

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (May 21, 2010)

CONTACT: Steve Olweean, 269-665-9393

Major International Conference Addresses Difficult Inter-faith Topics

International Conference on 'Religion, Conflict, and Peace - is slated for **June 11-13** in **Dearborn, Michigan U.S.A.**

- An international conference aimed at increasing harmony between and within religious communities is being held June 11-13 at Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn, Michigan. Common Bond Institute (CBI), along with International Humanistic Psychology Association, Henry Ford Community College, Council of Islamic Organizations Michigan, Parashakthi Temple, Pathways To Peace Foundation, 2,000 Dialogues, and Muslim Presence Ottawa are organizing the **2nd Annual International Conference on "Religion, Conflict, and Peace: Walking The Talk to Compassion and Harmony."** The 3-day event is an official partner and event of the **Charter For Compassion** and the **Parliament of World Religions**, is endorsed by over 100 organizations and universities internationally, and is open to everyone. It is meant to raise public awareness and stimulate proactive efforts to improve relations between and within communities, attracting representatives from a cross-section of diverse communities throughout the region, across the United States, and other countries. More than 45 presenters will be on hand to explore a broad range of difficult questions and dilemmas, as well as avenues to enhance understanding, compassion, and peace.

The conference emphasizes direct personal engagement and aims to promote wider public dialogue on challenges of extremism, intolerance, polarization, scapegoating, and Islamophobia, as well as the promise of understanding, harmony, and a shared consciousness of peace. "Our goal is to promote the religious experience as a healing remedy rather than problem" said Steve Olweean, director of CBI and coordinator of the conference. "To do this it is important to look within ourselves as well as at other religions."

"The reality is religious communities share both common dilemmas and capacity to transform these dilemmas into a collective consciousness of peace; one based on understanding, familiarity, and appreciation, not fear of the unknown Other," Olweean said. "We each carry a piece of the problem and a piece of the solution, so engaging each other in compassionate dialogue is not only reasonable, increasingly it's absolutely essential."

Although the dynamics and struggles may be universal for all religious communities exposed to targeted religious intolerance, marginalization, and scapegoating, the conference includes a focus on the more recent experience of the Muslim community as a current example. Examples of other difficult topics addressed include gender, race, domestic abuse, and hate acts in schools.

An array of leading presenters are featured at the conference, as well as live virtual addresses by Huston Smith, Rabbi David Rosen, and Karen Armstrong. The RCP Conference is established as an annual event in Michigan.

Registration is open to all. Information about the program, presenters, registration, and fees are available online at www.cbiorld.org, Email at SOlweean@aol.com, or telephone at **269-665-9393**.

Common Bond Institute, 12170 S. Pine Ayr Drive, Climax, Michigan 49034 USA

#