

Manitoba MUSLIM

SPECIAL EID DIGITAL EDITION

May 2021 | Volume 22 | Issue 1

Eid Mubarak



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Editorial Board

Yasmin Ali
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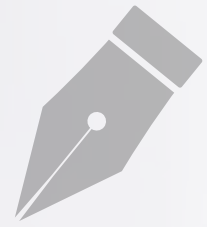
Manitoba Muslim Magazine is a publication of the Muslim community in Manitoba under the auspices of the Manitoba Islamic Association (MIA).

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FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM



This year's Ramadan was certainly different from all the pre-COVID-19 Ramadans of the past where socialization and community gatherings were at their peak. During last year's Ramadan, the mosque was virtually closed. This year it was open but with limited capacity. COVID-19 is unprecedented. At no time in our community's history, did the mosques have to be closed or restricted for such an extended period. COVID-19 is a challenge and a test. Despite the loss of many loved members of our community, sadness, grief, worries, anxieties, decline in mosque revenues, loss of income etc., our community stood together and creatively kept itself connected and engaged through a variety of virtual programs and activities. Despite restrictions, the typical Ramadan food sharing, mosque fundraisings, zakat collection and distribution etc. continued. The volunteer spirit of community members was the driving engine behind all of these noble undertakings. We hope and pray, by next Ramadan, COVID-19 will be history and life will get back to its normal course.

The anxieties created by COVID-19 have taken a toll on the mental health of many people. The impact of COVID-19 on mental health will remain for years to come. More than any other time in the past, mental health related services -pro-active and re-active- will be of greater need and active planning to address them will be essential. Further, the prolonged physical disconnect with the mosque and community gatherings could potentially have a lasting negative impact on some segments of the community, particularly marginalized segments who already had a distant relationship. Active outreach to every segment of the community will be of elevated importance.

This year will be the 22-year anniversary of the *Manitoba Muslim Magazine*. For over 15 years, it was published bi-monthly, however, over the last few years it became a periodical, published once a year during Eid-Al-Fitr. Last year, due to the sudden closures resulting from COVID-19, the magazine was not published. Adjusting to the new reality, the magazine is now published as an online version. We hope you enjoy reading the current issue and we welcome your input and feedback.

From the magazine team, Eid Mubarak, we wish you a happy and joyful Eid!

Words of Revelation

“O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for God can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve, and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily God is well acquainted with all that ye do.”

Holy Quran: Chapter (4) Sūrat al-Nisāa Verse 135



On the authority of Abu Hurayrah, Prophet Muhammad of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“God (mighty and sublime be He) will say on the Day of Resurrection: O son of Adam, I fell ill and you visited Me not. He will say: O Lord, and how should I visit You when You are the Lord of the worlds? He will say: Did you not know that My servant so-and-so had fallen ill and you visited him not? Did you not know that had you visited him you would have found Me with him? O son of Adam, I asked you for food and you fed Me not. He will say: O Lord, and how should I feed You when You are the Lord of the worlds? He will say: Did you not know that My servant so-and-so asked you for food and you fed him not? Did you not know that had you fed him you would surely have found that (the reward for doing so) with Me? O son of Adam, I asked you to give Me to drink and you gave Me not to drink. He will say: O Lord, how should I give You to drink when You are the Lord of the worlds? He will say: My servant so-and-so asked you to give him to drink and you gave him not to drink. Had you given him to drink you would have surely found that with Me”.

Reported in the Book of Sahih Muslim.



Duaa for Al Aqsa

O Allah protect the Al-Aqsa mosque, its people and its surroundings.

O Allah descend your grace upon the oppressed and the weak and grant them strength and steadfastness.

O Allah make this place and its surroundings a place of justice, peace, tolerance, and ease!

سُبْحَنَ الَّذِي أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى
الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَا الَّذِي بَرَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ ءَايَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ
السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ "سورة الإسراء"

"Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing."

(Holy Quran, Surah Al-Isra, Verse 1)



TAKE ACTION

Members of the community can do their part.

1

Send an automated email letter to Honourable Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Ambassador and Permanent Representative-Designate of Canada to the UN in NY Bob Rae, Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs Marc Garneau

<https://www.emailyouofficial.com/TrudeauStopAttackonAlAqsa>

2

Sign the online petition to the Federal Government to denounce attacks on Al-Aqsa Mosque (Organized by NCCM)

<https://www.nccm.ca/alaqsa/>

3

Call your MP and ask them to categorically condemn the outrageous attack on the Al-Aqsa mosque, as worshipers gathered in prayer on one of the holiest nights of Ramadan and demand an immediate halt to escalation in violence. Invite them to study the recent report by Human Rights Watch, which details the charges of crimes against humanity being committed by Israel

<https://www.ourcommons.ca/members/en>

4

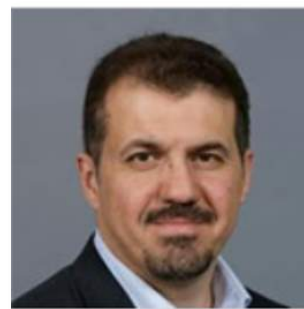
Support relief efforts in Palestine. For example:

[Help Gaza, Donate Today - Gaza Appeal | Islamic Relief Canada](#)



MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIRMAN

It gives me great pleasure to write for this revived edition of the Manitoba Muslim (MM) Magazine. As chair of the board of the Manitoba Islamic Association (MIA), I am glad to see that volunteers have come forward and revived this project. The MM has been published, off and on, for over 20 years, and has catalogued our community's history and progress.



I volunteered with the MM not long after I moved to Winnipeg more than 15 years ago. It gave me the opportunity to get to know the community, and to work alongside some of the most selfless volunteers I have come to respect and love. In 2009, I helped organize a banquet that celebrated the 10th anniversary of the magazine. I pray this revival succeeds and the magazine continues to play an important role in our community life.

This edition is published after more than a year since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. I hope that through its pages we can find an opportunity to pause and reflect on the challenges of the past 14 months.

We have all suffered in our own ways in this pandemic: loss of income, inability to travel, lack of freedom to move, loss of health or loved ones, and of course the disappearance of community life that was so central to our lives and that we often took for granted.

We also gained much. I pray that we all gained the ajr (spiritual rewards) of being patient with adversity. We also gained a renewed appreciation for everything we were deprived of in the pandemic and have insha Allah developed a reinvigorated sense of gratitude for the immeasurable bounties that God bestows on us. We also came together and supported each other and our fellow citizens in numerous ways, and that is something we can be very proud of.

As we look forward to the end of the pandemic and the start of what will be a long recovery, I hope to see more generosity, more action, more volunteering and more kindness and love expressed towards each other and our fellow citizens. I also hope to see better co-operation between our various community organizations. This is an area that requires a lot of attention and care and I believe community leaders need to come together to discuss priorities and areas of focus and specialization.

Another key priority is a renewed focus on young Muslims. We need to understand our young brothers and sisters who are coming of age in Canada, and allocate as much of our resources as possible to supporting their growth and development.

Recovery from the economic and social impact of the pandemic will be long, but I am confident that we can stand by each other and embody the beautiful prophetic description of being to each other as interlocking bricks with each brick supporting the other in a beautiful and strong structure.

Dr. Adris ElBakri,

Chairman of the MIA Board of Directors

A GLIMPSE AT THE COMMUNITY

COMPILED BY TASNEEM VALI



The pandemic has changed our lives in so many ways, including the way we interact as a community, the events we look forward to and our valued and much loved masjid events and Jummah prayer. It is a test from Allah (swt) and even though we had to quickly adapt to restricted gatherings and new procedures, our community came together to support one another.

In response to the COVID crisis, below are some initiatives and community events that were planned:

- MIA joined the Canadian Muslim COVID-19 Task Force in March and has adopted its guidelines around closure and opening of mosques and the level of services being offered and procedures.
- MIA led the community in mobilizing to help those in need of assistance. A large volunteer group was set up to assist those in need.
- A food support program was initiated in the early days of the pandemic.
- Volunteers called seniors who lived alone to check on them and offer any assistance needed.
- #VirtualMosque was launched and created innovative and new ways for the community to remain connected virtually.



Volunteers distribute food in Downtown at MIA Connections



Volunteers preparing food deliveries at Grand Mosque

RAMADAN & EID

We cannot imagine Ramadan without getting together to break the fast, to pray Tarawih and how can we have Eid by staying home? Volunteers spearheaded a daily Iftaar drive through service that provided thousands of meals during the month. They also delivered close to 30 meals to seniors every weekday. Close to 700 food hampers were distributed within the community and beyond.

In Ramadan for the first time in MB we were publicly broadcasting daily the call to prayer from the Grand Mosque and from MIA Connections at sunset. Many came out to listen to the call to prayer. It gave us a sense of pride and a boost in spirit, Alhamdulillah.

The Annual Quran Competition was also held virtually and we had about 50 participants and the prize for the entire Quran went to Safae Filou.

For Eid-ul-Fitr, MIA held a drive through celebration at the Grand Mosque, a goodie bag pick up at MIA Connections, and our volunteers joined Knox United Church in cooking a halal Eid meal and distributing it at Central Park.

For Eid-ul-Adha there was the annual fireworks organized at the Waverley Grand Mosque. Families sat in their cars and enjoyed the wonderful display and enjoyed the feeling of community even though they were physically distanced.



#VIRTUALMOSQUE - BRINGING THE MASJID INTO YOUR HOME

Paint night, cooking tips, community check-ins, spiritual reminders, mental health tips, full blown lecture series and a weekly reminder on Fridays were just some of the many online events that our volunteers and staff put together since March. These

innovative programs enabled us to maintain a connection to the community and break the isolation of lockdown periods. More programs are being planned, and we welcome your suggestions on uplifting, fun and fulfilling online content.

YOUTH PROGRAMS

In the summer, with easing of restrictions and re-opening of the mosques, two summer camps were organized over 8 weeks. They were completely free. Also during the initial lockdown period in the spring, there were many online courses aimed at youth as part of the #VirtualMosque initiative. There were several youth events that were organized by them – like campfire halaqas and Arafah Iftaar event.



#SHAREMERCY

How were we to respond to the issue of offensive cartoons about the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) erupting again, and the pain inflicted on Muslims by the repeated insults to the honourable Prophet in the name of free speech? The #ShareMercy, an ambitious project to place books about the Prophet (PBUH) in all public libraries and schools in Manitoba was launched. The Winnipeg Public Library system and two rural libraries have accepted the book package and so have several smaller faith-based organizations in rural MB. We also provided books, as well as prayer and halal meals during special occasions for Muslim inmates in the provincial correctional system. The community rallied behind this project and we raised \$8,000 for this cause.

PROJECT #ShareMercy

Sponsor books about the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to a Manitoba public library or school.

\$60 sponsors a package of 3 books.



miaonline.org/share-mercy



#BLACKLIVESMATTER

The movement for #BlackLivesMatter erupted again last summer with the brutal killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. The movement had global reverberations. Winnipeg had one of its largest solidarity rallies ever, with over 20,000 people congregating at the legislature, despite the pandemic. Many Muslims were part of the rally to show allyship with black Muslims and the black community in general. A virtual event was organized - a forum where black Muslims could share their experiences within the Muslim community.

Listening to Black Voices: Racism in our midst



**Thursday
July 2, 2020
7:00 – 8:00pm**

Is there anti-Black racism in the Muslim community, or are we truly a universal brotherhood/sisterhood and a community that welcomes and supports all? Do we live up to Islam's teachings that our racial and ethnic differences are a sign of God's creative power, or do we draw lines of division between us based on colour of skin and ethnic origin? Join us for a conversation with Black members of our community as they share their reflections and experiences within the Muslim community and beyond.

SPEAKERS

-  **Sk. Ismael Mukhtar**
Chair of MIA Fiqh Committee
-  **Warda Ahmed**
Social Worker, counsellor & teacher
-  **Samir Hassan**
Community Member
-  **Farida Alaka**
International Student at UofM
-  **MIA Mental Health Initiative**

 Manitoba Islamic Association

miaonline.org

#FAJRAJR

Before the pandemic - to encourage youth to come to the masjid - the #FajrAjr program was initiated for youth who came every weekend from January - March to pray Fajr at the masjid and got their FajrAjr card stamped would receive a gift. There were snacks after salah and also sports.

CONDOLENCES

Over the last two years many dear members of our community passed away, including founding elders, young students and others from a cross-section of the community. The COVID-19 restrictions, made it difficult to attend their funerals and to be present with their loved ones as they grieved alone. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those who passed away and their loved ones. May they all rest in peace in the abode of peace!





ISLAMIC HISTORY MONTH

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, the usual Islamic History activities were held virtually in the month of October 2020. The theme of this year's celebration was: **Honouring the Resilience and Achievement of Black Muslims.**

Various online speeches including a virtual lecture on Oct 19, 2020, titled: **Abrahamic Faith Responses to Racism**, presented by:

- ▶ Shahina Siddiqui, Islamic Social Services Association (Winnipeg)
- ▶ Rabbi Kliel Rose, Etz Chayim Synagogue
- ▶ Rev. Dr. Loraine Mackenzie Shepherd, Westworth United Church

BOOK PREVIEW

Manitoba Muslims A HISTORY OF RESILIENCE AND GROWTH

The Muslim community in Manitoba has a long and rich history dating back to the early 1900s. Unfortunately, this history has not been fully documented and some parts of that history is probably lost. The *Manitoba Muslims, a History of Resilience and Growth*, is the first attempt to document and preserve this history. The book is authored by a veteran member of local Muslim community and ex-MIA president, Ismael Mukhtar. It is tentatively scheduled to be published by May 2021.

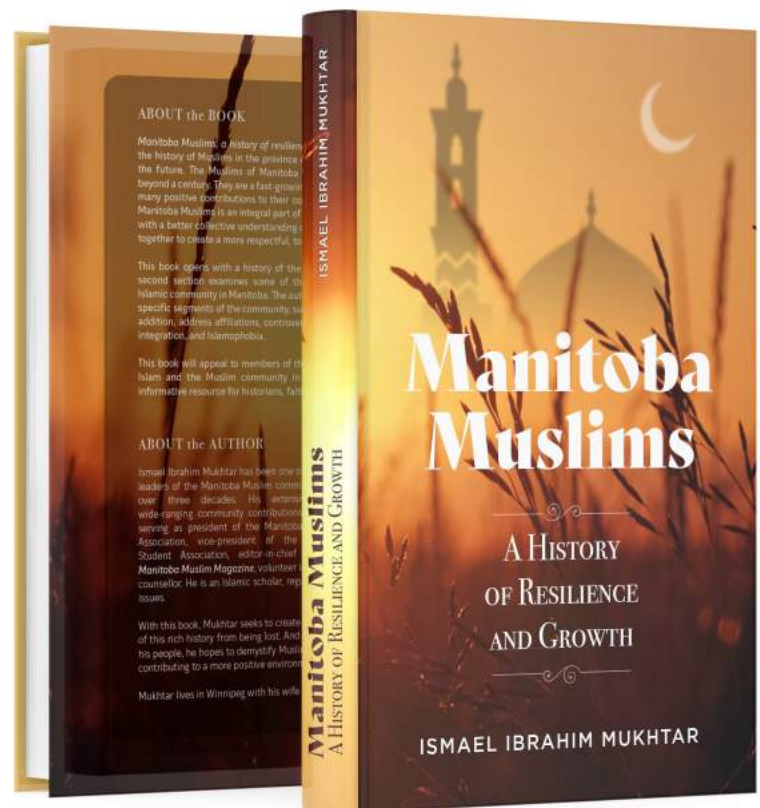
The book is about 300 pages with the following chapters:

- Chapter 1: Exploring the Prairies (1900-1950)
- Chapter 2: Setting the Stage (1951-1968)
- Chapter 3: Laying the Foundation (1969-1976)
- Chapter 4: Addressing the Needs (1977-1995)
- Chapter 5: Opening New Frontiers (1996-2011)
- Chapter 6: Charting a New Direction (2012-2020)
- Chapter 7: Influx and Outgrowth
- Chapter 8: Community Issues
- Chapter 9: Challenges and Opportunities

The book also includes 19 appendices, hundreds of community photos, historical documents and extensive footnotes. The sources of the book are wide ranging. They include archives of the Manitoba Islamic Association; numerous community publications, particularly the *Manitoba Muslim Magazine*; local daily newspapers such as the *Winnipeg Free Press*, *Brandon Sun*, and *Winnipeg Tribune*; various online archives and resources as well as interviews and information gathered directly from individuals. In addition, the author uses his long experience and in-depth knowledge of the community to provide greater insights and analysis.

The book is broadly categorized into two main sections. The first section, chapters 1-7, provides a chronological history of the community from 1900-2020. Included in these sections are stories of early immigrants in the 1900s, the formation of the MIA, the opening of the first mosque, the establishment of Al Hijra - the first Islamic school - emergence of other organizations, opening of various mosques, expansion outside of Winnipeg and more.

The second section, chapters 8-10, addresses some of the community's issues, challenges and opportunities. Among them are issues relating to segments of the community, such as the roles of women, youth participation and convert transitions. Also included are issues such as ideological affiliations, different sub-groups within the community, internal controversies, social issues, halal alternatives, integration, Muslim success stories, outreach to the wider society, collaboration with Indigenous communities, impacts of 9/11, the effects of Islamophobia and more. The book begins with an introduction about Islam and ends with a chapter on future outlooks.



In his concluding remarks on future outlooks, the author notes:

"The Muslim community in Manitoba has come a long way from its beginnings in the early 1900s. It began as a hardly visible community, comprised of a handful of scattered families, without any institution, to becoming a robust and well-adjusted community. Over the years, it has seen constant growth in terms of its population, institutions, services, and outreach. Today it has a visible presence in Manitoba and is an integral part of the larger society. The community has had many successes and accomplishments, as well as many failures and setbacks. It has learned from its failures and readjusted successfully. If the community keeps its momentum, builds on its past accomplishments, and effectively uses its resources, it is certainly destined for a great and brighter future.

The potential for greater growth and success is within reach, but requires united efforts, concerted endeavours, and creative approaches. Having been part of this wonderful community, seeing it evolving and growing, working within its framework, I am confident the community is set on the right course and is destined to achieve greater successes. I feel privileged to have been part of this great community and I not only hope for a great future, but I sense it coming in the foreseeable generations" (Chapter 10).

Images from chapter 1



Mary Blonarowiz (died in 1964), from Brandon, the first convert to Islam, wife of Ahmed Awid - who came to Manitoba in 1904. They were parents of sixteen children.



Sobhi Omer El Tassi and his son Muhamed in their farm in Hodgson, Manitoba in the 1950s.

Images from chapter 2

SEASIDE ISLAND ASSOCIATION.

Financial Report.
Oct. 1961 - Oct. 1962.

Balance Sheet.

<u>DEBITS</u>	<u>CREDITS</u>
Membership Fees.....\$65.00.	22.00 ✓
Collection for Ila	512.00 ✓
<u>413.20 ✓</u>	512.00
Dinner.....\$150.50 ✓	Stationary.....\$60.00
Sale of 216 Eggs.....\$25.00	Bank of Ila.....\$50.19
Bank Int.....\$100.00	<u>80.00 ✓</u>
<u>\$100.00.</u>	Cost in Bank.....\$24.74
	Bank in Bank.....\$37.13
	<u>\$100.00 ✓</u>
<u>Income</u>	<u>Balance</u>
<u>\$150.50 ✓</u>	<u>\$150.50 ✓</u>

Approved Oct. 4, 1962

Robert
Oct 1962

Nagano - Ila
HOUSING DEPARTMENT.

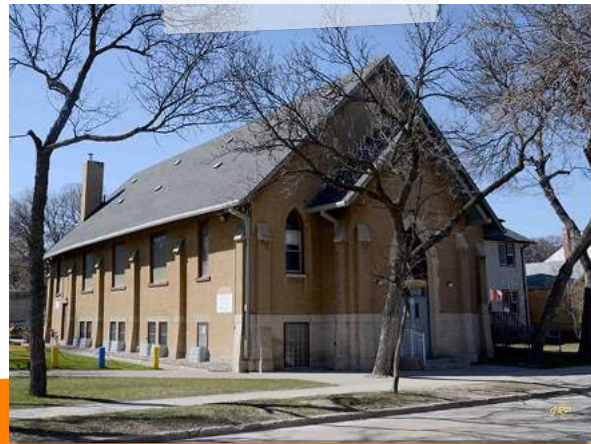
27th Oct / 1962

Amounts and found correct.

Dr. L. G. G. G. G. G.

TREASURER,
Seaside Island Association.

1961-1962 MIA FINANCIAL STATEMENT



790 Banning Street, the church where Winnipeg Muslims regularly met before opening their own mosque in 1976.



Council of Muslim Communities of Canada (CMCC) annual conference hosted by the MIA at University of Manitoba, early 1980. Second and third from left Abidh Hosein and Yusuf Siddiqui (leading members of MIA)

**Image from
chapter 4**

“This is a much-needed book, charting the past and present of Muslims in Manitoba. Every province and territory needs one to create just such a record of their Muslims. I learned a great deal from this book.”

Haroon Siddiqui, Editorial Page Editor Emeritus, Toronto Star.

“Manitoba Muslims shifts our understanding of migration history away from ports and cities, to cross-border migration, and rural and suburban western Canada. Written by Ismael Ibrahim Mukhtar, local historian and leader within the Manitoba Islamic Association (MIA), Manitoba Muslims highlights the unique experiences and networks of Canada’s earliest Muslim migrants.”

Dr. Alison R Marshall Professor, Department of Religion Brandon University.



ARTICLES



MENTAL HEALTH AND YOUTH

DR. AHMED JWELY

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic our lives have changed immeasurably. We are more isolated, unable to keep up our hobbies and social interactions as before. Most young people try to adapt to the new life-style with TV, video games, solo physical activities or online social activities. Unfortunately, many youth may develop unhealthy life-styles, unhealthy relationships, mental health crises and substance abuse problems. In this article, I will try to focus on my own experience with youth mental health. I spend a lot of time working at the mental health emergency and crisis services where I have been involved with many families and young adults.

Family dynamics play a major role in our mental health. A healthy relationship that's based on respect, love, caring, and support will promote stronger connections among family members. A sense of safety and a warm home environment promote healthier mental health. Connections between family members will benefit everyone. From attachment theory we learned that children who were victims of unhealthy relationships

with their caregivers suffer from more mental health diseases (e.g. depression, anxiety, substance abuse, eating abnormalities and personality problems). Three scenarios may harm our youth:

Unhealthy environment: e.g. parents fighting, poverty, growing up in a war zone/ refugee camp and isolation.

Abuse; any kind of abuse (e.g. emotional, verbal, sexual, excessive control... etc.)

Neglect: no expression of warm & loving emotions among family members and letting the child watch TV/play video games all day long.

Unfortunately all of these issues may damage a young person's self-esteem, sense of belonging, and ability to become assertive and may become more complex as the child grows up. Family is the central building block of every society and it's everyone's responsibility to support it.

Our children spend a great deal of time at school and this can also have an effect on our children's mental health. Each one of us can recall the teacher who had a strong influence (positive or negative) on our choices in life, career, even personality. Having conflicts between what schools teach and promote and what our culture, family, and religion does, can create problems and difficulties for our children and youth. As a result, either one side will win and become dominant or a growing gap will develop. Second generations of immigrant families are more at higher risk of mental health problems than their parents.

Children and youth have a strong tendency to "fit-in & blend" with their friends and present culture. Anything that disrupts or challenges that process will be difficult for the person. The younger the person is, the more difficult it is for her/him to cope. Children / Youth who struggle with mental/ physical health problems are at a higher risk of bullying and abuse which increase their risk for substance abuse, educational problems, depression, and crimes/violence as an adult (3).

All relationships (romantic & non-romantic) have a significant impact on our youth. Cultural background plays a major role in this and is very obvious when comparing first generation immigrants with the second & third generations.



Understanding and communicating with youth will help us to promote healthy and successful relationships. Youth clubs, youth sport teams, youth social/creative activities, etc. are just examples of different ways to achieve that.

Winnipeg is faced with a major problem where substance abuse such as marijuana, alcohol, crystal meth, heroin etc are being used by some youth. Other types of addictions include video games, internet usage accessing pornography and virtual gambling. Our youth are not sheltered from this and many families are struggling to control, protect or even deal with these problems.

Our Muslim community in Manitoba is an example of diverse nationalities and ethnicities representing almost every corner of this earth.

The challenges are not just how this community is interacting with the rest of Manitoba's communities but also how this heterogeneous group of people are interacting and blending with each other within the Muslim community. In this Muslim community, politics, and even simple and basic faith & religious aspects all have their own challenges. All of these issues together create problems for Muslim community leaders to unify our goals and plans for this community. Our community leaders have a heavy responsibility but each one of us is responsible to help and support our community to grow and become more successful.





In every shared smile
and laughter;
In every silent prayer answered;
In every opportunity that
comes your way
– may Allah bless you
immensely!

Eid Mubarak!



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in line with Islamic values.



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ART AND CULTURE



WOMEN SUPPORT



SOLACE IN TIMES OF CHALLENGES AND ANXIETY

BY SHAHINA SIDDIQUI

"So do not lose hope, nor fall into despair". (Quran 3:139)

COVID 19, has taken a toll on our nerves and emotional wellbeing along with worries of financial challenges. Many Canadians are experiencing heightened levels of anxiety, while for Muslims there is an added concern with a new wave of Islam bashing. Attack against civilians outside a church in Nice, France, is unjust, un-Islamic, and against the teachings of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him- who strongly instructed against revenge and vigilantism. The killing of the teacher by a Muslim youth enraged and hurt by the showing of Prophet Mohammad caricatures in a classroom discussion about free speech was equally wrong.

Once again headlines project Islam as the driving force behind violent acts committed by a couple of Muslims in response to caricatures that insult and poke fun at our beloved Prophet Mohammad peace be upon him.

The message from European leaders is clear- they conflate Islam with terrorism, drawing clear lines of us and them. There is no consideration of mental health, social

marginalization, economic challenges adding to the stresses of isolation, lock downs causing high levels of anxiety over contracting the virus that can put any vulnerable/ impressionable person over the edge, especially when provocation is deliberate.

The ignorant people, who draw caricatures of our Prophet, cannot sully his reputation. They only expose their own ignorance, pettiness and vile arrogance. Our beloved Prophet would want us to say 'Peace' and walk away.

Those who defend the publications of these caricatures in the name of free speech must re-evaluate their commitment to human dignity. Canadians were outraged and rightly so, by the use of the "N" word by teachers in Canada, and yet some fail to acknowledge, the anguish of 1.6 billion Muslims, when their Prophet is maligned. Muslims have repeatedly requested the French establishment to ban the deliberate Islamophobic, provocation nurtured by reproducing these caricatures in order to avoid the polarization within the French society. Unfortunately, they have been ignored.



Free speech is not a license to ridicule what some hold sacred. Just as obscene expression of what is sacred, IS NOT a justification to commit violence.

Peaceful protests on the streets, boycott of French products, and petitioning political and religious leaders to speak up is your right- exercise it!

Any peaceful means to record our pain and rejection of Islamophobia is within the teachings of our Prophet. However, violating the example and teaching of the Prophet by committing and supporting violence, betrays the very essence of our faith.

Today more than ever, we need to remind ourselves and our youth about the character and conduct of our beloved Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him). He was the Prophet of mercy who forgave all who did him harm verbally and physically and instructed his companions to do the same. When he entered Makkah as victor, he gave general amnesty even to those who had desecrated and tortured his family and followers.

Remember, the Quran has prepared us for such trials and advised us to be patient. Please reflect on the following verses, and you will find solace, spiritual, emotional and intellectual wellbeing, InshaAllah!

These days when we are not socially distracted, we have the perfect opportunity to reflect on the Quran and the life of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) to strengthen our resolve and model the character and practices of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him).

"We will certainly test you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth, and lives and fruits (earnings); but give glad tidings to the persevering and patient". (Quran 2.155.)

The main purpose for testing is to mature and perfect the believers, both as individuals and as a community. To purify means, to distinguish between the true believers and the hypocrites. Furthermore, exercising patience develops our capacity and prepares us for trials we are bound to go through.

Allah reminds us in the Quran "Do people think once they say, "We believe," that they will be left without being put to the test?"(Quran 29:2).

This verse was revealed when the conditions for Muslims in Mecca were extremely trying. Whoever accepted Islam was made a target of tyranny, humiliation and persecution. The Prophet advised them to be patient and remain steadfast.

"Remember how the unbelievers plotted against you (Prophet Mohammad), to keep you in bonds, or slay you, or get you out (of your home). They plot and plan, and Allah too plans; but the best of planners is Allah." (Quran 8:30) This verse is an empowering message to all of us, that we should not worry or despair about the plotting and planning of those who wish us harm, because only Allah's plan will succeed.

The challenge for us is to fulfill our duty, to stand up for justice, to speak and stand with the truth. To diligently follow the path of the Prophet (p.b.u.h) by practising mercy, compassion, empathy and preservation of human dignity of all peoples regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, orientation, socio-economic status and culture.

May we be of those with whom Allah and his Prophet are pleased. Ameen.

(Reproduced from Islamic Social Services e-newsletter)



THE YEAR WE FASTED ALONE

BY NILUFER RAHMAN

The new normal still feels strange, even though we've had a year of practice. Only Allah (SWT) knows what the future holds. What we do know is that this time, this moment in history, is one that humanity will always remember. I wanted to do something to contribute to our collective memory, and so I made a film - THE YEAR WE FASTED ALONE.

I did *not* make this film alone however. Last year during our first Ramadan in lockdown - that unprecedented time in history - I put out a call for submissions and invited anyone to share their thoughts and experiences of "fasting alone", away from family, friends and community. I did not know what to expect in terms of response since I came up with the idea quite spontaneously after Ramadan had already started. There wasn't much time to collect submissions, however I felt like it was still worth a try.

Within three weeks, I received 35 submissions from 12 different countries, Alhamdulillah. When I reviewed them I could see that together they embodied a universal story about love, laughter, grief, adaptation, struggle, resilience, joy and hope. Building a story from many pieces is exciting - it's like playing with Lego or designing a recipe from scratch. Many parts contribute to something beautiful. I've thoroughly enjoyed working on this project and I'm so grateful to those in the film who have welcomed us into their lives through their stories and voices.



Ramadan in the context of a pandemic has, I think, enhanced our consciousness around global issues and inequalities. Our Ramadan experience parallels our pandemic experience. Ramadan is a time when we do more with less, and as a result we are more grateful and appreciative of what's truly important. The pandemic is doing the same thing for humanity - at least for those who are paying attention. Pandemic + Ramadan has encouraged a whole lot of shifts in perspectives and a new depth in personal and societal reflection. Many people in the film share their reflections that promote awareness around issues that affect their lives. May Allah (SWT) continue to help us as individuals and communities move towards positive action and effectiveness in alleviating one another's struggles.

As someone who makes and watches films, I truly believe that art in its many forms helps us to feel more connection and empathy for one another. Throughout the process of making the film, I have enjoyed spending time with those who sent in submissions. It's made me feel less lonely these past months. I realize now, more than ever, that although we may have been fasting alone for not just one, but two years, we are *never* truly alone. Allah of course is always with us. Perhaps He has sent us this trial as a reminder to cherish the relationships we've had in the past and have in the present. We can feel one another's presence no matter where we are. Our memories, our adaptability and resourcefulness in unique times such as these - are all gifts from Allah to help us to connect, gain perspective, have courage and be resilient.

I hope you will enjoy the film as much as I have enjoyed making it! Please share with your friends and family. Take care, stay safe, and may Allah (SWT) shower His blessings on you all! Eid Mubarak!

To watch THE YEAR WE FASTED ALONE - teaser, trailer and full film, please visit the SNOW ANGEL FILMS [YouTube channel](#) or [Vimeo page](#).

A YEAR IN: HOW THE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS ARE ADAPTING TO COVID-19

BY ERUM TANVIR, CMWI BOARD DIRECTOR

It has been over a year since the unsuspecting world was plunged into the middle of a pandemic without any clues of what to expect next. One moment the virus was a cause for concern and next, whole cities were under lockdown mandates. No one was prepared for the life at home, all day, every day, with everyone around. It certainly was a change, one that came with a learning curve.

The lockdown, while equally imposed on everyone, brought challenges that were not equally experienced by all. We were all in the same storm but not in the same boat. For some, the time at home was an opportunity for reflection, catching up on lost family time and long desired hobbies. Yet for others it meant uncertainty, loneliness, despair, and hardship.

The need for community support and services was at an all-time high. In addition to the regular programs offered by the nonprofits, additional needs were identified. Many families lost their sources of income thus increasing the demand for food and basic supplies. However, notwithstanding the additional needs raised due to COVID-19, the lockdown itself imposed significant challenges for the nonprofits to continue offering even their regular programs and services. Specifically, for organizations offering in-person services, it was a big question mark as to how to convert the existing in-person program or service into a socially distant one while ensuring that the efficacy of the programs and services was not negatively impacted. Given the financial limitations of the nonprofit



organizations and their clientele, many came up with creative ideas to continue serving the community while ensuring their staff and clients remain safe.

The Canadian Muslim Women's Institute (CMWI) is one such nonprofit that has been providing essential support and culturally sensitive programs and services to the refugees, newcomer families and other individuals in the community since 2006. Before the pandemic we were able to provide face-to-face services to more than 120 families (equivalent to 600 new clients). Our regular programs include in-person, hands-on employment training programs (child minding, culinary, cleaning and housekeeping, industrial sewing and machine operator training, work readiness certificates etc.), Family & Community Support programs (English conversation support group, Mom and Tots programs, Peer Support sharing circles, Drivers Ed, nutrition programs for kids and their parents etc.), food programs (a food bank operates every other week with the help of Winnipeg Harvest, emergency food kits, Ramadan/Eid Hampers) and, Financial Empowerment programs (Money Management workshops, credit counselling and free tax clinics). We also serve as a child friendly Drop-in centre for newcomer families to drop by for snacks and networking.



However, this all changed in March 2020, due to COVID-19, when CMWI had to adapt and change the way we deliver services to our clients. Most of our regular programming like Financial Empowerment programs and Mom and Tots programs moved online using Zoom. The first challenge was training the staff on how to use and navigate the technology to facilitate programming and meetings. The next challenge was teaching this to the clients. To do this we had to ensure that all clients had access to a computer or cell phone. CMWI was able to procure the devices through the 'Computers for Schools' program. Despite the

initial struggle in training the staff and clients on how to navigate this technology, the online delivery of our programs was eventually successful. For those clients who were unable to use the technology, our staff made daily phone calls to check in on them.

Given the food insecurity caused by COVID-19, our Winnipeg Harvest food bank continued throughout the year. To ensure social distancing and capacity limits, the

clients were served by appointment and provided pre-packaged food kits to take home.

The beginning of the pandemic was a scary and confusing time and many of our clients were anxious and exhibited signs of stress. We identified a need for mental health support and started a new program called 'Supporting Each Other'. This is a support group where a social worker has weekly Zoom meetings with clients in their first language so they can talk about the pandemic and how to cope. It has been very successful with an attendance of 35 women. It was first started in Somali and now we have an Arabic speaking support group.

Looking back to last March and comparing where we are today, it can be said with confidence that CMWI has now settled into an effective way of serving our clients virtually, but we look forward to the day when we can serve them in person.

Like many other organizations, CMWI has shown the ability to adapt to adverse situations so that we can continue to be there for our clients in not only the good times but also be a support during difficult and challenging times. We intend to continue to improve and adapt our service and programming to our clients in a safe way whether it be remotely, socially distanced or in person as we strive to meet the emerging needs of our clients. We cannot thank our Muslim community enough for your unwavering support throughout this time that enabled us to keep our doors open. InshaAllah (God willing), the coming days will be brighter, and we will be able to be together again in person.



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MLA for Waverley



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TIMINGS: Mon-Fri, 9 AM-3 PM

LOCATION: 61 Juno St, Winnipeg

BLENDED LEARNING: In person + Online

WHO CAN APPLY:

- Permanent Residents
- CLB Level 3 and Above
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A CONVERSATION WITH DR. NATASHA ALI, CHAIR OF THE MIA MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

BY: DUJAHN KASAS*

Recently I had a delightful chat with Dr. Natasha Ali on the subject of mental health in our community and a little bit about herself. I found our conversation to be very important, with lots of information that our community would find useful in these challenging times. Here is a little bit of our conversation.

Firstly, I asked her to tell me a bit about herself, where she was born, and where she had grown up. She told me that she was born in Montreal, but because her father, who had a PhD, wasn't able to find a job (there was a lot of Muslim underemployment at the time), her family soon moved to Trinidad where she lived and grew up until the age of six when they then moved to Vancouver. In Vancouver, school was hard for her because of the bullying and racism she faced and at age nine, they moved to England. There she faced more bullying at school, and she didn't feel like she belonged anywhere. After hearing a bit about her interesting childhood, I moved on to asking her about her job and what kind of work she does for the Muslim community. She is a psychologist who provides counselling, runs workshops as well as a variety of other things and has been providing her services to our Muslim community since 2018.

Next, we discussed some of the substantial issues she sees our community is struggling with due to this pandemic we are in. The first issue she discussed is one we can all relate to, the problem of isolation. Since our religion is so socially

and community based, whether it be prayer, iftars, tarawih, khutbahs or weddings, there is a certain fulfillment we all feel while being together. She also said that this is already a problem amongst newcomers and a lot of us who don't have our extended families with us and this pandemic has just made our problem bigger.

The second issue we discussed was that because of this pandemic and all the issues that come with it, a lot of people have been coping by going online a lot and eating a lot. We are seeing an addiction to devices, but despite that we are also feeling exhausted from our screens because now we have to use them for almost everything. Our sleep and concentration have drastically been thrown off. People are not reaching out because they are so done with using a device to be connected to someone. Some of us are seeking social interactions online, and the huge amount of time we spend online can sometimes draw us in to things we should not be involved in.



Dr. Natasha Ali

I asked Dr. Ali what are some things that we can do for those in our community who are struggling with loneliness, especially our seniors. Some of her suggestions were to firstly, pick up the phone and talk to a senior you know, check in with them and let them know that they can call you anytime. Then if you have the means, dedicate a specific time and day and call someone or visit them just to say hello, slip them a note under their door, or bake them something. This can be for anyone, just show that you remember and are thinking of them.

Further, I asked her about how to cope with stress, and here's what she had for me. She told me that the first step is to recognize the stress, as well as recognize where it is coming from, more specifically what aspect or part of your life it is coming from. Ask yourself, am I sleeping okay, am I eating okay, am I neglecting my responsibilities, am I avoiding people or anything else, are my relationships okay? Take a moment to figure out what is causing the stress. Then ask yourself, what do I need to do to manage this stress, whether it be disconnecting from the internet, or strengthening your relationship with Allah, or cutting out toxic people in your life. Be honest with yourself, don't live in denial. Make sure all the aspects

of your life are healthy. This pandemic has been hard on all of us, especially those who have lost a loved one.

Next we talked about what those who are struggling with the loss of a loved can do to cope. Firstly, Dr. Ali said that seeking professional help is the best option. Everyone takes grief differently, and if you feel like it's taking you too long to get out of the rut you're in, you should be seeking help. Turn to your deen. Islam has so many answers for us, so strengthen your faith. Remember that Allah will continually test us and it is up to you how you use the resources around you to come out as a stronger person who has grown from each trial. Ask yourself, what did Allah want me to learn from this trial?

I asked Dr. Ali what we can do to help others close to us who we know are struggling with their mental health. You need to empathize with this person to truly help them. Check in with yourself, think back to a time where you were in a similar situation, and try and relate to them. Then listen to them but listen to them without judgement. Keep checking in with them and encourage them to get professional help.

Lastly, to end it on a high note, I asked her what are some things we can do to boost our mental health. Here is what she had to say. She told me that if you focus spiritually and physically the mental health aspect will fall into place. Spiritually you can do dhikr, prayer helps, reading a page of Quran and strengthening your relationship with Allah. Do something you enjoy at least once everyday. It should be healthy, for example reading, or music, or journaling, or meditation, or even painting. It shouldn't lead you down a bad path. Another thing that is very beneficial to our mental health is being out in nature. So, things like biking or walking or gardening can be lots of fun but also be good for us.

I found my discussion with Dr. Ali to be wonderful. I learned a lot and I hope everyone who reads this will benefit from Dr. Ali's amazing knowledge and wisdom. Thanks for reading, I hope you all enjoyed.

**Dujahn is a grade ten student and active youth volunteer.*

Greetings

FROM MP TERRY DUGUID



Dear friends,

I hope you and your families are doing well and staying safe. I know that over the past year, the work of the Manitoba Islamic Association has made a real difference in the lives of not only our Muslim community, but our wider Winnipeg community as well.

During a time when Canadians were experiencing grief, hardship and struggles, so many of you graciously volunteered your time towards supporting others. Whether it was by organizing food banks, delivering groceries or phoning seniors to check-in, you have all stepped up in incredible ways. Your actions, both big and small exemplify what it means to be a good neighbour when it matters most.

As the Member of Parliament for Winnipeg South, I have been grateful for the continued partnership of the Manitoba Islamic Association, and I have been pleased to see your organization receive federal grants through the New Horizons for Seniors program as well as the Canada Summer Jobs program. The federal government recognizes how integral the work you do is, and we are pleased to support you in this way.

As we begin to head into the summer months, I know that we have all grown tired of the pandemic. This past year has been a time of great sacrifice, and I know we are eager to put these difficult days behind us.

Right now, our government's focus is on procuring Covid-19 vaccines as rapidly as possible. We share the urgency that Canadians have in getting their vaccines, and we have been working around the clock to secure doses. Over the past several weeks, vaccine shipments have ramped up dramatically. At the time of writing this, Manitoba alone has received over 240,000 vaccines, with much more on the way. It is likely that by the time this message is published, these numbers will be much higher. Across Canada, we anticipate receiving 36.5 million doses by the end of June, with enough for every Canadian who wants one by September 2021.

In the meantime, let's continue to take care of our loved ones and those around us by wearing our masks, socially distancing and washing our hands. By working together, we can and will get through this pandemic.

As you mark the end of the holy month of Ramadan, I would like to wish you an Eid Mubarak. Eid al-Fitr marks a time of reflection on the importance of peace, forgiveness, unity and helping those in need. I know that this year, Eid is being celebrated differently, and that you're not able to be at the mosque or gather with friends and family as you normally would. I hope that you enjoy safe, virtual celebrations and I look forward to seeing you in person when we are through this public health crisis.

Wishing you a happy and joyous Eid.

Sincerely,

Terry Duguid
Member of Parliament
Winnipeg South

Terry Duguid

Member of Parliament
Winnipeg South



Wishing you Eid Mubarak!

103 - 2800 Pembina Hwy
204.984.6787 terry.duguid@parl.gc.ca



REPORTS



THE FUNERAL HOME JOURNEY

BY AZIZ MIAN

As I look back, time seems to have gone by surprisingly fast. It feels like just yesterday when I first got involved in the funeral process about 20 years ago. Br Iqbal Siddiqui and Sr. Shahina Siddiqui were my mentors and taught me what I needed to know about how funerals are managed in Winnipeg. If I recall correctly, they were involved in the funeral for at least 20 years as well. As time progressed, I took on more responsibilities within Manitoba Islamic Association (MIA) and my involvement with the funeral process kept getting deeper.



Recently, I was talking to a sister who assists with the body washing process. She was so happy to be using MIA's new funeral facility. She said, "I felt sukoon washing the body here". This short sentence took me for a trip down memory lane. I remember now what I was feeling 20 years ago; I did not have sukoon back then. At the time I did not realize what I was feeling. Looking back now I am able to see and understand that.



Exterior of Funeral Home before and after completion.

Sukoon is an Urdu language word that means calm, peace, relief, serenity, tranquility, wholeness. It is not a material object, it cannot be weighed, it cannot be named, it can only be felt. I never felt sukoon dealing with funerals back then because it was not good enough in my heart.

Our community was small 20 years ago and the number of funerals was few and far between. Unfortunately, the status quo at the time was the most economical solution. I stayed involved in the process because I felt the community needed a consistent person to manage this difficult affair. We took baby steps and I slowly started to take over the process from the families. This way the family could spend the time with their loved ones and not worry about what to do next. This gave me the opportunity to consistently find ways to improve the process while reducing or maintaining the cost.

As the number of funerals started to increase, the importance of our own funeral home became more evident. First, it was difficult to sell this idea to those who were not involved in funerals. Sometimes people have to do the job to understand the pains involved in those jobs.

One day I was sitting with Br. Anis Khan at Tim Hortons sipping my coffee and somehow we got on to the topic of our own funeral home. He immediately made a financial commitment if I was to start this project.

To move the project forward, a program of requirement was developed. We approached many companies but only a few companies provided a quotation. We

picked a very talented design company with the best cost proposal. We went through various stages of the design proposal. Many people provided the input that went into the design. As a result, a hallway was added doubling the size of the project. The feedback also resulted in more natural light, doubled the original height and many other specialized features. The final drawings were given to many companies and only received three quotations. The most economical quotation was selected and negotiated.

Having been involved in many past fundraisers, I knew this was still a difficult task. However, Br. Anis's commitment was encouraging and served as a catalyst in my mind thinking that the project was possible. At that time, the idea was to have a small functional body washing facility. As the design of the project increased in size, scope and quality, the estimated price increased.

Alhamdulillah, the facility became operational on January 2, 2021 when interim occupancy was issued. The first funeral was processed on Jan 12, 2021. Full occupancy was achieved on February 18, 2021 though we still have a few deficiencies to correct in addition to making the donor wall. We did 15 funerals in the first 90 days.



Aziz and Mourad working on the Funeral home sidewalk

MOVING FORWARD

It is no secret that funerals are increasing in numbers and complexities. One funeral can take anywhere from a few hours to many days depending on the complexities involved. MIA has taken a bold step and hired a staff person to manage the funerals. This will provide consistency, efficiency and reliability in the service.

We strive to make things better in our daily lives at home and at work. MIA is no different and continuous changes are essential in order to provide better services for the community. Having our own funeral home means that we have to create a system to manage the flow of documentation necessary to work with hospitals, the cemetery, Vital Statistics, the Medical Examiner and Government offices. Once these systems are completed, a computerized system will be needed to manage

these processes. We are also looking to improve transport services, casket design, headstones and the cost of cemetery plots. We still have lots of work ahead of us to have a full system and process that will make us the most efficient Muslim funeral home in North America.

SINCERE THANKS

Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "He who does not thank people, does not thank Allah" (Ahmad, Tirmidhi). I am thankful to Allah for giving me the opportunity to play a tiny part in this project. This project was not possible without his blessings and without the guidance of many who helped. Please forgive me if I have forgotten to list you in this.

Sincere thanks to my predecessors Sr. Shahina Siddiqui and Br. Iqbal Siddiqui for their guidance and mentorship when I took over the program. I still rely on their expertise when dealing with complex cases.

Br. Anis Khan was the first to ask me to somehow start the project and made a commitment to the process. This conversation worked as a catalyst for this job. You will rarely find a project in the Manitoba Muslim community that does include significant contributions from the same people who donate over and over again. The very early commitments also came from Br. Ferid Memon, Abdo ElTassi, Adnan Shah, Reda Algazzar, Alaa Ibrahim, Yousseff Bezzahou, Laila Chebib, Sahar Elmahallawy, Mansoor Hussain and Mauz Jutt.

I was afraid that if we could not collect all the money, we could not start the project. Br. Ezzet Ibrahim knew about project costs and the efforts required for a project this size. He committed bridge financing if we had any trouble starting due to lack of funds. He also played a pivotal role along with Br. Tariq Aziz in reviewing the proposal and providing valuable guidance.

Bilal Masjid was considering adding a funeral home when the Masjid was being renovated. We are thankful to Br. Abdul Hakim and Sh. Muhiadin for not



duplicating the service and having faith in MIA's plans to expand the funeral services.

Allah always finds different means to help us make things happen. I went to visit the late Br. Naseer Sarwar who was sick at that time. He had questions about funerals and the processes. May Allah be pleased with him and grant him Jannah. His generous donation brought tears to my eyes.



Despite the major donors, we still had a long way to go. We needed constant awareness so people would contribute. Every soul would have to go through death and eventually would benefit from this project. Therefore, it was important for everyone to participate. Br. Faraz Khan and Br. Sohail Khan stepped up with their friends, Furqan Muhammad, Mazahr Ali Khan, Ibrahim Ali Khan, Athar Ali Khan, Adna Muhammad, Adnan Noor, Waleed Asim, Farhan Khan, Masoor Khan and Br. Jehangir Khan. These folks worked for more than a year holding many fundraising events in addition to going door to door. No amount of words is enough to thank their constant and unwavering support. May Allah be pleased with them.

Still out a substantial amount, Br. Farook Chebib's family found a way to communicate this project to the Saudi Princess Al-Johara who helped us get over the danger zone of having a shortfall.

If you were watching the progress of the walkway outside the funeral home, you must remember Br. Mourad. He built the sidewalk in extreme heat and donated his time and expertise. I have to remind you of his request. He asked that you remember him in your duas.

The last group of people is the heart and the soul of this program; our volunteers. There is no secret that our funerals are done fast and with not much time to pre-plan. Our volunteers have to drop everything in their lives to come out to help on very short notice.

Let me illustrate the importance of body washing by telling a short story. A brother called me a few times wanting to help with body washing. When someone passed away, I called the individual telling him the details of the washing time and location. This person was busy and asked for more lead time. A few days later, we had another deceased. I called the same brother again asking if he was able to come. This person was unable to help on such a short notice and asked me if we can plan this work with

better notice. This should paint a clear picture how lucky we are to those who put this work ahead of their own and have been helping consistently for many years. Sometimes, we only have a few hours notice in order to meet the timelines. Our volunteers have never failed us.

Community members performing these services for over 25 years include Shahina Siddiqui, Denise Usmani, Nighat Hameed, Najmi Siddiqui, Firdaus Rahman, Zoleikha Mustafa, Razia Rajput , Bashir Rajput, Iqbal Siddiqui, Akram Rana, Mian Hameed and the late Dr. Mujib Rahman.

Community members who helped with body washing for about 10 years include Nasim Sabzwari, Zubaidah Mussadaq, Sajida Ghalib, Ihab Salih, Omar Siddiqui, Parveez Siddiqui, Habib Ahmed, Ayub Hamid, Ezzat Ibrahim, Shaneeza Jameel, Hanif Mohammad, Khalid Iqbal, Abid Siddiqui and Tariq Aziz.

Our new volunteers include Tasneem Vali, Ruheen Aziz, Urooj Danish, Rukhsana Deen, Shabbana Zuhair, Subheen Saboor, Attia Khatoon, Abid Siddiqui, Dr. Mansoor Farooqi, Fasih Ahmed, Naveed Subhani, Danish Habib and Raza Hameed. Please forgive me if I have forgotten any names. May Allah reward you all abundantly.





MIA WAQF FOUNDATION: A CHANCE TO LEAVE GENERATIONAL LEGACY!

BY DR. ABDELILAH SOUSSI GOUNNI

Background

Islamic societies have a long and rich tradition of philanthropy, which has shaped development throughout the Muslim world and given rise to various social, educational, cultural, and religious institutions. One of the oldest civil society institutions, called the *Waqf* in Arabic or endowment, combined philanthropy features with a social service agency. This combination is what made Waqf a millennium-long success as a social institution. Hence, Waqf is a sustainable, ongoing charitable endowment “Sadaqah Jariyah,” mainly used to develop and support communities.

The Waqf system is based on the tradition of Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) and has been a long-established Muslim way of financing Islamic institutions. In the Waqf system, donations are locked in revenue-generating investments. The principal remains intact; only revenues are used to finance specified projects or

services. A Waqf is essentially a charitable trust whereby a donor designates something to be used solely for the benefit and welfare of the society members, particularly the poor and needy. A restriction is placed on preventing the sale or new ownership by an individual or a group.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, first encouraged the concept of Waqf when Umar (RA) asked the Prophet, "Oh Prophet of Allah, I have valuable land in Khaibar. What do you wish I do with it?" The Prophet, peace be upon him, replied, "Give its benefits to charity while ensuring that it can no longer be sold nor bought nor be given away." This hadith is the basis on which the scholars agreed that giving for a Waqf is encouraged in Islam. In another hadith, **The Prophet of Allah SWT said;** *"When the human being dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge, or a righteous child who prays for him."* Sahih Muslim.



Mia Waqf Foundation

The Manitoba Islamic Association (MIA) Waqf Foundation is a new initiative undertaken to establish a sound and sustainable financial basis for Manitoba's Muslim community.

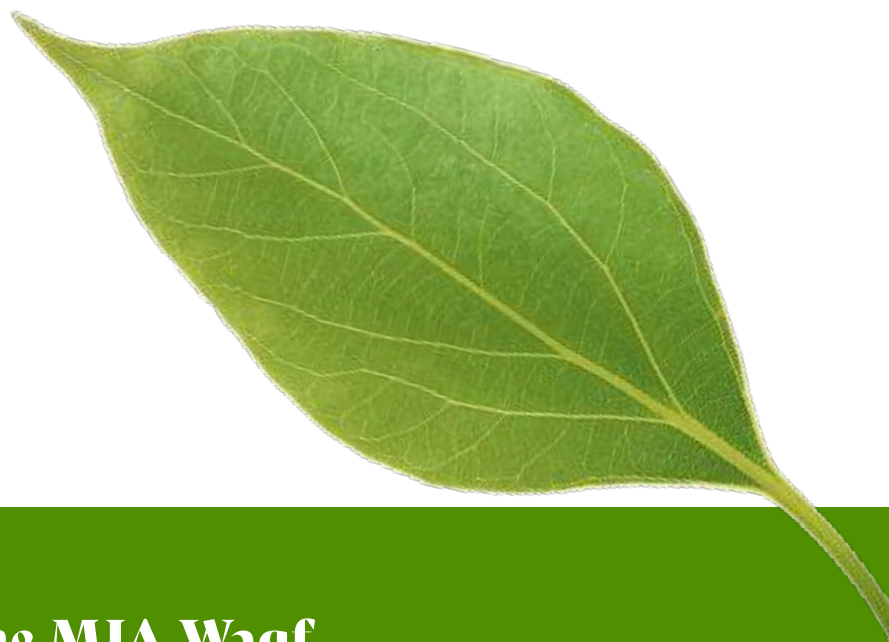
Manitoba Islamic Association provides a variety of spiritual, educational, and social services. It now manages three mosques in the city, and it collaboratively offers wide-ranging services for all Muslims in Manitoba.

Up to now, MIA's primary source of revenue has been general donations. With the increased demands on MIA's services, its financial resources are being stretched to the limit.

For the first time in Manitoba, by the grace of Allah SWT, MIA Waqf Foundation has been established and approved by Canada Revenue Agency as a charitable organization. The MIA Waqf foundation has its independent board that abides by the established constitution and CRA rules with its separate bank account.

The MIA Waqf Foundation's independent board is responsible for collecting funds, investing them, and disbursing the revenue following the Waqf mandate. The MIA Waqf fund will be subject to regular audit, and periodic financial reports will be made public. The MIA Fiqh Committee will review the Waqf fund transactions to ensure compliance with the fiqh rules of Waqf. Furthermore, a group of well-respected community leaders advises the MIA Waqf Foundation's board. This advisory committee is composed of:

- ▶ Dr. Abdelilah Soussi Gounni
- ▶ Dr. Ali Hassan Khan
- ▶ Mrs. Kathleen Mazur
- ▶ Mrs. Merdia Imame
- ▶ Mr. Salman Idris
- ▶ Dr. Youssef Bezzahou



How To Donate to the MIA Waqf Foundation

Donations can be made in many ways:

There are many avenues to be part of this legacy. You can become a monthly donor, be a founder donor in your name, family or deceased relative or an ad hoc donor.

You can also contribute using "In Kind contribution " by donating any type of Real Estate (i.e. house, apartment or land), common shares or bonds, or any marketable assets like cars, jewellery etc. Finally, Will designation is another excellent way to contribute. You can designate in your Will the MIA Waqf Foundation to be a beneficiary of your estate, up to the islamically allowable maximum of one third.

WHAT DID I DO DURING THE PANDEMIC?

We asked kids in the community to submit their thoughts and write a short paragraph or draw a picture about what they did during the pandemic. We have chosen to publish the following entries - they are hopeful as we all should be.

There was really, not much to do during the pandemic. It was summer, but all my favourite activities like swimming, going to the beach, or any other tourist attractions. While indoors there did not seem to be much to do. It is funny, how we always complain that we never have time for ourselves, I guess the world got tired of hearing our complaints and gave a chunk of time for ourselves. Yet still, we were and are complaining.

Apparently, the schools did not find a global pandemic intense enough and still continued schooling us (online school). Apart from that I didn't have much to do, reading books and watching TV were and are my majors. I did try to learn how to cook Mac n Cheese, that was a fun experience. I also went outside of my house to play with my friends for hours!. My mom was always so scared at first, but she eventually realised that I was not gonna stay in. She started letting me go out easily and I started playing everyday.

Zainab Vohra, 11 yrs old



As we all know this year the pandemic had stopped us from doing lots of stuff that we enjoy doing like: going to the water park, playing with our friends, going to the mall with our family, and most importantly meeting our relatives in person (not on call obviously)

Well for me, the pandemic did not stop me from doing EVERYTHING I enjoy doing in fact it barely stopped me from doing stuff that I enjoy because I could still play all the games I enjoy playing outside and of course I couldn't play hide and go seek and mantracker and all the other games you need at least 25-30 people to play but, I mean there was still some stuff I could play. We all know that now we have found the cure to the Covid-19 but we still need to be vigilant just in case. And remember just 'cause the pandemic is here it doesn't mean that we can't do ANYTHING. We can do loads of stuff because we have a family so ask your family to come play outside with you it can really be fun that is what I did for one and a half years. At least I think that's how long the pandemic has been here for. So remember to stay safe and be vigilant



Usaid Habib,
10 yrs old
Grade 5

During the pandemic, I enjoyed doing school projects the most. My favorite was the community project. In project teacher asked to choose two places we NEED and two places I WANT in the community. I choose "Costco" and "shoppers" in places I need because we cannot live without food. For places I want, I choose "Toys R us" and "haircut saloon". I made models of those places out of shoe boxes and letter blocks so I can trace the letters.

During pandemic, I also played board and card games. For the card games, I played Uno and memory games. For the board games, I played Chess and Scrabble. How you play scrabble? You make words with the random letters you get, and you get points. How you play Chess? There are two colors white and black. There is pawn, king, queen, knight and more. White goes first all the time. Queen has the most places to go. How you win? If the king cannot survive then game is over.

Saad Ahmad Iqbal,
7 yrs old | Grade 2



It was one of the last days of March 2020. I still remember I was travelling in my car with my family, when my mom's phone rung and a representative from the MIA office informed us about the cancellation of all the activities and weekend schools including "Muslim Children of North America" (MCNA) and "Al-Noor" because of Covid-19.

I was blessed to spend more time with my family because almost all my activities/classes were closed. Due to remote learning, I learned and used more technology that way such as "Class kick" and others. Because of Covid-19 we had to social distance, I could not be physical like I used to be because I could not go to parks, swimming pools or play outside.

With Covid-19, I could not see my relatives. Because we would have to wait 2 weeks in a new country before visiting them. But I stayed in contact with them through technology almost daily. We played games online with them.

Fortunately, the community offered many activities during this pandemic. One such activity is drawing Masjid Al-Aqsa, as shown below.

by Musab Iqbal
10 years old
Grade 5



Thank you

to our generous food program
volunteers and sponsors





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Assiniboia Surgical Centre is pleased to provide full scope of Oral Surgical care for all Manitobans. We accept self-referrals, and referrals from Dental and Medical offices including our beloved new immigrants from Syria.

Dr. Elgazzar and Dr. Shah will do both basic and advanced Oral Surgery procedures: including teeth extraction, wisdom teeth, dental implants, biopsies, oral lesions, TMJ, and jaw surgery.

**Our mission is to provide our patients with quality care,
attention and comfort**

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