

# STRENGTHENING THE INTER-FAITH BRIDGES

in Burnaby



APRIL 2013

## FINAL STRENGTHENING INTER-FAITH BRIDGES DIALOGUE SESSION

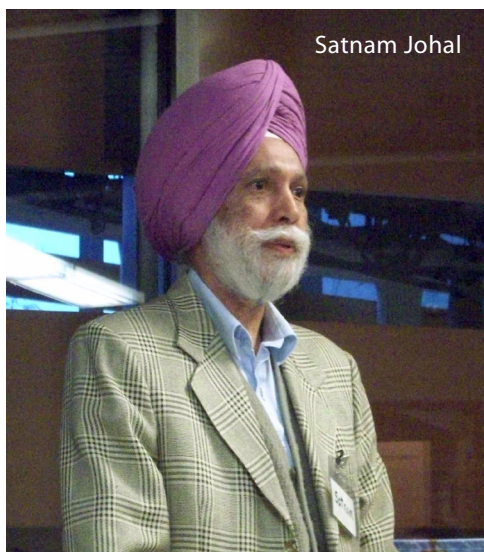


Photo Credit: Sara Shaw, South Burnaby Neighbourhood House

***"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."***

- Margaret Mead

Our not-so-small group of thoughtful, committed Burnaby citizens met on March 20th at the beautiful National Nikkei Heritage Centre ([www.nikkeiplace.org/](http://www.nikkeiplace.org/)) to participate in the final Strengthening Inter-Faith Bridges dialogue session. This session, attended by over 30 people, focussed on learning about the Islamic and Sikh faiths, and hearing about the importance of faith in the settlement process for immigrants and refugees. Participants also explored future inter-faith action in Burnaby.

Tazul Bano Ali and Satnam Johal started the dialogue by describing the welcoming traditions and protocols at Islamic mosques and Sikh temples. At previous dialogue sessions, participants expressed an interest in visiting diverse places of worship, but also expressed apprehension. Through their presentations, Ali and Johal dispelled a number of myths and misconceptions, paving the way for greater interaction. Dialogue participants practiced traditional Islamic and Sikh greetings, with varying degrees of success!

Ling Chu, Burnaby S.U.C.E.S.S. Settlement Program Manager, spoke eloquently about the pivotal role that faith played in her own settlement process. Lonely and afraid, Chu drew strength from an emerging faith that enabled her to cope with the challenges of living in a new country and culture. By telling her personal story about reaching out to a faith community for support, Chu gave dialogue participants a compelling insight into the relationship between faith, courage, and community engagement.

## ANOTHER BIG SHOUT OUT

Thank you to Burnaby Family Life, the City of Burnaby, and Fairy Cakes for donating door prizes at our dialogue sessions & congratulations to the lucky winners!

Thank you to the National Nikkei Heritage Centre for allowing us to use their beautiful space. For information about space rental at the NNHC, Contact: knagao@nikkeiplace.org



*This project is made possible through funding from the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia.*

Kathy Corrigan, MLA for Burnaby-Deer Lake, attended, re-iterating the valuable contribution that faith communities make to Burnaby, and to the whole province.

The question for this session's small groups also generated plenty of intense discussion. Participants were asked to explore: What can we do to live our faith in Burnaby? The results of this discussion will be used at our upcoming Faith, Food, and Fun Forum in May to set priorities for future inter-faith action.

Highlights from the discussion include:

- Establish an Inter-Faith Leaders' Action Team
- Tour Faith Centres/Places of Worship
- Host Inter-Faith Social Events

Some critically important questions also emerged from the discussions, including: how do we bring those not aligned with a faith organization into the discussion? How do we tie our "duty of care" for the most vulnerable members of our community to our ongoing inter-faith work? How do we use our shared values and collective commitment to build an even more welcoming and inclusive Burnaby?

Over the course of the Strengthening Inter-Faith Bridges in Burnaby dialogue sessions, well over 100 Burnaby residents have come together to share their faith, learn about other faiths, and explore ways to live their faith in Burnaby. They are thoughtful, committed citizens working together to change their small part of the world, and indeed they will.

# You're Invited to the Strengthening Inter-Faith Bridges in Burnaby FAITH, FOOD & FUN FORUM

**DATE:** Tuesday, May 7, 2013

**TIME:** 6:00 – 9:00 pm

**LOCATION:** Shadbolt Centre for the Arts (6450 Deer Lake Avenue, Burnaby)  
<http://mapq.st/W12agI>

**Special Guests:** *Vancouver Society of Storytelling: Stories of Faith and Courage*

### JOIN US:

Please join us as we celebrate the successes of our Strengthening Inter-Faith Bridges Community Dialogue series & make plans for future action. Enjoy a delicious vegetarian meal, and hear inspiring stories of faith and courage told by compelling local storytellers.

### REGISTRATION:

This session is **free** but pre-registration is required and early registration is strongly encouraged.

Please register today at:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Register2Inter-Faith\\_Forum](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Register2Inter-Faith_Forum)

This event is sponsored by the Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table (BIPT). For information about the BIPT, please visit, [www.bipt.ca](http://www.bipt.ca)

story  
is  
every  
thing

Jordan Bent design