

Giving Voice to a Movement



The Interfaith Alliance and
The Interfaith Alliance Foundation
2002 Annual Report

The Interfaith Alliance Mission Statement

The purpose of The Interfaith Alliance is to promote the positive and healing role of religion in public life through encouraging civic participation, facilitating community activism, and challenging religious political extremism.

The Interfaith Alliance Foundation Mission Statement

The mission of The Interfaith Alliance Foundation is to promote the positive and healing role of religion in public life through education, research, and civil discourse.



The Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, President of The Interfaith Alliance and The Interfaith Alliance Foundation

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Two full years into the new millennium, the United States faces stern challenges abroad and at home. The looming threat of terrorism that casts a pall over many Americans' daily lives sent the nation to war in the Middle East. Meanwhile, a lingering economic downturn has taken jobs, shrunk savings and retirement funds, and forced deep Federal budget cuts. The stress and strain are taking a toll.

Although the founders of The Interfaith Alliance and its partner organization The Interfaith Alliance Foundation could hardly have anticipated such circumstances when they gave birth to the organizations less than a decade ago, the new and uncomfortable realities of American life make the organizations' role even more crucial. With a mission spanning the intersection of religion and public policy in American life, and with a membership and constituency broadly representative of the nation's diverse faith community, our organizations are uniquely situated to address the challenges inherent in these difficult times.

That is precisely what the organizations did in 2002 – we took on difficult and sensitive issues, with an approach all our own. We brought the many and varied voices of America's faith community into the policy-making process. At the same time, we worked to strengthen the still-budding interfaith movement and to call on religious leaders and laypeople across the land to ensure that religion is a unifying force in our society, rather than a divisive one.

The organizations' work is done not just in Washington, DC, but throughout the nation by a growing number of state, regional, and local Interfaith Alliances.

The pages that follow describe the work of the national office, focusing on just a few of the innumerable efforts by The Interfaith Alliance leaders and friends to advance our important mission.



“I think the key to our success as an organization is that we take the ‘high road’ in our work with people of faith from mainline churches, mosques, synagogues, and temples.

We promote the healing role of religion, rather than the divisive partisanship that fractures Americans into ‘we-they’ conflicts.

For example, when we see instances of blatant candidate promotion, we contact the clergy quietly and urge them to comply, and we don’t grandstand. As a result, we’ve been instrumental in getting most churches to abide by The Interfaith Alliance’s guidelines for nonpartisan groups. □ “Similarly, we urge candidates to be civil in their campaigning, concentrating on issues rather than smear tactics. And when we encounter a violation of The Interfaith Alliance’s Oath of Civility, we confront it personally and privately. Only once have we had to go public in denouncing campaign tactics. □ “We draw our constituency from Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, and more than 30 other faith groups. Personally, I am a Presbyterian minister, and Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior. Still, I don’t want my country to end up being like other nations that exclude or harass people of different creeds, colors, or political persuasions.

I love my country and my faith. But I remind us all that it is ‘One America: Many Faiths.’”





Interfaith Profile
Rev. Dale Stewart

The Rev. Dale Stewart is a founder, former director and current board member of The Interfaith Alliance of Florida.

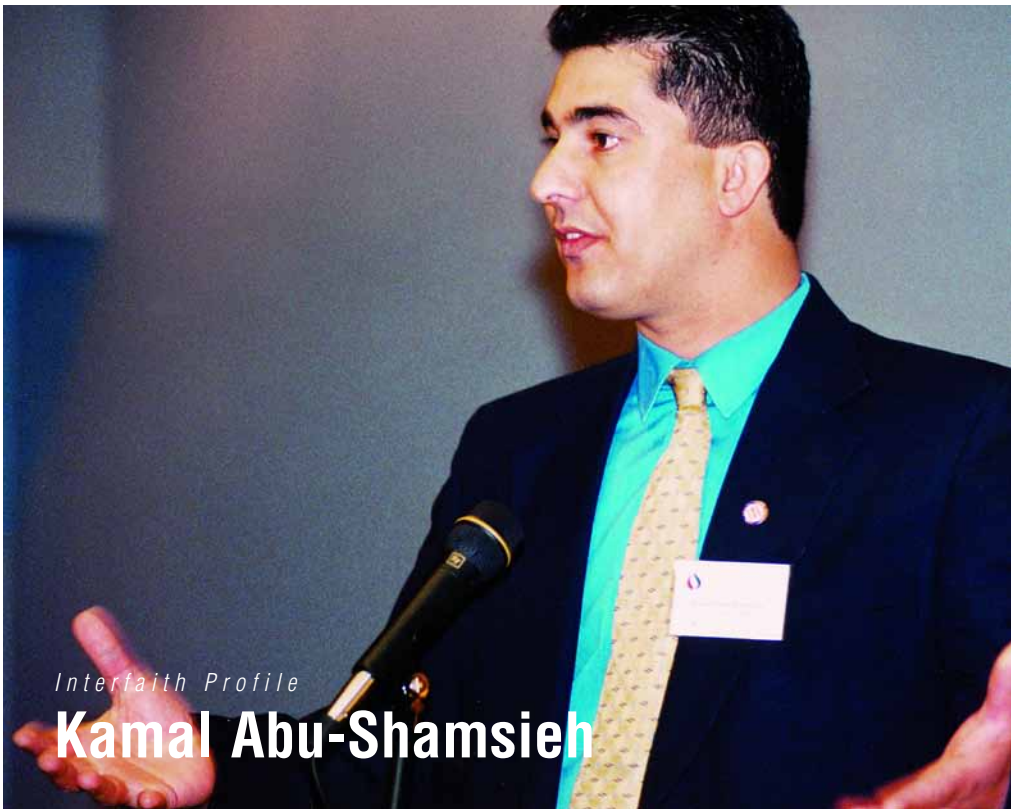
“We began work in Fresno in response to a number of problems in the community,” he says. “We had problems with extreme religious groups proselytizing in the public schools, and the mayor at that time had initiated what he described as ‘interfaith’ prayer breakfasts that included two or three Christian denominations, while excluding Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and others. □

“So we established an Alliance that would meet and build on the diversity of the community.

At first, we met over vegetarian brunches in the park, and that sparked a number of events. One was a Fourth of July celebration that celebrated the diversity of the community, and the sharing of different cultures through the music and food. Another was a Stop the Hate Week, for which we worked very hard to develop alliances with law enforcement and others to sponsor conflict-resolution activities and more. Both of these events continue to thrive annually. And of course, after September 11, The Interfaith Alliance and the Muslim Public Affairs Council ran a number of interfaith meetings on pluralism, diversity, and nonviolence, as well as several teach-ins. □

“Through interfaith work, we’re dealing with all aspects of extremism in our society – violence, efforts to destroy the wall of separation between church and state, and more.

Our challenge, particularly since September 11, is to become bolder in communicating our vision of pluralism and diversity, to continue to provide an example of why we need interfaith dialogue in these troubling times.”



Interfaith Profile

Kamal Abu-Shamsieh



Kamal Abu-Shamsieh, a co-founder and leader of the Fresno-based Interfaith Alliance of Central California which was the recipient of the inaugural Bishop P. Francis Murphy Memorial Local Activism Award in 2001. Originally a resident of Fresno, California, he has since moved to Los Angeles.



“The aftermath of September 11 has had a chilling effect on Sikh Americans. The community has experienced hundreds of hate incidents, doubly painful for us because they involve not just hatred for difference, but because they are also testimony to widespread ignorance about the differences between the Sikh religion and Islam. And it’s very personal for us. I know that hardly a day passes for me without some comment or insult being tossed my way by strangers in the street.

I’ve lived in the United States for most of my life, and it’s very painful to be reminded that for some of my fellow Americans— a small but a vocal group— I’m not welcome in the place I call home.

□ “Of course, the vast majority of Americans are not gripped by such hatred. Still, we have some educating to do. We are training local, state, and federal law enforcement officials to more effectively deal with hate crimes and racial profiling of Sikh Americans. We also trained staff at the Federal Aviation Administration and have provided materials being used by the 55,000 airport screeners of the Transportation Security Administration about issues related to Sikh passengers. Law enforcement and airport profiling have been a real problem since the terror attacks, and we’re trying to address it through education and, when necessary, legal action. □ “We frequently collaborate with The Interfaith Alliance. I think the organization plays a vital role in helping to encourage respect for all faiths, and then helping to remind policymakers that it’s not just the Christian Coalition that speaks for people of faith. I’m proud of our association.”



Interfaith Profile

Preetmohan Singh



Preetmohan Singh is the National Director of the Sikh Mediawatch and Resource Task Force (SMART), the oldest national Sikh American advocacy group. SMART works to protect the rights of Sikhs through advocacy, public education, litigation, and by ensuring accurate media portrayals of the Sikh religion. The organization maintains a close working relationship with The Interfaith Alliance.

“I just don’t think we ought to get into politics in the church.

I think you can talk about it, but to me, it’s the wrong posture for the church to get into a situation where it’s supporting or opposing particular candidates. I realize there are organizations with a political or fundraising stake in this issue, but I take this at face value.

The question is whether it’s appropriate for churches to be endorsing candidates, and I think the answer is ‘no.’

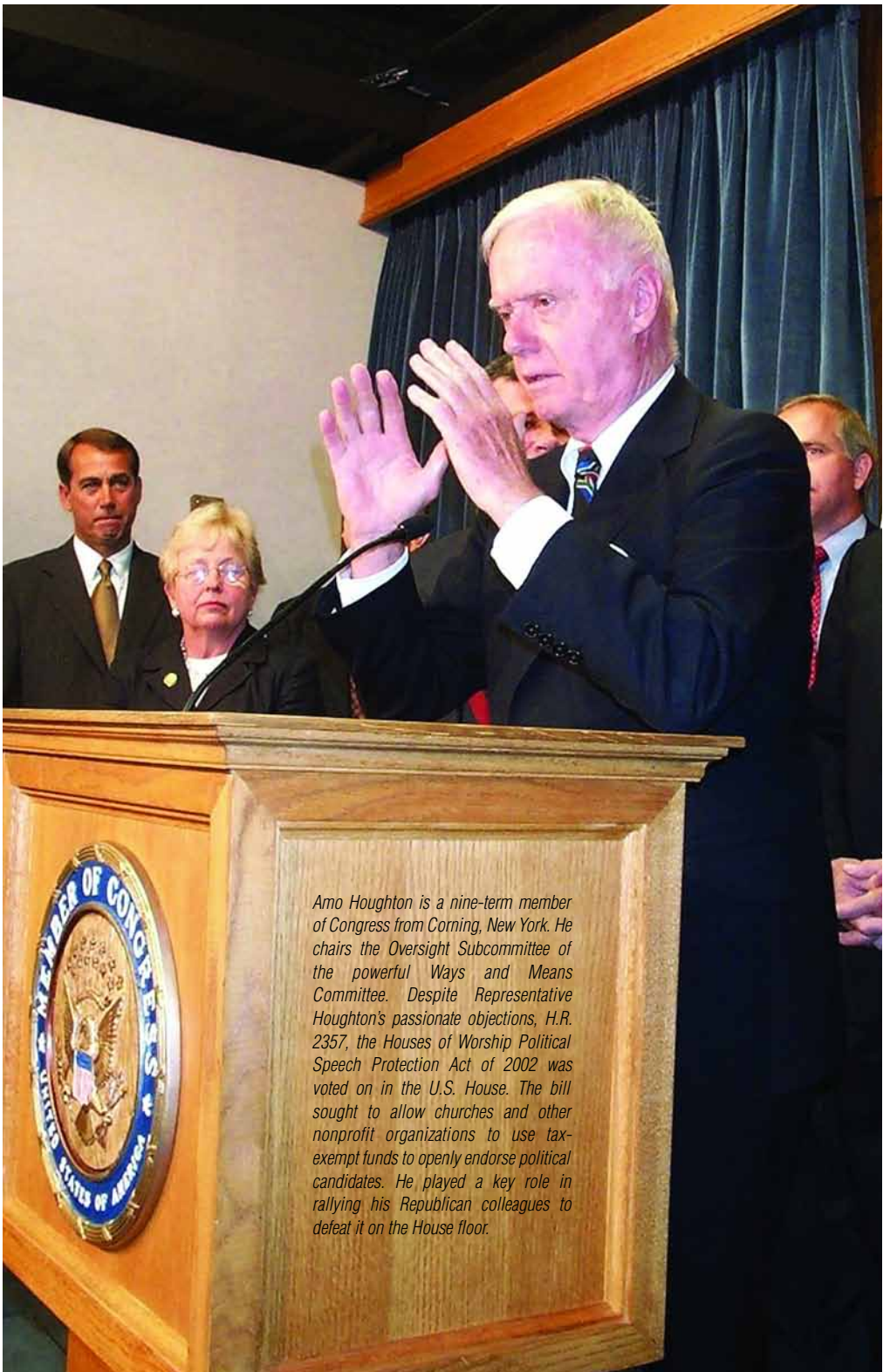
□ “I have great respect for Welton Gaddy. He has his feet on the ground, and is a mainstream person, not a line-in-the-sand sort of advocate. He and I talked a lot about this bill, and he makes a lot of sense. You’ve got to have counter-pressures in the political world, and there are people on the extreme right and left who come at you hard. So it’s wonderful to have somebody like Welton and his organization representing the middle and unafraid to talk. So often here in Congress, we just hear from the extremes.”



Interfaith Profile

Rep. Amo Houghton





Amo Houghton is a nine-term member of Congress from Corning, New York. He chairs the Oversight Subcommittee of the powerful Ways and Means Committee. Despite Representative Houghton's passionate objections, H.R. 2357, the Houses of Worship Political Speech Protection Act of 2002 was voted on in the U.S. House. The bill sought to allow churches and other nonprofit organizations to use tax-exempt funds to openly endorse political candidates. He played a key role in rallying his Republican colleagues to defeat it on the House floor.

Interfaith Profile

Lesley Goranson



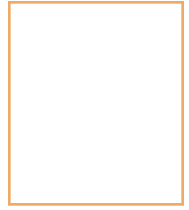
Lesley Goranson is a past president and current board member of The Interfaith Alliance of Idaho. She moved to the state from California in mid-1996, and has been an active volunteer for a number of causes, while working full-time at Boise State University.

“I joined my local Interfaith Alliance mostly because **I was tired of being told by the Jerry Falwells and Pat Robertsons of the world**, and by our local and state versions of them,

that you couldn't be a good person of faith if you didn't believe the way they did.

Idaho's got more than its share of difficulty with the right wing, but the reality is that Boise, where I live and work, is something of an oasis. There are a lot of technology companies, and they've attracted and brought in a lot of diversity, and some more progressive thinking. But there's still an awful lot of prejudice to be addressed – against Hispanics, gays, lesbians and others. We've got quite a number of hate groups in the state. Sometimes you feel like you're on your own, but I've come to understand that you keep pushing, and take one step at a time. So while it can be a struggle, I'm very hopeful, because I've met more and more people willing to speak out. □ “In 2000-2001, we developed a series of community workshops around the state, focused on diversity and community-building. It was very successful, and seeded a number of human rights groups. Now we're in a second phase of that work, where we're going back out to meet with groups, to find out what support they need, to get them up and running, and talking with them about what's happening in terms of hate and bias in their own communities. **Really, my concern is to ensure that everyone has the same rights as everyone else, and the same access. We are all human beings and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.**”





Interfaith Profile

Vaughn Beckman and Jerry Chang

Jerry Chang and Rev. Vaughn Beckman are two of the co-founders of The Interfaith Alliance of Hawaii, the youngest of the 38 Interfaith Alliances across America, as of early 2003. Veteran activists, their new organization is beginning to take on a number of important issues, including a renewed drive for a state campaign finance reform measure, and combating persistent efforts to diminish the civil liberties of gays and lesbians in the state.

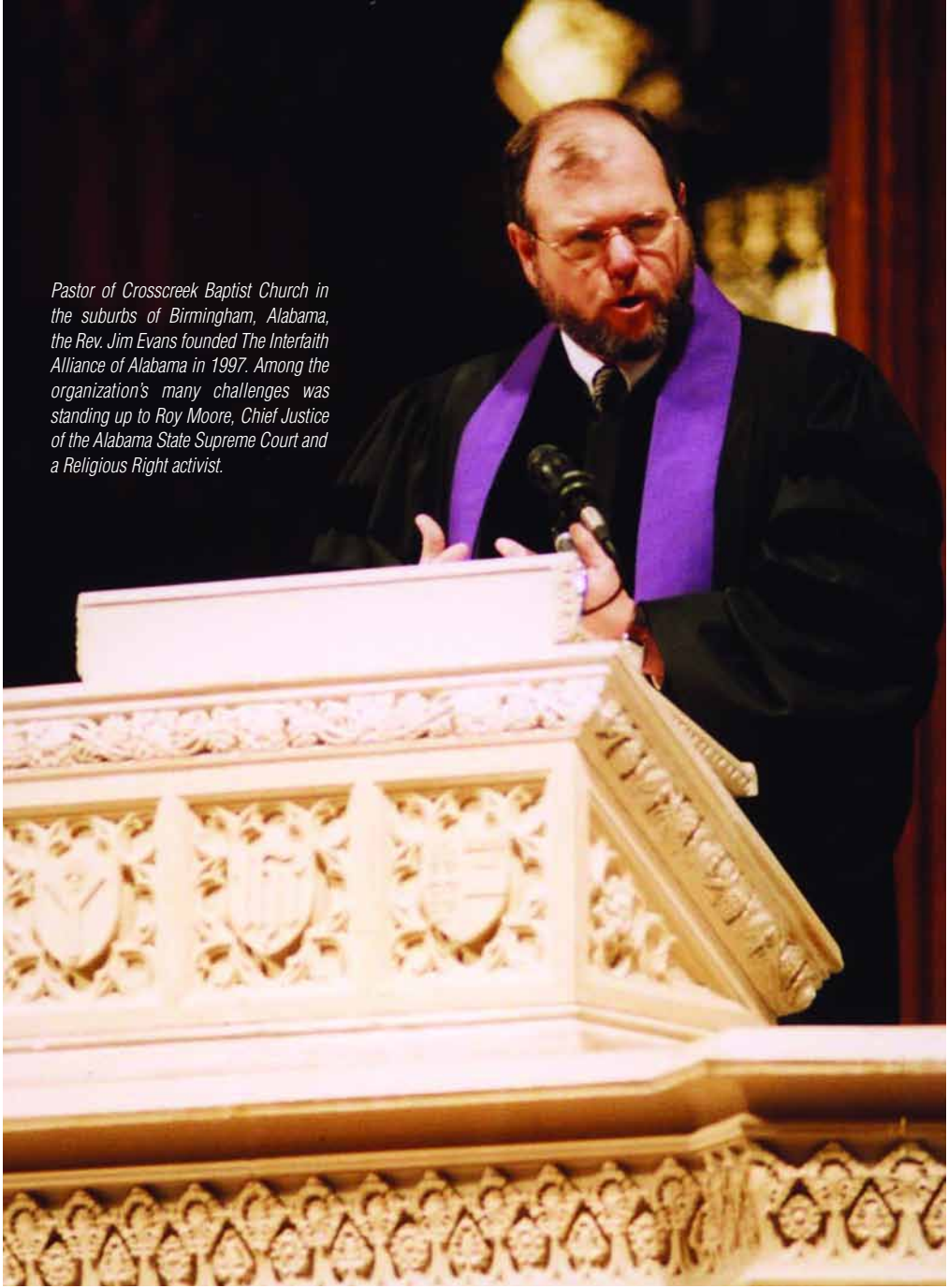


“We’ve not had a voice to counteract the Religious Right in Hawaii, and that is becoming a growing problem.

Three years ago, when it looked as if civil unions would be approved by the state Supreme Court, the Hawaii Christian Coalition and other like-minded groups responded with a ballot initiative. Money and resources poured in from across the nation to help fund these anti-gay organizations. And we have a lot of issues to address – clean elections, anti-gay bigotry, and more. We’ve got a hate crimes law that’s very badly enforced, in my judgment. I think the police force downplays the number of hate crimes, and we’ve got to deal with that. So, there’s no shortage of work to be done. Of course, we’re just getting the Alliance off the ground. Really it began in the fall of 2002, at a conference in Washington. That led to a field trip by The Interfaith Alliance staff to help us get going, and now we’re looking to a bright and very busy future.” – Rev. Beckman

“One reason we’re hopeful about our new organization is that there’s such a strong national office.

We can latch onto some of its successes, and to what it is already doing. We also look at what is unique in Hawaii that we can also do. If people think their religion is the only way, it’s very hard to have a dialogue. We’re hoping to change that view, and get some conversations going. I was born in China, and because my grandfather happened to be a Christian, I became a Christian. But what I’ve learned is that no matter our particular faith, we’ve all got to understand each other better. That’s why I’m so interested in the religious aspect of The Interfaith Alliance, because **I think our ultimate purpose – all of us – is to promote peace, and to see to it that we don’t kill each other in the name of God.**” – Mr. Chang



Pastor of Crosscreek Baptist Church in the suburbs of Birmingham, Alabama, the Rev. Jim Evans founded The Interfaith Alliance of Alabama in 1997. Among the organization's many challenges was standing up to Roy Moore, Chief Justice of the Alabama State Supreme Court and a Religious Right activist.

Interfaith Profile

Rev. Jim Evans

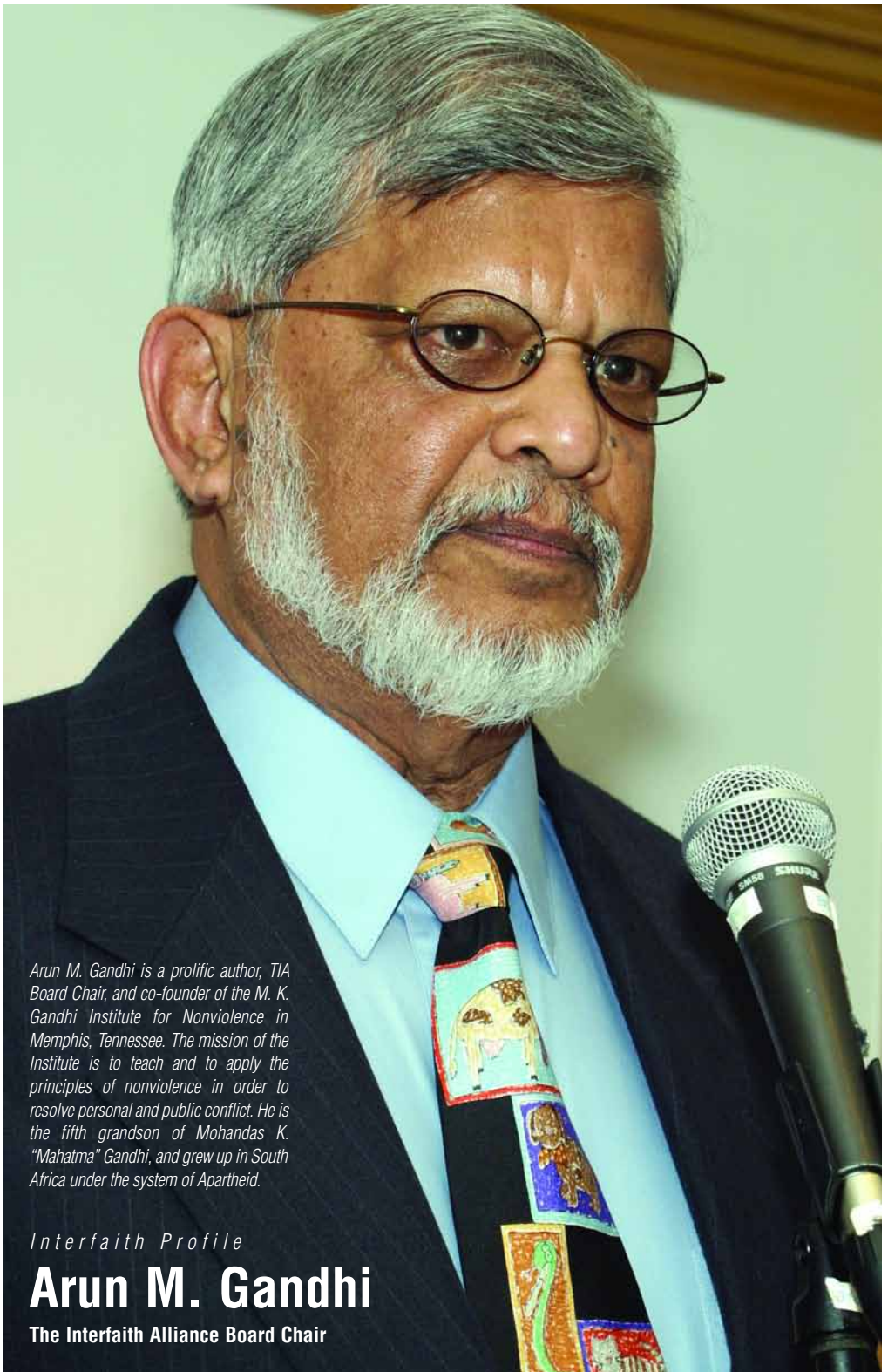




“It’s been a busy time for us. We’ve been working on a lawsuit opposing the Chief Justice’s insistence on displaying the Ten Commandments in the courthouse. And that’s had quite a bit of attention from state and national media. It’s more than just a political or constitutional issue for me; it’s a faith issue when the Scriptures are used inappropriately. □ “We’ve also had to get after the Christian Coalition at election time. In fact, in a religion column that I write for the Birmingham Post-Herald as a local Baptist minister, I have frequently criticized the Coalition’s ‘voter guides,’ accusing them of being deliberately deceptive. The Christian Coalition stages these big rallies where they take credit for electing particular candidates. But when you challenge their voter guides and say that they are campaign propaganda, they claim they are nonprofit and nonpartisan; ‘it’s just voter information.’ So, we were active in being a counterpoint to them.” □

“One of the ongoing challenges for us is to do more than just be reactive to the Christian Coalition and the Religious Right.

We don’t want always to be dancing to the opposition’s tune, so we work also to embrace a positive role of religion in public life.”



Arun M. Gandhi is a prolific author, TIA Board Chair, and co-founder of the M. K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence in Memphis, Tennessee. The mission of the Institute is to teach and to apply the principles of nonviolence in order to resolve personal and public conflict. He is the fifth grandson of Mohandas K. "Mahatma" Gandhi, and grew up in South Africa under the system of Apartheid.

Interfaith Profile

Arun M. Gandhi

The Interfaith Alliance Board Chair



“I think [interfaith work] was the fundamental basis of my grandfather’s philosophy of nonviolence, where he talked about bringing people together of different religions and different faiths and different cultures. He had a vision of a multicultural and multi-religious society. And if we can’t live together peacefully, we are going to create more violence. So interfaith dialogue has been one of the most important aspects of our work.” □ “[I think my grandfather would have told Jerry Falwell and Ralph Reed] that they need to broaden their perspectives. They continue to live in the 16th-17th century, when the world was divided on a religious basis with Muslims living in a certain part of the world and Hindus in another part, and so on. And now globalization has forced the world to come closer together. So the imposition of beliefs that divide society on a religious and ethnic basis are counterproductive. **We have to accept the fact that the world has become pluralistic and multi-religious and multicultural. So we have to make concessions to that and try to understand each other, if we want to live in peace.** But if we don’t want peace and if we want confrontation all the time, then we pursue this method that we are pursuing now, which will ultimately lead to self-destruction.” □ “Another thing that we need to learn more about is tolerance. We keep talking about tolerance and tolerating others and I think that is very wrong. Because tolerance means that we can tolerate something that we don’t necessarily have to respect or like. But because I can’t do anything about certain things, then I tolerate them. And that’s not what we want between people.

We don’t want people to tolerate each other; we want people to respect each other.

And respect can come only if we learn about and are willing to treat each other as human beings... Ultimately, what we need to do is to bring about a change of heart in people. And the change of heart cannot come by law and it cannot come by violence. It has to come through dialogue and through reaching out and understanding each other. If we bash each other on the head, and try to change the hearts of others that way, that’s never going to happen. It’s going to create more and more violence.”

Challenging Intolerance and Bigotry

Broadening the circle of full inclusion and acceptance in American society is central to the mission of The Interfaith Alliance. We take this on with full awareness of the scope of the challenge.

Standing Up to Extremist Rhetoric. In 2002, the ongoing effort again required standing up to protest a sorry variety of extremist statements, ranging from misguided to downright bigoted. Many of these unfortunate public utterances victimized Muslims, and most were from a familiar source: the Religious Right political movement.

In October, for example, the Rev. Jerry Falwell told a “60 Minutes” interviewer that “Muhammed was a terrorist... [and] a violent man, a man of war.” Earlier in the year, Attorney General John Ashcroft, the Bush Administration official most closely aligned with the Religious Right, reportedly told a former Moral Majority employee turned syndicated columnist that Islam is “a religion in which God requires you to send your son to die for him.”

“Since the horrific September 11 attacks, we have witnessed a myriad of misinformed and mean-spirited statements about Islam and the Muslim people, all feeding into a divisive, anti-Islamic sentiment in the national arena. Pat Robertson’s remarks are only the latest. We’ve heard a disparaging characterization of Islam from the Rev. Franklin Graham when he asserted that Muslims do not worship the same God as Christians and Jews – an assertion in direct contradiction to the substance of

today’s Islamic observance. Recently, columnist Cal Thomas reported Attorney General John Ashcroft as classifying Islam as a religion where you send your son to die for you – another invalid description of Islam.”

Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, *The Interfaith Alliance news release: Robertson’s Characterization of Islam: A Disgrace to Religion, Harmful to Healing Nation*, February 22, 2002

Similar remarks from Christian Coalition founder Pat Robertson and the Rev. Franklin Graham, who delivered a prayer at the President’s inauguration, contributed to a growing intolerance of Muslims in the United States in the wake of the September 11 attacks. One result of this wave of bigotry: a sharp increase in hate crimes singling out members of minority religions.



The Interfaith Alliance responded to these leaders’ remarks with clear and forceful denunciations, even calling on President Bush to disassociate himself from the repugnant views of his political allies. “The strident voices of this extremist theology are growing louder and louder in their affirmation of conflict in the Middle East as a necessary tragedy to move the world toward a fulfillment of biblical prophecy, the conversion of Jews, and the reign of Christ,” the Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, President of The Interfaith Alliance, wrote in a letter to President Bush referring to Falwell’s slur. The letter requested that the President both divorce himself from such rhetoric from Religious Right leaders, whom he has referred to as friends and advisors, and that he demonstrate to the American people that the White House is not developing foreign policy on the basis of a fundamentalist Christian theology.

Progress on Hate Crimes. In Congress, the issue of prejudice arose in a different context: the ongoing effort to combat hate crimes. A bill in the

U.S. Senate endorsed by The Interfaith Alliance, the Local Law Enforcement Act (S. 966) would expand existing federal hate crimes laws to cover violence perpetrated because of gender, disability or sexual orientation. Current law already allows federal penalties for hate crimes related to race, ethnicity, religion or national origin.



The Interfaith Alliance and The Interfaith Alliance Foundation played a key role in bringing diverse religious voices to the debate, coordinating and presenting to Congress a letter signed by more than 500 religious leaders, from throughout the 50 states and drawn from diverse faith traditions. The letter urged swift passage of hate crimes legislation.

Although The Interfaith Alliance's work helped make considerable progress, to date there has been no action on this legislation.

“We cannot condemn hate and then refuse to act to stop hate and the violence that hate foments within our society. Those of us who value religious pluralism and practice interfaith cooperation must not waver in sending a strong, unified message condemning prejudice and supporting hate crimes legislation.”

Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, *The Interfaith Alliance news release: The Interfaith Alliance Urges House to Pass Hate Crimes Discharge Petition, September 25, 2002*

Ending Discrimination. Another congressional effort to create legal tools to combat hatred supported by The Interfaith Alliance met a similar fate, as the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) languished. The bill would prohibit employment discrimination against Americans on the basis of sexual orientation – such discrimination is legal in 38 states. A measure emerged from

the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions committee, chaired by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, but never came to a vote in the full Senate.

Bringing Communities to Consensus. The Interfaith Alliance's 2002 work combating hatred and discrimination also included a unique consensus-building effort in Fresno, California. This multi-day event brought community leaders from a variety of realms together for intense conversations aimed at developing a group consensus on how to overcome racial barriers in the community. The session was modeled on the American Assembly format for consensus-building around societal issues.

Congregational Partnerships. Another organizational initiative aimed at building bridges within communities is the innovative “Twelve Springs” Congregational Partnership Project. The name refers to a refuge and sanctuary described similarly in the Torah, Bible, and Quran. The project, for which preliminary on-the-ground organizing began in 2002, seeks to couple congregations of differing faiths in the same community.

The effort to build interfaith partnerships focuses particularly on women and youth, in an effort to gain access to nontraditional power structures within the various faith traditions. The goals of the project include building cross-faith understanding and acceptance as a means for joint civic action in the future.



Encouraging Meaningful Civic Participation

“The Assembly in Fresno stimulated vital, informed discussion among community leaders about race relations and racism. It is my hope that this consensus document, its findings and recommendations, will be used as a tool to spur further education and action on race relation issues not only in the Fresno area, but also in communities throughout the nation.”

Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, The Interfaith Alliance news release: *Foundation Releases Consensus Document on Race Relations and Racism in Fresno, Calif., February 12, 2002*



Increasing meaningful civic participation by the faith community has long been in the central mission of The Interfaith Alliance. In the months leading up to the 2002 midterm elections, The Interfaith Alliance and The Interfaith Alliance Foundation worked to: encourage participation by people of faith; inform their participation with useful and accessible issue information; defeat Religious Right efforts to pollute voters' decision making by recruiting churches to distribute partisan campaign propaganda masquerading as nonpartisan voters' guides; and help the media understand and better report on the proper role of religion in political campaigns.

Shaping Media Coverage of Religion in

Politics. The Interfaith Alliance kicked off its 2002 civic participation work by gathering leading news reporters from major American media outlets for a forum on the “Use and Abuse of Religion in Campaigns.” Speakers included a range of familiar media “opinion leaders,” including David Broder and Jack Germond.

Discussion at the Washington, D.C. event focused on the difficulties the media encounter in covering candidates' political use of their religious views and backgrounds, as well as tackling the difficult question of how to cover individual religious leaders without implying that their actions represent all people of faith, or even of their particular religion or denomination.

Confronting the Efforts of the Religious Right to Manipulate Churches.

In time for the 2002 elections, The Interfaith Alliance Foundation updated its acclaimed *Election Year Guide for Houses of Worship*, and distributed it to 15,000 synagogues, churches, and mosques. The docu-

The Interfaith Voice. Throughout the year, The Interfaith Alliance continued its now customary role of giving voice to the interfaith community on difficult matters of public policy. Over the years, the organization has developed wide respect with the many and varied faith organizations in the United States because we have paid careful and heartfelt attention to the need for interfaith bridge-building. In that effort, The Interfaith Alliance has consistently sought to give voice to minority faiths that have often been under-represented in the public dialogue.

In 2002, The Interfaith Alliance expressed a variety of interfaith concerns on a range of issues, including joint letters calling on President Bush to avoid a unilateral attack on Iraq, urging then-Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott to repudiate race-tinted remarks he made on the occasion of Sen. Strom Thurmond's retirement from the Senate, and uniting the faith



community to rally against legislation which would have politicized houses of worship.

“Questions about where lines should be drawn in the relationship between faith and political campaigns will always exist. Early in this election year, we want to begin a discussion with journalists about the concerns and obstacles that make their coverage of religion on the campaign trail difficult.”

Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, *The Interfaith Alliance news release: The Interfaith Alliance Foundation Promotes Discussion on Faith as “Running Mate”* April 9, 2002

ment provides clear legal guidelines on how such institutions may legally and ethically participate in the political process, particularly during the campaign season. It is particularly relevant for churches that have been targeted by the Christian Coalition and other Religious Right groups seeking distribution for their divisive campaign propaganda the weekend before Election Day.

Guiding Candidates to Avoid Improper Entanglement of Religion and Politics. With the guidance of religious leaders of diverse faith traditions and political consultants from both Republican and Democratic campaigns, The Interfaith Alliance produced an *Election Year Guide for Political Candidates*. The printed piece offered suggestions and guidelines for candidates struggling with how to appropriately represent their respective faith in the political campaign, while avoiding divisive language and risking legal or ethical consequences. It touched on such issues as the distribution of partisan voter guides in houses of worship and appropriate ways to respond to religious-based political attacks. The Interfaith Alliance distributed the guides to more than 900 congressional candidates and made it available on our website. In addition, The Interfaith

Alliance Foundation’s *Use and Abuse of Religion in Campaigns Network*, a national coalition of religious and lay leaders working to monitor the use of faith in political campaigns, chronicled a number of examples of the misuse of faith, publicized them and followed up in the affected communities with website bulletins and targeted media alerts.

In addition, The Interfaith Alliance Foundation conducted aggressive outreach to houses of worship in six states where problems had arisen. In Colorado, Louisiana, Georgia, Missouri, Iowa and Minnesota, The Interfaith Alliance, working with state Alliances, sent more than 35,000 letters warning churches and other houses of worship of the legal and ethical pitfalls of distributing partisan “voter guides” of the variety produced by the Christian Coalition. Indeed, the sad irony of these voter guides is that it exposes churches to scrutiny and possible punishment from the Internal Revenue Service, because churches are not permitted to use tax-exempt dollars to engage in partisan campaigning. The Interfaith Alliance’s drive to warn churches of these dangers received considerable attention in the six states.



Call To A Faithful Decision Weekend. In the closing days of the fall campaign, The Interfaith Alliance Foundation organized religious leaders from more than 750 congregations throughout all 50 states and Puerto Rico, to involve their congregations in our *Call To A Faithful Decision Weekend*, a national series of programs and worship services on the necessity of personal religious

believes finding public expression through the thoughtful and prayerful involvement of people of faith in the election process. One important tool for the weekend was the organizations' comprehensive interfaith Worship Leaders Guide, written to help religious leaders connect the themes of justice, religious commitment, civic involvement, and the moral foundation of educated civic participation.



Just Vote! An overall theme of our organizations' work during the 2002 campaign was justice. For example, at *Just Vote!* teach-ins that were held in Denver and Birmingham, The

Interfaith Alliance Foundation called on people of faith and good will to remain true to the values taught by their respective faith traditions, and to fairly evaluate issues and candidates. The teach-ins brought together religious leaders, academics and others to engage in dialogue about justice issues from a faith-based perspective. Panelists were drawn from the Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Sikh traditions. All panelists spoke from the viewpoint of their various faith traditions, engaging the audience members in a thoughtful, prayerful reflection on the impact their vote would have on the lives of others.

Campaign Finance Reform. Commitment to justice also motivated the organizations' work on campaign finance reform in 2002. The issue provided a classic example of The Interfaith Alliance and The Interfaith Alliance Foundation's approach to expanding participation in an important national debate to include the full scope of the faith community.

Indeed, the Christian Coalition and other Religious Right groups had long since been fully engaged in the debate, and in the absence of The Interfaith

“The Alabama teach-in calls on people of faith to consider the impact their vote will have on the lives of others. Public policies created by our elected officials have profound consequences on all of our lives, and particularly on the lives of marginalized members of our society. Issues of justice deserve greater public discussion, and I can think of no more appropriate location than in Birmingham, where so many civil rights and racial justice battles have been fought.”

Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, The Interfaith Alliance News release: The Interfaith Alliance Foundation to Bring People of Faith Together for Teach-In on Justice in Birmingham, Alabama, July 3, 2002

Alliance and The Interfaith Alliance Foundation's work, their message may well have come to be regarded as the view of the entire faith community. Instead, clarifying the inaccuracy of such a perception, we engaged thousands of Americans in this important issue through a multi-year effort to give voice to a broader range of the faith community reminding elected officials that no single organization and no single faith tradition represents all people of faith and good will.

The cornerstone of the effort was a 2001 public opinion research project. Through a grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts, in cooperation with Colby College, The Interfaith Alliance Foundation contracted with the Gallup Organization to conduct a poll and a series of focus groups, in order to separately gauge the views of self-identified people of faith and of religious leaders on the relationship between campaign finance reform and their base moral values. The findings documented the fact that people of faith view the current campaign system as contrary to many of their core values thus undercutting the Christian



Coalition's repeated assertion that people of faith opposed campaign finance reform in general as well as restrictions on last-minute interest-group advertising in particular.

In 2002, The Interfaith Alliance Foundation built on this solid foundation of research conducted in 2001, publishing *Campaign Finance Reform and Faith, a Call To A Faithful Decision* study paper and a definitive guide to existing and proposed election law for houses of worship entitled, *Campaigns and Congregations*. These documents, distributed widely proved particularly useful during a series of forums in Cincinnati and Oklahoma City in which local Alliances gatherings focused on campaign finance abuses chief among the public policy concerns. Simultaneously, The Interfaith Alliance Foundation national staff worked to organize faith-community involvement on the issue in a number of other cities around the nation, including Miami, New Orleans, Honolulu, San Francisco and Chicago.

In October, The Interfaith Alliance Foundation hosted a “grasstops” conference in Washington D.C., bringing local and national campaign finance reform activists and leaders of the faith community to Washington to strategize and network with one another. Representatives from many faith traditions came together to debate the issue including leaders from the National Council of Churches,



Protestants for the Common Good, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism and even the Christian Coalition. States that were represented at the event included California, Colorado, Florida, Maine, Hawaii, Illinois, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Vermont. The conference was also the occasion for the launch of www.callforreform.org, a special website developed by The Interfaith Alliance Foundation, devoted solely to campaign finance reform.

Defending Religious Liberty

The last two years have witnessed what may be the most profound challenge to the separation of the institutions of religion and government to arise in decades. Since long before a landmark 1971 Supreme Court ruling set down clear standards by which courts would judge laws that proposed the

“Religious charities and ministries play a significant role in delivering social services to the needy. Religious leaders have formed partnerships with local government entities to develop effective ways for communities to address social problems. Yet religious institutions have been able to retain their unique identity while contributing to the betterment of the community. If we end up with “Charitable Choice,” government has ultimately become entangled with religion and compromised the very freedoms and integrity that have allowed religion to flourish in our nation.”

Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, The Interfaith Alliance news release: Lieberman-Santorum Faith-based Initiative Bill Is Compromise,” February 8, 2002

mixing of these institutions, only the most extreme voices have argued that direct federal appropriations to pervasively religious institutions were constitutional. And yet, that is the stated position of the President of the United States and many members of Congress. Indeed, the funneling of tax dollars to religious institutions, once a pipe dream of the Religious Right, has become a reality.

Even more distressing, because the current assault on religious liberty is the product not of considered action by Congress, or even by a reinterpretation of the U.S. Constitution by the Supreme Court, but rather of unilateral executive action by the President. After seeing various legislative components of his “faith-based initiative” stall repeatedly in Congress, due to unresolved issues regarding the constitutionality of the proposed bills at the end of 2002, the President bypassed the legislative process by issuing an executive order titled *Equal Treatment of the Laws for Faith-based and Community Organizations* (E.O. 13279) at the end of 2002 implementing much of his objectionable proposal.

The result is that federal guidelines now permit funding for activities at the core of the institutions’ religious mission, not simply for faith-based feeding programs for the poor, for example, but for construction costs for religious institutions’ buildings.



“Profound constitutional issues are at stake in these two bills. As a religious leader with a national constituency and as an active Baptist pastor from Louisiana, I oppose these legislative proposals. Adoption of this legislation would alter the whole legal landscape of church-state relations in this nation. When I speak about the possible consequences of these bills, my passion is deep, and my concern about their negative impact on religion’s prophetic voice in our nation is real.”

Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, in testimony before Congress on the Houses of Worship Political Speech Protection Act
May 15, 2002

Through press conferences and statements and e-mail issue alerts, The Interfaith Alliance emphasized the reality that providing taxpayer support for pervasively religious institutions inevitably translated to government endorsement of a particular religion. Another problem: because of reluctance to prohibit religious institutions from considering the faith of job applicants, the proposal would permit federal funding for institutions that are allowed to discriminate in hiring on the basis of religion.

The Interfaith Alliance played a key role in working to educate members of Congress and the Administration regarding the implications of this issue, while at the same time warning of the harm that entanglement with the government could do to the religious institutions themselves.

Keeping Partisan Politics Out of the Pulpit.

Another piece of legislation The Interfaith Alliance

successfully confronted in 2002 involved an attempt to grossly distort the Constitution's religious liberty provisions in a different way. The so-called "Houses of Worship Political Speech Protection Act," would have permitted churches to endorse candidates and spend tax-exempt dollars to work directly to elect these candidates to public office. Backed by a host of Religious Right organizations, the legislation would, among other things, have cleared the legal barriers to the Christian Coalition's practice of distributing partisan voter guides in churches.

Introduced in the House of Representatives, the bill would have removed the absolute prohibition on houses of worship engaging in partisan activities. They would have been able to use tax-exempt dollars to openly endorse favored political candidates and spend these dollars to advertise on their behalf.

At first, the bill was considered by many to be just one of many hundreds of bills introduced in Congress that would never reach the floor for debate. With the backing of the Religious Right, however, this astonishing proposal gathered momentum, until more than 120 members of Congress had signed on as cosponsors. It was left to The Interfaith Alliance and other like-minded organizations to alert the faith and civil liberties communities to the threat to religious liberty that the bill posed. As a result of our collective efforts, the bill eventually failed on the floor of the House by a large margin. This legislation resurfaced in early 2003 and has attracted even more support amongst members of Congress. The Interfaith Alliance continues to oppose this dangerous legislation that would turn houses of worship into political rally halls for partisan candidates and campaigns and will persist in efforts to prevent it from becoming law.

Recognizing Faithful Servants

Twice in 2002, The Interfaith Alliance and The Interfaith Alliance Foundation honored the contributions of allies.



In June, at a dinner keynoted by Helen Thomas, doyenne of the White House press corps and a legendary figure in American journalism, The Interfaith Alliance Foundation presented its annual Walter Cronkite Faith & Freedom Award. The recipients, ABC News Anchor Peter Jennings and Oklahoma Observer Editor Forrest J. "Frosty"



Troy were recognized for their fearless and fair coverage of traditionally controversial and divisive issues embodying the shared religious values of civility, tolerance, diversity and cooperation.

In February, The Interfaith Alliance presented its second annual Bishop P. Francis Murphy Memorial Award for Local Activism to The Interfaith Alliance of Greater Cincinnati. The award recognizes outstanding interfaith grassroots work and commemorates the memory of one of the organization's original founders. The Cincinnati Alliance, though relatively young having been founded in 2000, played a critical role in successfully passing a local campaign finance reform measure. ■



A Message from
President Gaddy

For those of us who devote our energies to nurturing interfaith cooperation in the United States, 2002 was a difficult year.

To our dismay, the many successes and unbounded promise of interfaith work in the wake of September 11, 2001 hit a sizable roadblock of challenges coming both from inside and outside the religious community. Encouraging signs of cooperation gave way to indications of deep division over political issues. We even saw certain religious traditions discipline their leaders for participating in community-based interfaith worship services. Of course, we also witnessed continued efforts by certain politicians to exploit faith for partisan gain. □ When the work of The Interfaith Alliance is viewed within this somewhat discouraging context, our accomplishments in 2002 appear all the more significant. In the face of harsh difficulties, we worked hard, and successfully, to keep interfaith dialogues alive – nationally and locally. Indeed, we launched new programs aimed at fostering greater, more action-oriented cooperation. In short,

we stayed the course when it mattered, when some tried to close the course completely.

□ Serious challenges to interfaith cooperation and to healthy interaction between religion and government persist. And in 2003, so far a tumultuous year by any standard, not only are we continuing to stay our important course, we actually can see some advances. We will do no less in the days ahead. **Be assured that you can count on our unrelenting efforts even as we count on the sustained support, extraordinary energy, and undiminished encouragement that we continue to receive from millions of thoughtful Americans across the land who share our commitment to interfaith cooperation and dialogue.**

Faith & Freedom Circle

The Interfaith Alliance and The Interfaith Alliance Foundation would like to thank the following dedicated **individuals** who have contributed \$500 or more in 2002:

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The Interfaith Alliance in the News

Over the course of 2002, The Interfaith Alliance was a frequent source of news and commentary. Among the media outlets in which the organization's spokespeople appeared:

**Associated Press
Birmingham Post-Herald
Daily News (New York)
Denver Post
Fox News Network,
HANNITY & COLMES
Lexington Herald-Leader
Los Angeles Times
Raleigh News and Observer
Religion News Service
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The Miami Herald
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The Board, Staff, and Volunteers of The Interfaith Alliance and The Interfaith Alliance Foundation extend a special message of thanks to the following people for all that they have done to help further the organizations' missions.

Susan V. Berresford
Walter Cronkite
Judith Light & Robert Desiderio
Robert Dilenschneider
Peter Jennings

Sue & Bill Mitchell
Herb Hamsher & Jonathan Stoller
Helen & Forrest J. "Frosty" Troy
James Wieghart

Financial Statement

Statement of Activities

For the year ending December 31, 2002	The Interfaith Alliance	The Interfaith Alliance Foundation
Revenues		
Events	\$-	\$107,950
Foundations	\$-	\$845,000
Leadership Donors	\$22,137	\$63,926
Membership	\$2,202,550	\$-
Other Sources of Income	\$104,070	\$38,809
Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	\$(11,683)	\$(27,295)
Net Assets Released from Restriction		\$70,017
Total Revenues	\$2,317,074	\$1,098,407
Expenses		
Program Services:		
Grassroots Organizing, Religious Outreach and Issue Advocacy	\$1,323,134	\$-
Education, Research and Civil Discourse	\$-	\$925,767
Support Services:		
Management and General Operations	\$78,982	\$108,105
Fundraising	\$1,068,142	\$203,116
Total Expenditures	\$2,470,258	\$1,236,988
Change in Net Assets	\$(153,184)	\$(138,581)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$292,381	\$383,625
Net Assets, End of Year	\$139,197	\$245,044

Statement of Position

December 31 2002	The Interfaith Alliance	The Interfaith Alliance Foundation
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash	\$104,021	\$63,874
Certificates of Deposit	\$100,010	\$249,000
Donations Receivable	\$38,157	\$12,258
Due from The Interfaith Alliance	\$63,612	\$-
Property and Equipment, Net of Accumulated	\$59,358	\$31,487
Security Deposits	\$116	\$-
Total Assets	\$365,274	\$356,619
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$226,077	\$47,963
Due to The Interfaith Alliance	\$-	\$63,612
Total Liabilities	\$226,077	\$111,575
Net Assets, Unrestricted	\$139,197	\$245,044
Total Net Assets	\$139,197	\$245,044
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$365,274	\$356,619

Full audited statements available on request from the national office.

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African Methodist Episcopal Zion	General Baptist	Shinto
Alliance of Baptists	Greek Orthodox	Sikh
American Baptist	Hindu (various schools)	Seventh-day Adventist
American Ethical Union	Humanist	Southern Baptist Convention
Anabaptist	Jain	Taoist
Anglican	Jewish, Conservative	Theosophist
Animist	Jewish, Orthodox	Unitarian Universalist Association
Asatru	Jewish, Reconstructionist	United Church of Christ
Baha'i	Jewish, Reform	United Church of Religious Science
Buddhist, Theravada	Liberal Catholic	United School of Christianity
Buddhist, Nichiren	Lutheran	Wiccan
Buddhist, Pure Land (Amitabha)	Mennonite	Zoroastrian
Buddhist, Zen (Chan)	Metaphysical Church	
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)	Methodist	
Christian Methodist Episcopal	Metropolitan Community Churches	
Christian Union	Moravian	
Church of the Brethren	Muslim	
Church of Christ, Scientist	National Baptist Convention of America	
Church of God	National Baptist Convention, USA	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints	Native American/Inuit (various)	
Church of Scientology	Old Catholic	
Community Churches	Pentecostal	
Congregationalist	Presbyterian	
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship	Progressive National Baptist Convention	
Eastern Orthodox	Reformed Church of America	
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