

Religious Diversity Programming

About the Presenters:

Norton Mezvinsky, Ph. D.-is a CCSU professor of history and a CSU university professor. Dr. Mezvinsky has published extensively on modern Middle East history, Arab Israel conflict, Judaismism, and various aspects of United States history. He is the recipient of numerous awards for scholarship and teaching. His book, written in conjunction with the Israel scholar Israel Shahak, has been translated and published in 4 languages in addition to English. His new forthcoming book will be on Christian Zionism.

Gerhard Beestermoller, Ph. D.-is the deputy director at the Institute for Theology and Peace, a research institution of the Catholic Church established by the Catholic Military Chaplaincy. The emphasis of research and documentation is on the political and social debate on questions of peace from a theological-ethical point of view. Dr. Beestermoller wrote his dissertation on the Just War Theory of Thomas Aquinas and his second book on the Peace-Philosophy of Kant. In addition, he has published several books and articles on issues of peace-ethics.

Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, Ph. D.-received his Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Michigan State University in 1970. Since then he has held clinical, research, and teaching positions at the University of Michigan, Central Michigan University, Michigan State University, the University of Pennsylvania, New York University, Columbia University, Vassar College, Trinity College, University of Haifa, the Israel Institute of Technology, Tel-Aviv University, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, King's College London, and the CNRS in Paris. He is the author, co-author, editor, or co-editor of seventeen books and monographs and 130 articles and book chapters on the psychology of religion, social identity, and personality development. In addition, he has a special interest in questions of ethics and ideology in psychological research and practice. In 1993 he was the recipient of the William James Award, given by Division 36 of the American Psychological Association for his contributions to the psychology of religion.

Felton Best, Ph. D.-Dr. Best is a CCSU Professor of Philosophy and was recently chosen for the prestigious CSU Professor award. Dr. Best graduated with his Ph. D. from Ohio State University.

He specializes in African-American studies; the philosophy of religion; and is director of the African Studies program. Dr. Best's publications include: Black religious leadership from the slave community to the million man march: Flames of fire; Black resistance movements in the United States and Africa, 1800-1993: Oppression and Retaliation; Crossing the color line: A biography of Paul Laurence Dunbar, 1872-1906.

Abdulla Antepi, M. A.-is a doctor of ministry candidate at the Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut. He is the associate director of Islamic Chaplaincy & Interfaith Relations at the Hartford Seminary. Before taking that position in 2005, he was the University Muslim Chaplain at Wesleyan University. In addition, Mr. Antepi has worked as the Malaysian representative to the Pasiad association of Social and Economic solidarity with Pacific countries and helped coordinate several business and educational activities in the Far East.

Mohammad Darawshe, M.A.-Mohammad Darawshe is the Director of External Relations for the The Abraham Fund Initiatives, the leading organization in Israel working on Jewish-Arab Relations. Previously he worked as Deputy Director of Givat Haviva Institute of Education. He holds an M.A. in Public Administration and presented lectures and papers at many international and academic institutions such as the U.S. congress, the European parliament, NATO Defense College and the World Economic Forum, and won numerous awards, including the Peacemaker award, bestowed by the Catholic Theological Union of Chicago and the Peace and Security Award of the World Association of NGOs. He frequently appears on Arab and international TV stations as political Analyst on Israeli and Arab issues.

The Programs

The co-existence between Jews and Muslims in Israel and the Middle East-Mohammad Darawshe,
Development Director of the Abraham Fund for
Co-existence.

Friday, March 16, 1:00 p.m., Torp Theater,
Davidson Hall.

Tolerating the Differences between Judaism and
Christianity-Norton Mezvinsky, Ph. D.,
Central Connecticut State University

Tuesday, March 27, 4:00 p.m., Torp Theater, Davidson Hall.

Religion: A peace-making or war-driving force? A Catholic Position-Gerhard Beestermoeller, Ph. D., Institute of Theology & Peace, Hamburg, Germany
Thursday, March 29, from 11:00-12:15 p.m., in Torp Theater, Davidson Hall.

Identity, Salvation, and Human Rights-Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, Professor of Psychology at the University of Haifa.
Tuesday, April 17, 11:00-12:15 p.m., in Torp Theater, Davidson Hall.

Panel Discussion on Tolerating Religious Differences -Norton Mezvinsky (CCSU), Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi (University of Haifa), Felton Best (CCSU), and Abdullah Antepli (Hartford Seminary). Represented on this panel are perspectives from Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
Tuesday, April 17, 4:00 p.m., in Torp Theater, Davidson Hall.

For more information, please contact Carolyn R. Fallahi at 860-832-3114.