



# Tufts

# UNIVERSITY CHAPLAINCY

E-NEWS 12.6.23



## A Reflection from your Muslim Chaplain

Dear Tufts community,

May Peace Be Upon You.

As we near the end of a semester which marks the culmination of a period of academic striving, it is natural to want to take stock of ourselves and our lives in a broader sense as well. How did we spend our time, energy and talents over these past months? Some of us may judge ourselves harshly in regards to how successful or productive we have been, whether we focused on the right things, and whether we gave our all in service of our goals. While this process of self-assessment can be useful, it can also at times be unforgiving. Though we may recognize on a cognitive level that we are each a work-in-progress, the pressure to achieve and push ourselves is real, especially in a competitive university environment.

In the Islamic faith, we are encouraged to pursue excellence in all we do, a concept known as *ihsan* in Arabic. It is said that “God loves when one of you is given a task, that he or she does it in the most excellent manner.” This is a call to hold ourselves to the highest standards, to perform even the most mundane acts with a sense of dignity and care. Our tradition, however, also reminds us of the importance of softness in our orientation to ourselves and others. The Prophet Muhammad said: “Verily, God is gentle and He loves gentleness in all matters.” As I reflect on these sayings, I am reminded of

this delicate balance. Striving for one's highest ideals while also remembering to be gentle with ourselves and others -- it is so important yet can sometimes feel elusive.

As we enter into the season of winter, a season of stillness and contemplation, I invite you to dwell both in the world of striving for *ihsan* as well as that of gentle acceptance of oneself. Psychologist Carl Rogers speaks of this blessed union when he says: "The curious paradox is that when I accept myself, just as I am, then I can change." What are some aspects of yourself that you can embrace more fully? In what areas of life can you give yourself grace? How might this spirit of acceptance make way for meaningful change and transformation?

May we each find a way to embrace a spirit of gentle striving, and offer it to ourselves and others.

Najiba Akbar  
Muslim Chaplain

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## Upcoming Signature Programs



Thursday, December 7  
6:00 p.m., Goddard Chapel  
Please RSVP for dinner



Join us for a night of  
storytelling, singing, and  
dancing featuring the  
Medford Community Chorale,  
WuZee, Kiniwe, Voices for Peace  
and Light, Enchanted, and  
a dinner hosted by the  
First Gen Collective!



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**Pax et Lux: A Multifaith Winter Celebration**  
Thursday, December 7, 6:00 p.m.- 7:30 p.m., Goddard Chapel

Pax et Lux is the University Chaplaincy's multifaith winter celebration centered around themes of peace and light. The celebration includes singing, dancing, storytelling, and poetry and aims to highlight individuality and celebrate people's traditions, cultures, and practices. We will host WuZee, the Medford Community Chorale and Youth Choir, Kiniwe Music and Dance Ensemble, and Voices for Peace and Light Choir. This year a reception, co-hosted with the Tufts First Gen Collective and featuring the a cappella group Enchanted, will be open to all after the event! Please RSVP below.

RSVP for Pax et Lux



# Wendell Phillips Speaker nominations are open!



Isabelle Charles, 2023 Wendell Phillips Speaker,  
with Dean Lizarríbar at the 2023 Baccalaureate Ceremony

Nominate an outstanding senior to speak at  
the 2024 Baccalaureate Ceremony!

Nominations close Monday, December 11 at 11:59 p.m. ET  
[chaplaincy.tufts.edu/wendellphillips/](https://chaplaincy.tufts.edu/wendellphillips/)

## **Nominate a Senior for the Wendell Phillips Award**

Submit your names by Monday, December 11

The Wendell Phillips Award was established in 1896 and is given annually to a senior who demonstrates both marked ability as a speaker and a high sense of public responsibility. Selected by the Committee on Student Life, the winner is the one graduating senior invited to offer a speech as part of Commencement, and the speech takes place during the Baccalaureate Ceremony. The speech is intended to deliver a message about civic engagement in our time. Faculty, staff, and students may nominate seniors to apply for this honor, and seniors may self-nominate. All nominations are due by Monday, December 11, at 11:59 p.m. ET. If you know an outstanding member of the Class of 2024, nominate them today!

[Nominate a Senior](#)



# MLK

WIN A  
CASH  
PRIZE!

## STUDENT VOICES AWARD

What does it mean to you to be  
“caught up in an inescapable network  
of mutuality, tied in a single garment  
of destiny”?

OPENS  
24 OCTOBER



CLOSES  
18 JANUARY

Accepting creative submission for the annual Rev. Dr.  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration on Wednesday,  
January 31. Find more at  
[go.tufts.edu/studentvoicesmlk](https://go.tufts.edu/studentvoicesmlk)

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College of Civic Life

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Office of the Vice Provost for  
Institutional Inclusive Excellence

### MLK Student Voices Award

Submissions now open through January 18, 2024

The annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration offers the Tufts community a time to participate in the ongoing university commitment to racial justice by honoring what we learn from the past, listening deeply to current voices of change, imagining together for Tufts, and celebrating a future of Beloved Community. Each year, we invite student voices - through essays, poems, spoken word, songs, art, or performances - to be a part of our community celebration.

Interested undergraduates and graduate students are invited to submit creative responses for this year's Student Voices Award as part of the annual Celebration coordinated by the Africana Center, Tisch College of Civic Life, and the University Chaplaincy. For the 2024 Celebration, we ask submitters to respond to an excerpt from the "Letter from Birmingham Jail," authored by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1963:

*"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial "outside agitator" idea."*

**For the 2024 Award, we are asking submitters to respond to the questions: What does it mean to you to be "caught up in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny"? What does that mean to you in this time of your life? Where does it show up for you at Tufts? What value does it have for our life together?**

Individual and group submissions are welcome. Submissions could uplift a place, relationship, program, or gathering on our campuses that models mutuality and a recognition of the "single garment of destiny." Submissions are due on Thursday, January 18 at 11:59 p.m. ET.

There will be a cash prize for each winner, and one of the winners will be invited to present at the Celebration on Wednesday, January 31, 2024. [Find more information on the University Chaplaincy website.](#)

[Find out more about the Student Voices Award](#)

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## Religious and Philosophical Programs

**Our gatherings are open to all members of the Tufts community! Please find more information and more regular weekly programming and events [here on our website](#). If you have any questions, or would like to connect about convening a new gathering, please [reach out to the University Chaplaincy](#).**



### **Winter Wonderland at the Africana Center**

Wednesday, December 6 - Monday, December 11, Goddard Chapel

Join the Africana Center for a week of wonder and joy during this holiday season! We're so excited to invite you to our fun-filled events! First, stop by the Africana Center Lounge on Wednesday, December 6, 2023 between 5:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to decorate our Africana Christmas Tree! We've got the goods, so we're counting on you to bring the vibes and creativity. On Thursday, December 7, 2023 between 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., we'll be serving our local community at the Harvard Square Homeless Shelter. We'll be meeting at the Africana Center by 6:00 p.m. to travel together and bring some cheer to the shelter. Sign up using the link in our bio to participate!


Friday, December 8, 2023 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. brings a Kwanzaa Celebration and joint Town Hall with PAA. Join us in the Africana Center Lounge as we celebrate Kwanzaa traditions, learn about the work PAA is doing, and sprinkle seeds of change! Last, but certainly not least, Monday, December 11, 2023 brings the event with foods and activities that we all know and love: Massages, Chicken & Waffles, a hot chocolate bar, and cookie decorating! There's no better way to treat yourself in preparation for finals!



Join us in the Africana Center from 5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., with massages happening from 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. We hope to see you soon for our Winter Wonderland!

Volunteer at Harvard Square Homeless Shelter with the Africana Center

*Enlightenment*  
*Day*  
Wednesday, 12/6 at  
Interfaith Center  
Food from Momo N Curry will be  
provided

A silhouette of a person sitting under a large tree at night, with a bright star in the sky. The background is a dark blue gradient with a lighter blue, cloud-like shape behind the text.

**Enlightenment Day with the Tufts Buddhist Mindfulness Sangha**

Wednesday, December 6, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., Interfaith Center (58 Winthrop Stre

Join the Tufts Buddhist Mindfulness Sangha (TBMS) to celebrate Enlightenment Day! They will commemorate Buddha's enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree with chanting, Buddhist texts, poems, and other festivities, as well as (free) food from Momo N Curry. Please contact Buddhist Chaplain [Ji Hyang Padma](#) with any questions.



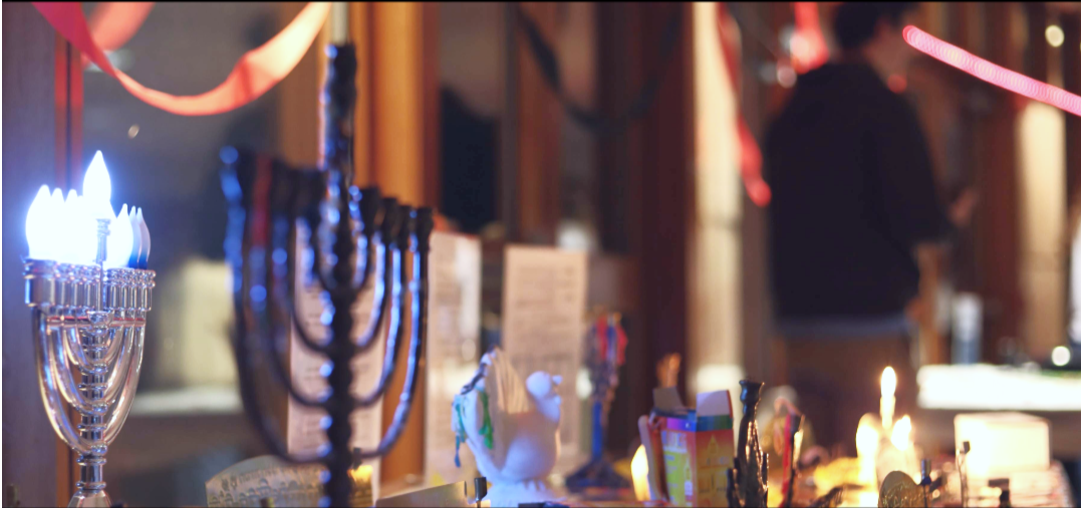
**A Winter Carillon Concert**

Friday, December 8, 5:00 p.m - 5:30 p.m., Goddard Chapel Chapel

All are welcome at Goddard for hot drinks and a carillon concert. Students have been invited to arrange and perform a song of their choosing for this event, which will use the carillon, a series of bells in the chapel tower, which are controlled by a set of piano keys within the building. You can contact [Suzanne Carreine](#) or [Emma Browning](#), A25, for more information, or just stop by for the fun!

# Chanukah Shabbat

## Light up your night!



### **Chanukah Shabbat: Light Up Your Night**

Friday, December 8, 5:30 p.m., Granoff Family Hillel Center

Join Tufts Hillel for the second night of Chanukah for its "Chanukah Shabbat: Light Up Your Night" celebration! It will be an evening of light, laughter, food, and friends. There will be a suffganiyot (donut) bar at 5:30 p.m., followed by candle-lighting, singing, and an a capella performance. Shabbat services will start at 6:00 p.m. and dinner will begin at 7:00 p.m. Please join us for any part that you would like! Everyone is welcome! You can find more information on the [Hillel website](#).





# Christmas Comes Early: A Party!

Friday, Dec 8 at 6-8pm  
Interfaith Center (58 Winthrop St)

All are welcome for this ecumenical  
gathering to celebrate the Advent and  
Christmas seasons.

## FEATURING

Dave's Fresh Pasta  
Cookie decorating  
Ginger bread houses  
Festive Christmas music

Hosted by: Protestant Students Association ♦ Orthodox  
Christian Fellowship ♦ C. Stacey Woods Programming  
Board ♦ Catholic Community at Tufts ♦ Daily Flame ♦  
Fletcher Christian Fellowship.

### **Christmas Comes Early: A Party!**

Friday, December 8, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Interfaith Center (58 Winthrop Street)

Join us for our ecumenical Christmas celebration. Invite friends and roommates as we gather around tasty food with festive music and good cheer. We will also be collecting donations to the Harvard Square Homeless Shelter - please focus on underwear, socks, period products and toiletries for the guests.



# Blessing of the Laptops

Finals can be stressful, and you are not alone!

**Tuesday, December 12**  
**12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.**  
**Tisch Library**

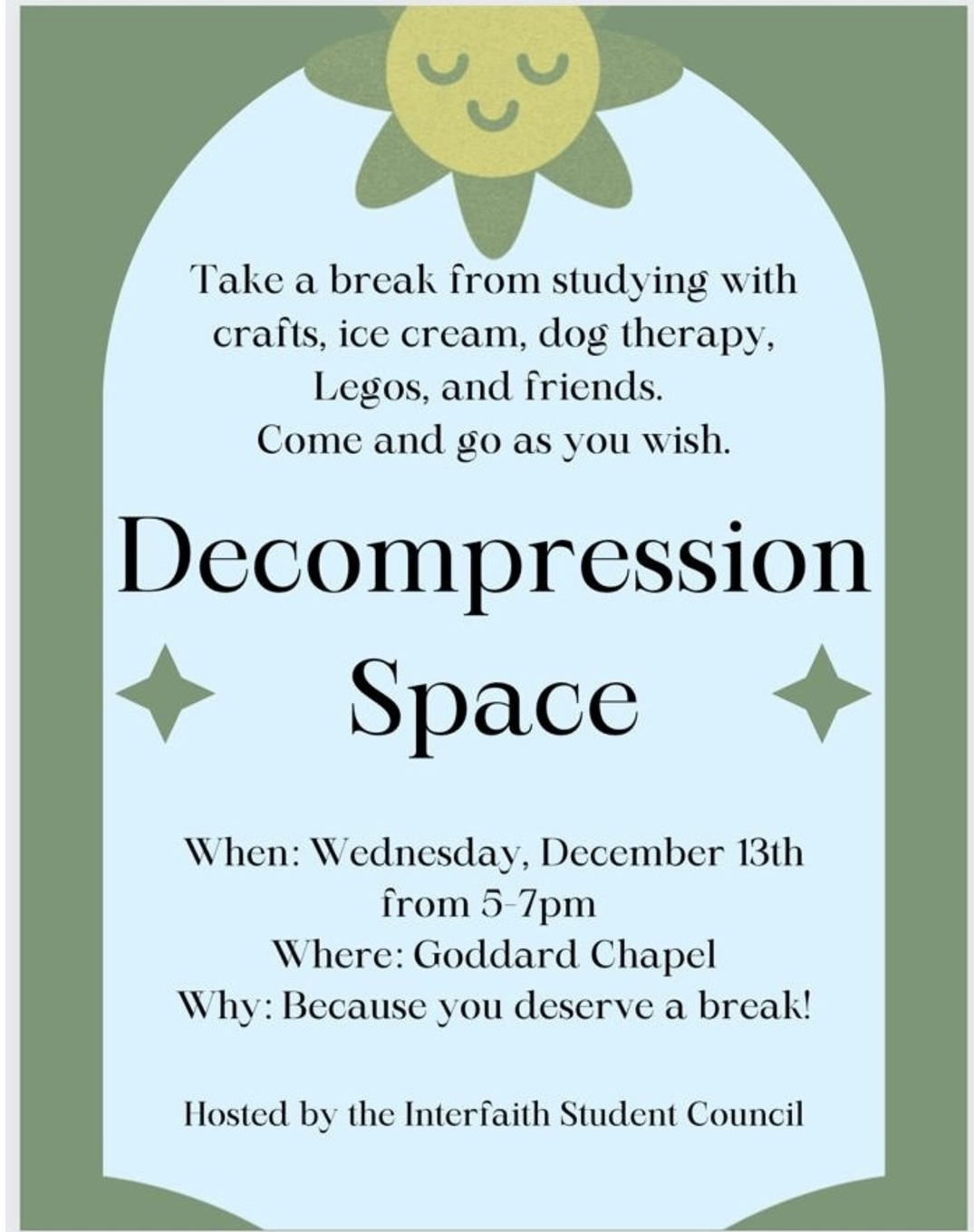
Let's celebrate the tools we use to study, write, create, and communicate. Blessings from our multifaith chaplains will be brief, non-denominational, and accompanied by candy!

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## **Blessing of the Laptops**

Tuesday, December 12, 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m., Tisch Library

Let's celebrate the tools we use to study, write, create, and communicate. Blessings from our multifaith chaplains will be brief, non-denominational, and accompanied by candy! Stop by Tisch Library next Tuesday.



**Decompression Space at Goddard Chapel**

Wednesday, December 13, 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., Goddard Chapel

The Interfaith Student Council will offer walking meditation, ice cream, tasty food, crafts, and even a few doggie visitors that night. No need to RSVP, just come!

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## Partner Programs





**Kiniwe**

Friday, December 8, 8:00 p.m., Distler Performance Hall

Kiniwe and guests will perform music and dance from the Ashanti, Dagomba, and Ewe people of Ghana. Kiniwe, directed by Attah Poku, will be joined by Mohammed Alidu, the Worcester Polytechnic Institute African Drumming Ensemble, Emmanuel Agbeli, and the Agbekor Drumming and Dance Society. The event will be live-streamed. Find more information on the Music Department's website, linked below.

[Music Department Website](#)



### Call for Art in the Graduate Student Lounge

Display your art in the Graduate Student Lounge! The Graduate Student Council is looking to create an art gallery in the Curtis Hall Tufts Graduate Student Lounge on the Somerville/ Medford campus. There are no restrictions for the size or content of the art. We will be accepting submissions on a rolling basis. During the selection process, individuals from the Graduate Student Council will curate the work that will be displayed in the space for this coming Fall semester. Based on interest, we will open up submissions again for the Spring semester. If you have any questions, please reach out to the Graduate Student Council [Vice President](#). Students will be compensated \$20 worth of any ticket they want per submission.

[Submit Art for Graduate Student Lounge](#)

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## Resources, Scholarships, and Opportunities



### illuminating Christmas and Hanukkah from the Inside

December 13, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m., Zoom

The Rev. Tom Reid and Rabbi Michael Shire will discuss Christmas and Hanukkah from their respective religious and spiritual experiences. What are the underlying spiritual assumptions and foundations that are experienced during these times of joy and celebration? What is significant from an insider's point of view and what is problematic or challenging about our celebrations and spiritual work during this period of the year. Find more information by following the link below.



Learn More and Register for Illuminating Christmas and Hanukkah



**Enheduanna: Voicing the Feminine Divine**

**Tuesday, December 12, 2023, 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Swartz Hall on Harvard Campus**

The Center for the Study of World Religions invites you to a special evening celebrating the life and writings of Enheduanna, who is the first named author in human history. Enheduanna, an Akkadian princess and daughter of King Sargon I, was appointed high priestess of the moon god Nanna (Sîn) in the holy city of Ur. Her poems and hymns offer unique, first-hand accounts of her personal experiences of the goddess Inana, and provide insights into issues of gender, sexuality, theology, and goddess-worship in early Mesopotamia. Celine Debose, Assistant Professor in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard will present on “Women in Mesopotamian Temples: Priestess, Slaves, Weavers” and Dr. Sophus Helle, translator, journalist, and cultural historian specializing in the literature of ancient Iraq, will give a talk on “Introducing Enheduanna’s World: Grief and Gender”. Their presentations will be followed by a musical



Register to Attend Enheduanna: Voicing the Divine Feminine

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## Upcoming Religious Celebrations and Observances

These events are drawn from the multifaith calendar maintained by the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life at Harvard Divinity School. To see more upcoming religious holidays and festivals, please follow the link to the [Harvard Divinity School calendar](#).

### Advent

Sun., Dec. 3 - Sun., Dec 24., 2023

Tradition: Christianity-Protestant, Christianity-Roman Catholic

Period of four weeks in which Christians prepare for Christmas and meditate on the end of all time. In Western churches, the first Sunday of Advent marks the beginning of the Christian liturgical year.

### Hanukkah

Thu., Dec. 7 - Fri., Dec. 13., 2023

Tradition: Judaism

The Feast of Lights (Feast of Dedication) is celebrated for eight days to commemorate the rededication of the Temple following the Jews' victory over occupying forces in 165 BCE, which re-established for a time their religious and political freedom.

### Bodhi Day

Fri., Dec. 8., 2023

Tradition: Buddhism

In the northern tradition, this is the anniversary of the Buddha's Enlightenment, ca. 596 BCE. In the southern tradition, the Buddha's Enlightenment is celebrated during Wesak. The dates and names of Buddhist celebrations vary significantly among cultures and communities.

### Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Fri., Dec. 8., 2023

Tradition: Christianity-Roman Catholic

A feast day that celebrates the belief that Mary, mother of Jesus, was born without sin.

### Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Tue., Dec. 12., 2023

Tradition: Christianity-Roman Catholic

### Yule

Thu., Dec. 21., 2023

Tradition: Wicca/Paganism

Winter Solstice, celebrating the longest night and the blessings of darkness as well as the rebirth of the sun god. Begins at sundown.

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## Support the University Chaplaincy

Supporting dynamic programs at Tufts University in religious, spiritual, ethical, and cultural life is easy and vital to our work. To donate, please click on the button below. Thank you for your generosity.

Give Today

# ABOUT US

The University Chaplaincy is a dynamic hub supporting religious, spiritual, ethical, and cultural life for all members of the Tufts community. We provide pastoral care, support religious and philosophical communities, educate about spiritual and ethical issues in society and the world, and promote multifaith engagement.

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