



**To learn more:** Those desiring more information on our Muslim neighbors and the religion of Islam are encouraged to contact any of the following groups for available speakers, interfaith panels, tours, and other resources. They would welcome hearing from you!

**Islamic Center of Greater Cincinnati**

Tours & Talks Program  
(513) 755-3280

[www.cincinnatiislamiccenter.org](http://www.cincinnatiislamiccenter.org)

**Bridges of Faith TRIALOGUE**

(513) 806-9650  
[trialoguecincinnati@gmail.com](mailto:trialoguecincinnati@gmail.com)

**Cincinnati Islamic Community Center**

Speakers Bureau  
(513) 377-0964/297-1679

[www.masjidcinti.com](http://www.masjidcinti.com)

**Cincinnati Chapter of Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)**

(513) 281-8200

[www.cairohio.com](http://www.cairohio.com)

**Clifton Mosque**

(513) 221-4003

[www.cliftonmosque.org](http://www.cliftonmosque.org)

**Islamic Networks Group (ING)**

Education, Curriculum and Interfaith Resources  
[www.ing.org](http://www.ing.org)

**National Underground Railroad Freedom Center**

Education Department  
(513) 333-7500

[www.freedomcenter.org](http://www.freedomcenter.org)

**The Edward B. Brueggeman Center for Dialogue, Xavier University**

(513) 745-3922

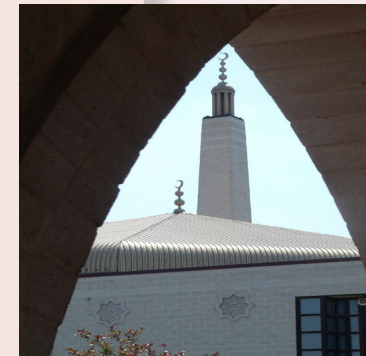
[www.xavier.edu/dialogue](http://www.xavier.edu/dialogue)

[www.interfaithcincy.org](http://www.interfaithcincy.org)

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*Getting to Know Our Muslim Neighbors*



**Frequently Asked Questions About Islam**



## What do Muslims believe? What are their Practices?

Muslims are followers of the religion of Islam. The word “Islam” means “submission to God” and is derived from a word meaning “peace.” Muslims refer to God the creator as “Allah.” Muslims subscribe to 6 articles of faith: belief in Allah, belief in the angels, belief in the prophets, belief in the revelations of Allah, belief in the last day of judgment, and belief in the fate that God wills for them. They endeavor to live their lives in obedience to 5 actions of faith, or Pillars: testifying that Allah is the one true God, ritually praying five times a day, being charitable, fasting during the month of Ramadan, and, if physically and financially able, making a pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca in Saudi Arabia during their lifetime.

## Are all Muslims from the Middle East?

Less than 20% of the 1.6 billion Muslims in the world are Arabs. Many live in non-Arab countries in the Middle East and Africa, with the most populous Muslim nations being Pakistan, India, Indonesia and Malaysia.

## Muslims in America and in Cincinnati?

There are an estimated 3.3 million Muslims residing in the United States, constituting 1% of the population. (Pew Research Center, May 2016). Muslims date back to the founding of America. Many were brought here as slaves. Today, 60% of American Muslims are first generation immigrants. In Cincinnati, there are an estimated 25,000-35,000 Muslims worshiping at eight mosques and involved in and contributing to all aspects of the professional and civic life of our community.

## How did the Qur’an come to be?

Muslims believe the Qur’an to be the literal word of God as delivered in the Arabic language to Prophet Muhammad through the Archangel Gabriel in the Seventh Century. It was revealed over 23 years of the Prophet’s life and preserved in memory and written form by his companions. Some Muslims have memorized the entire Qur’an.

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## Is the Qur’an a violent book?

Muslims see the Qur’an as providing for mercy and healing. It contains passages, historical in context and often misunderstood, that encourage Muslims to stand up for themselves when under attack or persecution. It warns Muslims, though, against committing aggression. The Qur’an also forbids Muslims from forcing anyone to accept Islam against his/her will.

## What is Shari’a Law?

Shari’a law is derived from the Qur’an and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. It is open to interpretation by scholars. It includes laws for social order, crime and punishment, guidelines for marriage and family life, and rituals of worship. When Muslims pray or fast or give charity, they are following Shari’a. Most Muslim countries employ a combination of secular and Islamic law, and for many, Shari’a has no role in the judicial system. Shari’a does not apply to and is not imposed upon non-Muslims.

## What is Jihad?

Literally, it means “struggle.” This can include an internal, individual struggle as one tries to improve him/herself, or can refer to an external, armed struggle of a group against oppression or tyranny. Jihad does not mean or imply the forcing of Islam on others or occupying their land.

## Is Hijab oppressive/forced on women in the name of Allah?

Hijab, which is the covering of the head, arms and legs, is widely adopted by Muslim women around the globe. It is a sign of chastity and purity and, despite the common misperception of non-Muslims, it is for many an expression of empowerment and a declaration of freedom from objectification. It is required by law in only two (Saudi Arabia and Iran) of the 53 Muslim-majority countries.

## How do Muslims view ISIS?

Muslims worldwide profoundly reject the hate-filled doctrine espoused by ISIS. It is a radical terrorist organization seeking to legitimize its actions by tying

them to a respected religion. In America, every reputable Muslim organization has consistently and publicly denounced ISIS and its acts of terror. It is no fairer to say that Islam is responsible for ISIS than it is to say that Christianity is to be blamed for the KKK.

## Who is Jesus in Islam?

Muslims believe that God has communicated with humankind through messengers and prophets. They believe that Jesus is a messenger and prophet of God, sent to the children of Israel. Muslims believe in all of the biblical prophets such as Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. They believe these prophets delivered a message from God, applied that message in their character and behavior, and became examples for other believers to follow.

## What do Islam, Judaism and Christianity have in common?

Christianity, Judaism and Islam are classified by religious scholars as the three “Abrahamic” faiths, all three monotheistic religions originating with the prophet Abraham. Their followers are united in believing in God and in being accountable to God for their morals, piety, charity and sense of justice as stressed in the Christian Bible, the Hebrew Bible and the Qur’an. Muslims believe that Islam is the final, progressive modification of God’s message to humanity on earth, built upon the foundations of Judaism and Christianity. The Qur’an orders Muslims to treat Jews and Christians with kindness and justice.

