



## Advent Lutheran Church

1700 Irby Lane  
Murfreesboro, TN 37127

Michael Jannett  
Pastor

Tuesday, July 16, 2019

To Whom it May Concern:

Why is the Murfreesboro Muslim Youth (MMY) work important and what difference does it make in the community? I'll tell you why the MMY are an asset for our community and what difference they make. But first, a quick story...

One day a gentleman by the name of Abdou Kattih gave me a phone call to ask if we could meet. He wished to come over to my house to meet me and my family and share about a vision he had for Murfreesboro. I happily accepted the meeting. Little did I know that that meeting would alter the history of Murfreesboro...

An unassuming, yet confident man came to my door. Most people dream dreams and rarely make them a reality. Not so with Abdou. He came over and he told me a dream of creating an organization that would be founded on 3 pillars: Service. Fellowship. Muslim Identity.

I had already begun building relationships between the congregation I serve (Advent LC) and the Muslim community in Murfreesboro, but this relationship between me and Abdou (and eventually, between the MMY and Murfreesboro) would bear fruit in abundance.

The MMY organization has been, from the very start, a group that desires peace and relationships. How critical. How timely. Amid rising levels of anxiety around Muslim relations, here stood a group ready to give more than it received, showing mercy to their neighbors in need and donating time, dollars, and resources to the poor and sick in our midst.

MMY has been a solid foundation in the Murfreesboro community. They have built relationships between organizations. They helped to start our "3 times per year" Love Your Neighbor potluck, which is open to the whole community to gather around a potluck to build relationships with the Muslim community and whoever else shows up. The Love Your Neighbor potlucks have been attended by MANY of my church members and have been instrumental in breaking down barriers and building bridges.

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

July 16, 2019

I have been blessed to attend the last two Thanksgiving meal projects sponsored by the MMY. In 2018, I believe we assembled over 150 meals to be distributed to known community members in need, as well as to first responders and emergency personnel in our community who had to work on Thanksgiving Day, foregoing whatever family holiday plans they might have been missing.

In October 2017, when a group of white supremacists desired to come to Murfreesboro, MMY leaders were a vital part of the conversation on how we might respond peacefully to this demonstration. In addition to the planning, they took charge to make sure that ALL the emergency personnel that were called into duty to respond to this demonstration were well fed. This act of hospitality was vital in helping to show our law enforcement personnel how much we appreciated their efforts.

Every year, for the past 3 years, our congregation has helped to sponsor the MMY's annual appreciation dinner, which highlights the work of OTHER organizations in Murfreesboro!!! So excellent to see them recognize other groups and to lift others in their efforts to make Murfreesboro a better place to live and work.

I could go on, but I think you see what is going on here. The Murfreesboro Muslim Youth look to promote the well-being of ALL people in Murfreesboro. Yes, they are service-minded. Yes, they have fun. And yes, they are Muslim. How awesome.

I am proud to call the people of MMY my brothers, sisters, and friends.

And to think...it all started with a vision, a phone call, and a wonderful, unassuming person who showed up on my front porch.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rev. Michael Jannett", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Rev. Michael Jannett  
Advent Lutheran Church  
Murfreesboro, TN