

Overview
Delaware Council of Faith-Based Partnerships
December 2015

Created by Executive Order January 2012

Ten members appointed by Governor. Currently, eleven members and liaison from Governor's office.
First meeting June 2012. Officers elected. By-laws created.
Thirty meetings since, at various houses of worship and State agencies.
Council members serve as interfaith volunteers. The Council operates without State funding.

Four Areas of Focus Selected

Emergency Preparedness and Response
Incarceration, Re-Entry and Recidivism
Foster Care and Transitioning for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care
After School and Summer Programs for Youth

Duties and Functions of the Council

Develop partnerships between faith-based groups and executive branch agencies; promote volunteerism and community service; provide forum for exchange of ideas on improving delivery and efficiency of services in community; encourage innovation and share best practices.

Council Accomplishments

Active support of the Lt. Governor Denn's Faith, Family and Foster Care initiative.

Database of Delaware faith-based institutions created and used to survey faith leaders on the State's public health emergency preparedness, in cooperation with Division of Public Health and University of Delaware's Center for Community Research and Service.

Partnered with Delaware State Parks and Mormon Helping Hands for Saturday in the Park: A Day of Service, during State's April 2013 Week of Service.

Provided direction for a \$20,000 Nemours Community Transformation Grant to connect faith communities and public schools in educating children on healthy food choices.

Partnered with Delaware Emergency Management Agency for Emergency Preparedness and Response Workshop for Faith Leaders, June 2014. Over forty attendees. Governor Markell and The Reverend David L. Myers, Senior Advisor to the Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator, addressed participants. Workshop featured in Governor's weekly message.

In 2015, hosted five, one-hour "Lunch and Learn" events, connecting faith leaders with State agencies. Featured topics included Home Ownership Programs and Foreclosure Prevention; I-ADAPT (Individual Assessment, Discharge and Planning Team), an individualized re-entry program for Delaware inmates; Matt Denn, Attorney General of Delaware, discussing incarceration, re-entry and recidivism; and Emergency Preparedness and Response for Faith Communities.

Faiths Represented (as of December 2015): African Methodist Episcopalian, Baptist, Episcopalian, Hinduism, Jewish, Latter-day Saints (Mormon), Methodist, Muslim, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic.

Current Council Members

The Reverend Dr. Douglas D. Gerdts, Council Chair
First & Central Presbyterian Church, Wilmington

Rabbi Michael Scott Beals, Council Vice-Chair
Congregation Beth Shalom, Wilmington

Flora McConkie, Council Secretary
Public Affairs Specialist (Philadelphia Region), The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Wilmington

Raina Harper Allen
Formerly Director of Community Engagement, Office of Lt. Governor, Wilmington

Sister Jeanne Frances Cashman
Founder, Sojourners' Place/Ursuline Community, Bear

Reverend Kenneth L. Foster
Grace Church (PCA), Dover

Pramod "Paul" Mathur
Board of Trustees, Hindu Temple of Delaware, Hockessin

Reverend John G. Moore Sr.
Vice President, Resource Development, United Way of Delaware, Magnolia

Usman Z. Sandhu
President, Islamic Society of Central Delaware, Dover

Rich Walton
Pastor Ewell's-St.Paul's United Methodist Church, Harrington

The Reverend Max Joseph Wolf
All Saints' Episcopal Church & St. George's Chapel, Rehoboth Beach

Council's Liaison with Office of the Governor

Jen Hill, Director of Constituent Relations