

Sept. 11, 2008 - Folks from all walks of life enjoyed two perspectives on the chosen topic of the

“Spiritual Effects of Fasting.”□

Rev. Tom Buchanan, of a local Presbyterian church, and Imam Suleyman Eris both talked and chatted with guests about fasting, the methodology of fasting, the types of fasting in different faiths, examples of fasting in the Bible and Koran as well as their own personal experiences of fasting.

The significance of the topic was a propos to the program’s second Thursday of the month being the 11th of September. The day was remembered by acknowledging the enormous responsibilities and possibilities we have as people who live in the United States to bring together Christians and Muslims and people of all faiths to celebrate the joy and diversity of life in the United States and abroad, as we are all human brothers and sisters.

Guests at Istanbul Center’s Norcross location learned some basic ideas behind fasting and its purposes. People conversed about the different ways one could fast as well as learned about how the Muslim tradition fasts during the month of Ramadan, which is set by the lunar calendar and falls this year from September 1-30th.

In both Christian and Islamic traditions, the purposes of fasting are the same: discerning one’s interior spiritual connection from the chatter of everyday life; inward reflection; refrain from physical and other material or sensual pleasures; repentance and restoration of the body, mind and heart; and most of all: the submission and surrender of the self.

Similarly, in the Jewish tradition, Yom Kippur is coming up soon on Oct 8th, which is the Jewish time of fasting and atonement.

During Ramadan specifically, one’s mind as well as one’s body must be cleansed of all bad thoughts or “ugly inclinations” to make one’s heart fast as well as the mouth and mind. One is encouraged to live through one’s heart center rather than through the mental processes of our often diffusing and distracting everyday world in which we often take for granted the bounties we enjoy on a daily basis such as clean water, clothing, shelter, healthy food, and other luxuries millions of the less fortunate do not have.

Dinner was served at sundown, and guests filled their plates with homemade Turkish donated from a local Turkish family.

Questions? Comments? Contact Cassandra at kwhitehead@istanbulcenter.org or 678-990-1717.

Istanbul Center - Norcross
6760 Jimmy Carter Blvd.
Suite 110
Norcross, GA 30071
Phone: 678-500-1663

7:00 pm

Please come and join us next time! Every 2nd Thursday of the Month