ed in the [Atlanta Journal-Constitution \(AJC\)](#) on Oct. 15 authored by Rabbi Peter Berg, Senior Rabbi, The Temple; Soumaya Khalifa, Executive Director, Islamic Speakers Bureau Atlanta; and The Right Rev. Bishop Rob Wright, Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta

List of Signatories:

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