

# THREE TRADITIONS, ONE INHERITANCE

## *What Two Decades of Abrahamic Dialogue Reveals*

First Analysis Institute of Integrative Studies

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### I. INTRODUCTION: THREE TRADITIONS IN CONVERSATION

For over thirty years, the First Analysis Institute of Integrative Studies (FAI) has been dedicated to exploring how consciousness, human development, and global spiritual traditions are interconnected. Central to that work is a conviction that the three Abrahamic traditions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — are not merely compatible with one another, not merely capable of coexistence in a pluralist society, but genuinely complementary. Each carries something the others need, and each is enriched, not diluted, by honest encounter with the other two. That enrichment reflects history as much as theology: the three traditions emerged in sequence, Judaism, then Christianity, then Islam, and this analysis follows that same order throughout.

FAI describes this relationship as a triune structure: the three foundational scriptures of the Abrahamic traditions each relatively emphasize one of three themes. The Hebrew Bible most basically addresses the Abrahamic God's well-being for all creation; the New Testament most basically addresses the Abrahamic God's redemptive love; and the Quran most basically addresses a belief in the Abrahamic God's revelation. All three traditions address all three themes; what differs is which is characteristically primary. If this mapping holds, its implications extend well beyond theology: the triune structure underlying the three Abrahamic faiths becomes a model for constructive dialogue, religious and secular alike, between their adherents, and a practical resource for the communities and institutions that depend on that dialogue.

For nearly two decades, FAI has tested this framework through its educational programs. The In Good Faith seminar series, co-organized with Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, ran for over a decade, bringing Jewish, Christian, and Muslim scholars and community leaders into sustained dialogue across nearly every major domain of human life, from civic engagement and war to immigration, ecology, and the afterlife. The Tri-Faith Dialogue series, which succeeded it, continues in partnership with the Islamic Cultural Center of Greater Chicago, North Shore Congregation Israel, and Divine Mercy Parish. FAI also supports the Tri-Abrahamic Dialogue on the Climate Crisis, a five-part webinar series organized by the Parliament of the World's Religions, applying this framework to the most urgent collective moral challenge of the present moment. Across twenty-six documented sessions, these programs have collectively represented approximately sixty speaker presentations from senior scholars, rabbis, priests, imams, theologians, and community leaders from all three traditions.

The impetus for this analysis came from the late Rev. Donald P. Senior, C.P., President Emeritus and Chancellor of Catholic Theological Union and a contributor to the development of the tri-Abrahamic triune model, who suggested that FAI test the model's validity against the transcripts of the In Good Faith seminars.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The analysis draws on the twenty-four sessions with preserved transcripts, representing sixty-five speaker presentations, working from verbatim records of what each speaker said rather than from summaries or recollections; the full session listing appears in the Appendix.

The current moment makes this work urgent. In 2024, the Anti-Defamation League recorded 9,354 antisemitic incidents across the United States (ADL Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, 2024), the highest level in nearly five decades. The Council on American-Islamic Relations documented 8,658 Islamophobia complaints in the same year (CAIR Civil Rights Report, 2024), also a record. Both numbers intensified in the aftermath of October 7, 2023, in ways that deepened not only hatred from outside but suspicion within and between communities. The ongoing conflict in the Middle East, and the suffering it continues to produce, has only sharpened these divisions, abroad and in American communities alike. At the same time, a strain of American Christianity has asserted that civic life should be organized around a single religious identity rather than a shared pluralist commitment. And active participation in organized religion of nearly every kind has continued the long decline that has marked American religious life for a generation. These pressures make the honest, substantive dialogue FAI has cultivated more consequential than ever.

Before we turn to the traditions one at a time, the overall pattern is worth stating plainly. Each tradition approaches a shared question from its characteristic angle and does so through a recognizable mechanism. The Jewish presentations organize most often around well-being for all creation; the Christian presentations around redemptive love; the Muslim presentations around revelation as the method through which every other consideration is weighed. The pattern is consistent across the sixty-five presentations: the primary emphasis matched the model's prediction in seventy-seven percent of cases, against a baseline of one in three (Table 1). A full listing of these sessions, with their topics and speakers, appears in the Appendix. The fifteen presentations that did not match are not random but lean toward well-being: eight reframed their question around well-being, five around revelation, and only two around redemptive love. Analysis of this kind was made practical by the assistance of Claude, an AI system developed by Anthropic, which coded all sixty-five presentations for both their primary and secondary emphases and held them to a single framework for comparison across the corpus.

Table 1. Primary emphasis by tradition (the emphasis predicted by the FAI framework is shown in bold).

| Tradition (n)   | Well-being | Redemptive love | Revelation | Concordance |
|-----------------|------------|-----------------|------------|-------------|
| Jewish (22)     | <b>18</b>  | 0               | 4          | 82%         |
| Christian (22)  | 4          | <b>17</b>       | 1          | 77%         |
| Muslim (21)     | 4          | 2               | <b>15</b>  | 71%         |
| <b>All (65)</b> | 26         | 19              | 20         | <b>77%</b>  |

Though the figures tell a powerful story on their own, the fuller account lies in the record behind them: what actually happens when the three Abrahamic traditions engage the questions that matter most. On war, on the climate crisis, and on the afterlife, the three reached strikingly convergent conclusions through three entirely different routes.

## II. THE JEWISH EMPHASIS: WELL-BEING FOR ALL CREATION AS THE ENCOMPASSING UNIFIER

FAI's framework positions Judaism as the tradition that relatively emphasizes well-being for all creation, the "encompassing unifier" whose characteristic orientation is the broadest possible scope of justice and flourishing, extending to all people and to creation itself. Across the Jewish presentations in the analyzed sessions, a well-being-oriented frame appears consistently across a wide range of topics: Torah's social obligations, the universalist scope of the Noahide Laws (the seven commandments that Jewish tradition holds apply to all humanity, not only to Jews), the peace imperative embedded in Jewish liturgy, the halakhic (Jewish legal) environmental tradition. Two qualifications matter. First, revelation is never absent; every

Jewish argument we reviewed is anchored in the Torah, along with the Talmud<sup>2</sup> and the rabbinic tradition that interpret it; the scriptural grounding and ethical conclusion are not always easy to separate. Second, several sessions center on communal continuity, which maps less clearly onto a universal well-being frame: Rabbi Michael Balinsky's treatment of interfaith marriage, for instance, and the sessions on Abraham and on the transmission of Jewish commitment to the next generation.

In the 2008 sessions on religion and civic life, Rabbi Saul Berman organized his argument around Moses Maimonides, the twelfth-century Jewish philosopher and legal authority, who held that every Torah law serves to teach a fundamental truth, cultivate noble virtues, or, at its pinnacle, construct a just social order. Berman traced this through the jubilee year preventing generational poverty and the seven Noahide Laws extending the duty of justice universally, and closed with the American healthcare crisis: fifty million uninsured Americans represent, in a Maimonidean reading, a failure of the legal duty to rescue grounded in Leviticus 19. The well-being concern is specific, legal, and universal in scope.

The same orientation ran through the other analyzed sessions. In 2009, Rabbi Victor Mirelman summed up the Jewish contribution in a phrase later speakers would echo: "God is the God of all humankind, the author of all, who cares for all, and is accessible to all." Professor Laurie Zoloth grounded her bioethics of stem cell research in healing as a "trumping value" of Jewish thought. In 2010, Rabbi David Saperstein anchored the immigration debate in the Torah's most repeated command: to love the stranger, because "you were strangers in the land of Egypt." And in 2011, a session on human suffering drew on Emmanuel Levinas<sup>3</sup> to frame suffering not as a theological problem to be explained but as a call demanding solidarity, a demand that the world be actively repaired.

In the 2014 session on care of creation, Jill Zenoff, founder of The Gan Project (an urban farm grounded in Jewish environmental ethics in Rogers Park, Chicago), walked through halakhic agricultural law in detail: bal tashchit, pe'ah, shemittah, and the jubilee year.<sup>4</sup> These are legal obligations embedded in Jewish law, and they extend the well-being imperative explicitly to the land itself, to non-human creation. This presentation offers perhaps the clearest single illustration of well-being for all creation as an organizing frame in the analyzed sessions.

The two themes the framework assigns elsewhere are also unmistakably present in the Jewish presentations. Redemptive love recurs throughout: chosenness was framed as "intimacy and responsibility," invoking Rav Kook's vision of the brotherly love of Jacob and Esau transformed "into eternal light and compassion"; Rabbi Byron Sherwin, addressing wealth, cited Abraham Joshua Heschel's teaching that "what we own, we owe" and described charity structured to preserve the dignity of the one who receives it; Rachel Kohl Finegold presented the marital obligation of onah (the husband commanded toward his wife's fulfillment, not his own) as love given the force of law. And revealed scripture, read through rabbinic interpretation, grounds every argument, from Zoloth's halakhic bioethics to Rabbi David Sandmel's account of an Abraham known only through the oral Torah.

### III. THE CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS: REDEPTIVE LOVE AS THE INTERACTIVELY ENABLING FORCE

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<sup>2</sup>The central text of Rabbinic Judaism, containing centuries of scholarly legal debate and interpretation.

<sup>3</sup>1906-1995, French-Jewish philosopher whose ethics are grounded in the irreducible encounter with the face of the other.

<sup>4</sup>Bal tashchit, the prohibition on needless destruction; pe'ah, the obligation to leave the corners of one's fields for the poor; shemittah, the sabbatical year in which the land rests and its produce belongs to all; and the jubilee year, in which land reverts to its original owners, resetting the structural conditions for poverty.

The Jewish presentations described above tend to organize around questions of justice and what creation requires; the Christian presentations we analyzed take a different characteristic approach. Where the Jewish argument moves outward from revealed law toward the broadest possible scope of human flourishing, the Christian argument characteristically moves outward from a relational center, love, toward its ethical and social implications. FAI's framework describes this as the "interactive enabler": the tradition whose primary orientation is relational and transformative, making genuine encounter between communities productive. If well-being sets the widest scope of moral concern, redemptive love supplies the connective force within it, the impulse that turns proximity into relationship and makes encounter transformative rather than merely civil. In the triune structure it is the enabling term, the motive that draws people across the distances between them. The Christian presentations we analyzed offer considerable support for this mapping, particularly in the sessions on human suffering, sexuality, and ecology, where love functions as the animating source from which ethical reasoning flows. The pattern comes with two qualifications. First, the civic engagement session, in which Rev. Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite made the structural case for a Just Peace framework, centers primarily on well-being concerns. Second, the analyzed sessions draw heavily from Catholic and theologically liberal Protestant traditions; evangelical, charismatic, and Orthodox voices are not represented. The pattern observed here is real but specific to this sample.

In the 2011 session on human suffering, Rev. Robin Ryan addressed theodicy (how a good God can allow innocent people to suffer) through the concept of "costly love disclosed at Calvary." The Christian understanding, Ryan argued, is not that God permits suffering from a distance but that God, in Jesus, enters it, choosing vulnerability, choosing pain, choosing the abandonment of power. The resurrection reveals on the other side not the cancellation of suffering but "tenacious fidelity and enduring communion." This kenotic theology (the theology of self-emptying) is the clearest single statement of redemptive love as a Christian distinctive in our analyzed sessions.

In the 2011 session on faith and sexuality, Dr. Patricia Beattie Jung organized the Catholic anthropology of sexuality around Trinitarian theology, the claim that human sexuality is an image of the relational love within God. The concept of "the body's grace," drawn from Anglican theologian Rowan Williams, extended the love emphasis into the most intimate dimension of human experience: love not as a moral rule applied from outside, but as the inner structure of what sexuality is. In the 2014 session on care of creation, Sister Mary Southard drew on Pierre Teilhard de Chardin<sup>5</sup> and Thomas Berry<sup>6</sup> to describe the universe as "a love story" driven toward mutual recognition; the ecological crisis is, in her framing, a failure of love, with humanity as the "prodigal species" called back into relationship.

In the 2015 session on living up to faith community ideals, Connie Rakitan described the Faith and Fellowship ministry she had built for adults with serious mental illness at a Chicago parish, organized around the image of "I'm Gonna Sit at the Welcome Table": redemptive love as pastoral practice, enacted rather than theorized.

The other two themes are likewise present throughout the Christian presentations. Well-being: in Thistlethwaite's structural critique of civic violence; in Prof. Regina Wentzel Wolfe's reminder that the word "wealth" is rooted in "weal," an older term for common well-being, and her grounding of the use of riches in the preferential option for the poor; in Rev. Joshtrom Kureethadam's concern for the poor who bear the greatest costs of the climate crisis; and in Sr. Anita Baird's grounding of anti-racism in the love of a neighbor who suffers under structural sin. Revelation likewise grounds Christian argument: Rev. Michael Place built

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<sup>5</sup>1881-1955, French Jesuit priest and philosopher who developed a synthesis of Christian faith and evolutionary theory.

<sup>6</sup>1914-2009, American Catholic priest and cultural historian who described the universe itself as the primary sacred community.

the Catholic position on stem cell research from nine principles drawn from natural law and church teaching, including the inalienable dignity of human life "from the time of conception"; Rev. John Pawlikowski reasoned from Jesus's teaching through the authority of papal encyclicals and Vatican II; Kureethadam anchored the Christian climate response in papal teaching and the Incarnational claim of John 1:14 that "the Word pitched his tent" in creation.

#### IV. THE ISLAMIC EMPHASIS: REVELATION AS INTEGRATIVE GUIDANCE

Of the three traditions represented in our analyzed sessions, the Islamic presentations most consistently illustrate what FAI describes as "integrative guidance." If well-being is the encompassing frame and love the connective force, revelation is the integrating structure: the authoritative order within which competing claims are weighed, reconciled, and held together. Its role in the triune is neither the widest concern nor the animating motive but the coherence that keeps the whole intact. The tradition's characteristic grounding is the Quran, the Hadith<sup>7</sup>, and the jurisprudential tradition built upon them; these are not one set of resources among others but the framework through which every other consideration is approached. Across topics from bioethics to war, sexuality, suffering, conversion, and ecology, Muslim speakers anchor their arguments in revealed sources in a way that is structurally distinct from the other traditions' methods. What revelation integrates is often well-being: care for the orphan and the poor, the protection of life named among the five necessities (maqasid) of classical jurisprudence, the Prophet's Mu'akhat system pairing each migrant family with a host family, and the stewardship of creation. The content therefore overlaps considerably with the well-being emphasis of the Jewish tradition; what stays distinctive is the method, since these obligations are derived from and authorized by revelation rather than from a philosophical analysis of what justice requires.

In the 2008 sessions on religion and civic life, Dr. Maher Hathout, a senior figure in American Muslim public life who had spent thirty-five years in interfaith dialogue, grounded the case for genuine interfaith engagement directly in Quranic verses: God's will that humanity be diverse, the command to vie with one another in goodness, and the Quran's identification of those who "deny the religion" not as theological dissenters but as those who are "harsh to the orphan, callous to the poor." The argument for pluralism is not derived from liberal political theory but from revealed text. The content (care for the vulnerable, acceptance of diversity) is a well-being claim; the method is revelatory.

In the 2009 session on stem cell research, Dr. Hossam Fadel, a maternal-fetal medicine specialist with training in both clinical medicine and Islamic jurisprudence, built his entire argument from Quranic verses, Hadith, the principles of ijthad (independent legal reasoning), and rulings from multiple Islamic juridical bodies. The position he reached, more permissive than the Catholic one in certain respects, was arrived at not by applying general ethical principles but by reading revealed sources and following the jurisprudential tradition, illustrating the integrative function of revelation: competing moral considerations are held together and resolved within a revealed structure.

In the 2011 session on faith and sexuality, Dr. Sherman Jackson drew a careful jurisprudential distinction between homosexual inclination and act, situating both within a revealed legal framework, and made the further argument that the scope of what revelation requires is itself defined by revelation: the moral prohibition does not extend to political exclusion of non-Muslims, because the tradition does not authorize it. Revelation here functions as the integrating parameter-setter, defining both the obligation and its limits.

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<sup>7</sup>The recorded sayings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad, which alongside the Quran form the primary sources of Islamic law and ethics.

In the 2011 session on human suffering, Dr. Mahmoud Ayoub, drawing on both Sunni and Shia sources, presented *ibtila* (divine trial) as the Quranic framework for suffering that is not punishment, and developed the Shia theology of Karbala<sup>8</sup> as a permanent template for suffering, solidarity, and hope grounded in a specific historical event. What the session illustrates is not simply that revelation is invoked, but that revelation integrates: suffering, martyrdom, memory, intercession, and eschatological hope are held together within a coherent revealed framework rather than addressed by general moral reasoning.

In the 2014 session on conversion, Dr. Timothy Gianotti drew on the Quran, Rumi<sup>9</sup>, and al-Ghazali<sup>10</sup> to reframe conversion as a turning of the heart toward God, a transformation of orientation rather than a change of community membership. Rumi's invitation ("Come, come, whoever you are") is presented as a revealed opening that encompasses rather than excludes.

Redemptive love, the third theme, runs through the Islamic presentations as divine mercy. Dr. Shakeela Hassan opened with the Bismillah ("In the name of God, the most merciful, infinitely compassionate"), recalled her grandmother teaching the Quranic verse that "God is as close to you as your jugular vein," and described finding God while reciting Arabic prayers in the chapel of a Catholic hospital. Imam Frederick Thaufeer al-Deen, for decades a chaplain in federal penitentiaries, named "the epitome of God's favor": to free the captive, to educate and feed the orphan. Sheikh Kifah Mustapha recalled the Prophet's saying of Mount Uhud, "it loves us and we love it," creation as beloved rather than possession.

## V. WHEN THE THREE COME TOGETHER

The most compelling evidence for FAI's triune framework is not found in any single tradition's presentations but in what happens when all three engage the same question in the same room.

The session on war offers the clearest illustration of what FAI's framework predicts. Rabbi Elliot Dorff, Rev. John Pawlikowski, and Dr. Louay Safi each arrived at the same basic just-war framework, though they arrived there through entirely different routes.

Dorff arrived through well-being. The Jewish tradition, he argued, has always understood peace as a positive obligation, not merely as the absence of war. Peace is embedded in every prayer, in the closing word of the Kaddish, in the Priestly Blessing (*birkat kohanim*, the ancient blessing from Numbers 6 recited at the close of Jewish liturgical services). The "purity of arms" doctrine (the obligation to protect non-combatant life even at cost to one's own military objectives) is derived from the well-being imperative extended to all people. Lives preserved must exceed lives lost.

Pawlikowski arrived through love. The Catholic just-war tradition originated, he argued, as an accommodation to the demands of political life by a tradition whose founding impulse was pacifist, grounded in Jesus's teaching of love of enemy. The contemporary Catholic push toward nuclear disarmament is the extension of that founding impulse: if love of enemy is the starting point, then weapons whose design makes the non-combatant/combatant distinction impossible are incompatible with it.

Safi arrived through revelation. The Quranic principles of just war (the prohibition on killing non-combatants, the obligation to accept peace when offered, the duty to honor treaties) are derived from specific verses,

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<sup>8</sup>The site in present-day Iraq where Husayn ibn Ali, the Prophet's grandson, was killed in 680 CE; the event is commemorated annually as Ashura and is central to Shia Islamic theology.

<sup>9</sup>Jalal al-Din Rumi, 1207-1273, Persian Sufi poet whose mystical verse is among the most widely read in the world.

<sup>10</sup>Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, 1058-1111, one of the most influential Islamic theologians and philosophers, whose *Deliverance from Error* chronicles his spiritual crisis and recovery.

elaborated in Hadith, and integrated by the jurisprudential tradition. The Medina Covenant<sup>11</sup> and the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah<sup>12</sup> are revealed precedents. What revelation commands, in Safi's account, integrates competing moral demands into a binding framework oriented toward the protection of human life.

That all three routes converged on the same destination is not accidental, nor is it the product of strategic agreement. It is what happens when three traditions, each reasoning from its characteristic emphasis, address the same moral question. The well-being frame, the love frame, and the revelation frame arrive at the same just-war conclusion because they are, in FAI's understanding, three facets of the same Abrahamic inheritance.

The September 2025 climate session followed the same structure. Rabbi Jennie Rosenn opened with a midrash (a form of rabbinic interpretive storytelling drawn from scripture) on the creation of the first human: God shows Adam all the trees of the Garden and says, "if you destroy my world, there will be no one to mend it after you." The organizing frame is well-being for all creation: the trusteeship of the earth as a legal and moral obligation, extended to environmental justice and the protection of the most vulnerable. Rev. Joshtrom Kureethadam, drawing on Pope Francis's *Laudato Si'*<sup>13</sup> and *Laudate Deum*<sup>14</sup>, articulated the Christian response as a prophetic call to bear witness to injustice on behalf of those who suffer most, grounded in God's love for the poor, who bear the greatest cost of a crisis they did not create. Dr. Ibrahim Ozdemir read the Quran with a green lens and found in *al-Mizan* (the divine balance) and *amanah* (the trust of stewardship) the revealed categories through which Islamic tradition understands what the climate crisis requires.

The May 2026 Tri-Faith Dialogue on the afterlife showed the complementarity at its most remarkable, because the topic is one on which every tradition must ultimately speak beyond what it knows. Rabbi Balinsky: Jewish tradition affirms a genuine world to come, *Olam Habah*, echoed in the Amidah blessing of God who revives the dead, while also finding in the sacred study of Torah its own present-tense taste of that same continuity. Dr. Richard Rosengarten: the afterlife is where the restlessness of love finally comes to rest. Imam Hazim Fazlic: the afterlife is structured in stages, grounded in the Quran and elaborated by classical scholars including al-Ghazali and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya<sup>15</sup>, moving from *Barzakh* through resurrection and judgment to *Jahannam* and *Jannah*<sup>16</sup>; and, in his closing movement, the humility that everything revealed about the afterlife is analogy, not description. The hereafter is "beyond human comprehension, beyond time." These three answers illuminate different facets of the same unanswerable question. The Jewish answer affirms a world to come and finds in sacred study a lived, present-tense form of that same continuity. The Christian answer is about the restlessness of love and its ultimate rest. The Islamic answer is about the revealed structure that holds the mystery open.

Beneath these instances lies a consistent mechanism in each tradition. In the Jewish presentations, well-being is expressed by deriving a universal obligation from revealed law and liturgy: a specific commandment

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<sup>11</sup>The agreement established by the Prophet Muhammad with Jewish and polytheist communities in Medina, circa 622 CE, cited as an early precedent for pluralist governance.

<sup>12</sup>A peace agreement between the Prophet Muhammad and the Quraysh tribe of Mecca, 628 CE, regarded as a revealed precedent for peaceful coexistence with former adversaries.

<sup>13</sup>The 2015 papal encyclical on care for the environment by Pope Francis, titled after the opening words of St. Francis of Assisi's *Canticle of the Sun*.

<sup>14</sup>A 2023 apostolic exhortation by Pope Francis addressing the climate emergency, building on *Laudato Si'*.

<sup>15</sup>1292-1350, major scholar of Islamic theology and jurisprudence in the tradition of Ibn Taymiyya.

<sup>16</sup>*Barzakh*, the intermediate state between death and resurrection; *Jahannam*, the state of purification; and *Jannah*, the state of divine nearness.

is read outward until its scope extends to all people and to creation itself. In the Christian presentations, redemptive love is expressed by reasoning outward from a relational center: love is located first in God, in the self-giving of the Trinity and in God's entering of human suffering, and its ethical and social implications are drawn from there, so that pastoral practice and social teaching alike flow from that source. In the Muslim presentations, revelation is expressed as the operative method itself: Quranic verses provide the structuring spine, Hadith and prophetic precedent supply the cases, and the jurisprudential tradition resolves the competing considerations through which every other concern is weighed.

Different in method, the three traditions nonetheless draw on a single inheritance, and tracing how they do so frames two elements at the heart of FAI's work. The first is the complementary nature of the three Abrahamic traditions. Each may become more meaningful to its own participants when understood as one facet of a complementary whole. A Jewish community that understands its well-being emphasis as the "encompassing unifier" of a larger complementary whole has a richer account of its own commitments than one that understands itself in isolation; its vision of justice and flourishing functions as the broadest frame of the entire Abrahamic inheritance. A Christian community that understands redemptive love as the "interactive enabler" sees its central gift not as one emphasis among three but as the connective force that makes the whole cohere, the love that turns difference into encounter. And an Islamic community that understands revelation as "integrative guidance" recognizes its emphasis as the ordering structure within which the inheritance holds together, the framework through which well-being and love alike are received and reconciled. This dimension of FAI's framework speaks directly to the long-documented decline in active participation across organized religion: the suggestion that each tradition becomes more fully itself within the context of its Abrahamic inheritance, not despite the other two but partly through them.

The second is structural: the way the three faiths illuminate one another. The evidence of two decades of sustained dialogue is that they can engage one another honestly, across the full range of contested questions including the most difficult ones, without either erasing their differences or treating them as irreconcilable. When Rabbi Berman read the American healthcare system as a violation of the Jewish legal duty to rescue, when Rev. Pawlikowski traced just-war theory to the Christian impulse of love of enemy, when Mahmoud Ayoub presented Karbala as a revealed system for integrating suffering into meaning, each was pressing his own tradition's conviction to its root, not softening it for the company. That these arguments illuminate one another without dissolving their differences is not a diplomatic achievement; it is, we would suggest, a structural one. FAI argues that this triune structure can also serve as a peacemaking model for constructive dialogue, religious and secular alike, between adherents of the three traditions. At a moment marked by record levels of antisemitism and Islamophobia, by a war in the Middle East that has strained relations among these very communities, by renewed claims that civic life should rest on a single religious identity, and by each community's own crisis of engagement, the dialogue FAI has cultivated over two decades is not merely a model of interfaith cooperation; it is a resource for one of the defining challenges of the present moment.

## APPENDIX

### *Session Overview: All Events Included in the Analysis*

*Sessions without preserved audio are noted; they are not included in the substantive analysis.*

#### **1. January 16, 2008 — Conflict, Cooperation, and Civil Engagement: Religion and Identity in the U.S.**

*Rev. Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, Ph.D. (Christian/UCC)*

Distinguished 'public theology,' bringing faith into democratic debate as a citizen, from 'political theology,' merging theology with a political agenda, and pointed to the Just Peace model as a constructive alternative.

#### **2. March 27, 2008 — Conflict, Cooperation, and Civil Engagement: Religion and Identity in the U.S.**

*Rabbi Saul Berman (Jewish/Modern Orthodox)*

Argued, by way of Maimonides, that every Torah law aims at a just social order extended to all humanity through the Noahide Laws, with the American healthcare crisis as a test of the duty to rescue.

#### **3. May 6, 2008 — Conflict, Cooperation, and Civil Engagement: Religion and Identity in the U.S.**

*Dr. Maher Hathout (Muslim)*

Offered a typology of interfaith dialogue refined over thirty-five years, grounding genuine engagement in Quranic verses that affirm diversity and condemn neglect of the orphan and the poor.

#### **4. November 11, 2008 — Religious Exclusivity: Is It a Good Thing?**

*Rabbi Michael Balinsky (Jewish); Rev. John Pawlikowski, OSM (Christian/Catholic); Dr. Ghulam Haider Aasi (Muslim)*

The first three-speaker session asked whether each tradition's claim to unique truth is theologically defensible and practically constructive; no audio has been preserved.

#### **5. January 15, 2009 — What Gifts Have We Received / What Have We Learned From Each Other's Religions?**

*Rabbi Victor Mirelman, Ph.D. (Jewish); Sr. Joan McGuire, O.P. (Christian/Catholic); Dr. Shakeela Hassan, M.D. (Muslim)*

Each speaker reflected on the gifts received from the other two traditions, framed during the 2009 Gaza war as personal testimony rather than systematic theology.

#### **6. March 24, 2009 — Why Are Holy Places Important and How Do We Deal with Conflicting Claims?**

*Prof. Rachel Havrelock (Jewish); Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA (Christian/Catholic); Dr. Amir Khayr (Muslim)*

Addressed the theological significance of holy sites and how to navigate conflicting claims over places sacred to more than one tradition; no audio has been preserved.

#### **7. October 29, 2009 — Approaching Difficult Moral and Ethical Issues from a Faith Perspective: Stem Cell Research**

*Prof. Laurie Zoloth, Ph.D. (Jewish); Rev. Michael Place, S.T.D. (Christian/Catholic); Dr. Hossam Fadel, M.D., Ph.D. (Muslim)*

Three scholars brought their traditions' moral resources to embryonic stem-cell research, weighing the value of healing against the status of the embryo.

#### **8. January 21, 2010 — Religious Perspectives on the Use of Wealth**

*Rabbi Byron Sherwin, Ph.D. (Jewish); Prof. Regina Wentzel Wolfe, Ph.D. (Christian/Catholic); Monem Salam (Muslim)*

All three treated wealth as a means rather than an end, locating moral safeguards against its idolatry, against the backdrop of the 2008-09 financial crisis.

### **9. March 11, 2010 — Religious Perspectives on War**

*Rabbi Elliot Dorff, Ph.D. (Jewish/Conservative); Rev. John Pawlikowski, O.S.M., Ph.D. (Christian/Catholic); Dr. Louay M. Safi, Ph.D. (Muslim)*

Three parallel just-war frameworks, each derived from a tradition's primary emphasis, converged on substantive policy in the clearest tri-faith consensus of the corpus.

### **10. October 21, 2010 — Justice, Tradition, and Civic Responsibility: The Role of Faith in the Immigration Debate**

*Rabbi David Saperstein (Jewish/Reform); Elena Segura (Christian/Catholic); Zaher Sahloul, M.D. (Muslim)*

All three framed immigration as a question of the standing of human beings made in God's image, setting a civic paradigm of sovereignty against a religious paradigm of unconditional dignity.

### **11. March 16, 2011 — Faith and Sexuality: Our Religious Traditions Engage Contemporary Issues**

*Rachel Kohl Finegold (Jewish/Orthodox); Patricia Beattie Jung, Ph.D. (Christian/Catholic); Sherman Jackson, Ph.D. (Muslim/neo-traditionalist)*

Three scholars affirmed sexuality as a genuine good while explaining each tradition's structural regulations and the contested authority to revise them.

### **12. November 2, 2011 — Human Suffering: Perspectives from the Jewish, Christian and Muslim Traditions**

*Rabbi Victor Mirelman, Ph.D. (Jewish/Conservative); Rev. Robin Ryan, C.P., Ph.D. (Christian/Catholic); Mahmoud Ayoub, Ph.D. (Muslim)*

Three scholars set out how each tradition makes sense of suffering, from solidarity with the vulnerable, to 'costly love disclosed at Calvary,' to the Quranic framework of divine trial.

### **13. March 20, 2012 — Sleeping with the Other: Interfaith Marriage**

*Rabbi Michael Balinsky (Jewish/Orthodox); Rev. Msgr. Patrick Lagges, J.C.D., Ph.D. (Christian/Catholic); Chap. Tahera Ahmad (Muslim/Sunni)*

Each speaker treated interfaith marriage as an irreversible social reality, with every tradition negotiating the tension between communal continuity and pastoral care.

### **14. October 10, 2012 — Authority and the Parameters of Dissent Within Our Religious Traditions**

*Emily Soloff (Jewish); Jon Nilson, Ph.D. (Christian/Catholic); Marcia Hermansen, Ph.D. (Muslim/Sunni)*

The panel examined who holds authority and where dissent is legitimate, finding deeply different structures across the three traditions but strikingly parallel dynamics of reform and resistance.

### **15. February 11, 2013 — Religious Liberty and the Common Good: Continuities and Discontinuities**

*Dan Elbaum (Jewish); David Fitch, Ph.D. (Christian/Evangelical-Anabaptist); Amir Hussain, Ph.D. (Muslim)*

The panel traced religious liberty from the 1790 Washington-Seixas correspondence to contemporary anti-Sharia legislation, each tradition holding both liberty of conscience and a robust account of community.

### **16. April 3, 2013 — Preparing Our Youth for Faith-Based Leadership in a Religiously Plural Society**

*Jacob Cytryn (Jewish/Conservative); Megan Kennedy-Farrell (Christian/Catholic); Laith Al-Saud (Muslim)*

Three faith leaders in their thirties recounted how they came to leadership and what their formation might teach those who work with young people.

### **17. November 20, 2013 — "Who is Abraham?": Does He Unite or Divide Jews, Christians, and Muslims?**

*Rabbi David Fox Sandmel, Ph.D. (Jewish/Reform); Jay Moses, D.Min. (Christian/Presbyterian); Abbas Barzegar, Ph.D. (Muslim)*

Each speaker presented Abraham as their tradition understands him, finding that the shared 'Abrahamic' label may mask as much as it reveals.

**18. February 12, 2014 — *Care of Creation: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives***

*Jill Zenoff (Jewish); Sr. Mary Southard, C.S.J. (Christian/Catholic); Sh. Kifah Mustapha (Muslim)*

Three speakers brought their traditions' environmental ethics to ecological stewardship, from halakhic agricultural law, to the universe as 'a love story,' to Quranic stewardship as trust.

**19. April 9, 2014 — *Race, Racism and Anti-Racism: Critical Perspectives from our Religious Traditions***

*Rabbi Michael Siegel (Jewish/Conservative); Sr. Anita Baird, D.H.M. (Christian/Catholic); Aminah Beverly McCloud, Ph.D. (Muslim)*

All three weighed how classical religious texts bear on race as a modern construction, addressing both each tradition's complicity and its resources for anti-racism.

**20. November 17, 2014 — *"Come On Over!": Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives on Conversion***

*Malka Zeiger-Simkovich (Jewish); Rev. Michael Shelley, Ph.D. (Christian/Lutheran); Timothy Gianotti, Ph.D. (Muslim)*

Three scholars explored conversion across traditions with very different relationships to it, from Talmudic openness to converts, to conversion as the Holy Spirit's work, to conversion as vocation.

**21. January 21, 2015 — *"Do We Walk the Walk or Just Talk the Talk?": Where Do We Succeed and Fail to Live Up to Our Ideals***

*Jay Tcath (Jewish); Connie Rakitan (Christian/Catholic); Laila Muhammad (Muslim)*

Each speaker measured the gap between their tradition's stated ideals and its lived practice, from a Jewish federation's neutrality on contested issues, to a Catholic 'Welcome Table' ministry, to a Muslim leader's widening sense of God's work.

**22. April 16, 2015 — *"Setting the Captives Free?": Incarceration and Liberty in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam***

*Rabbi Victor Mirelman, Ph.D. (Jewish/Conservative); Rev. David Kelly, C.P.P.S., D.Min. (Christian/Catholic); Imam Frederick Thaufeer al-Deen (Muslim)*

Three practitioners with prison-ministry experience examined how each tradition understands incarceration, punishment, and rehabilitation.

**23. December 7, 2015 — *"Getting to God on Facebook": Social Media and Religious Belief Today***

*Rabbi Shoshanah Conover (Jewish); David Bowles (Christian/Catholic); Omer M. Mozaffar (Muslim)*

Three practitioners weighed how social media shapes community, religious identity, and encounter with the divine, drawing on each tradition's resources.

**24. March 8, 2016 — *"The Rise of the Nones": Spiritual but Not Religious***

*Rabbi Evan Moffic (Jewish); Rev. Edward Foley, O.F.M. Cap., Ph.D. (Christian/Catholic); Hind Makki (Muslim)*

The panel examined the 'spiritual but not religious,' with each tradition questioning the category and reframing disengagement in its own terms.

**25. September 8, 2025 — *Tri-Abrahamic Dialogue on the Climate Crisis***

*Rabbi Jennie Rosenn (Jewish/Reform); Rev. Joshtrom Kureethadam (Christian/Catholic); Dr. Ibrahim Ozdemir (Muslim)*

Part of the Parliament of the World's Religions climate series, the session had each tradition ground ecological responsibility in its own sources, from a midrash on creation, to Laudato Si', to a 'green lens' on the Quran.

**26. May 6, 2026 — *The Afterlife: Perspectives from Judaism, Christianity, and Islam***

*Rabbi Michael Balinsky (Jewish); Dr. Richard Rosengarten (Christian/Catholic); Imam Hazim Fazlic (Muslim)*

Each tradition addressed the afterlife: a present-tense community of sacred study, the final rest of a restless love, and a revealed structure held open in the humility that all such description is analogy.