



THE SALAAM NETWORK

Striving to make our Beloved Community of Louisville Whole

RESEARCH PROJECT CONSULTATION

TOPIC OF RESEARCH: Muslim Communities in Kentucky

PRIMARY RESEARCH SCHOLAR: DR. MATTHEW PIERCE, Associate Professor of Religion, Centre College, Danville; STUDENT RESEARCH ASSISTANT: DUSTIN FOLEY

CONSULTANT: DR. RIFFAT HASSAN, Professor Emerita, University of Louisville

VENUE: THOMAS JEFFERSON UNITARIAN CHURCH

DATE: July 26, 2019 (6.30 - 8. 30 p.m.)

Dr. Matthew Pierce, accompanied by his student research assistant, Dustin Foley, had a Consultation with Dr. Riffat Hassan at Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Church, Louisville, on Friday, July 26, 2019.

Dr. Matthew Pierce who won an International Award (Iran's World Book of the Year) for his first book entitled *Twelve Infallible Men: The Imams and the Making of Shi'ism* (Harvard), published in 2016. Dr. Pierce has studied at Cairo (Egypt), San'aa (Yemen) and Qom (Iran), and has been teaching at Centre College since 2011. He teaches a number of courses on Islam, including Islam in America, Introduction to Islam and Islamic Traditions, Sufism and Spirituality, Women, Gender and Spain, and Concepts of the Qur'an.

Dr. Pierce's research interests range from global to local, and for some years he has been interested in studying the Muslim Communities in Kentucky. This summer he started his preliminary research on the subject and arranged to have a consultative meeting with Dr. Hassan.

During the two-hour consultation, Dr. Pierce talked with Dr. Hassan about various aspects of the Muslim Communities in Louisville which he visits often and where Dr. Hassan has lived since 1976. Subjects that were discussed included: The history of mosques in Louisville -when, where and how they were built, the diverse Muslim groups in Louisville and their affiliation with different mosques, the culture of mosques administered by different groups (e.g. Arabs, Pakistanis, Indians, Turks, Iranians, Bosnians), relationship of different mosques and communities with one another, attitude of Muslims in Louisville toward religious pluralism and interreligious dialogue, response of local Muslims to escalating Islamophobia, and specific issues such as those related to women, mixed marriages, and political and social activism. Dr. Pierce and Dustin Foley said that they would be returning to Louisville to continue the conversation.