



# Tufts

# UNIVERSITY CHAPLAINCY

E-NEWS 3.6.24



## A Reflection from your Muslim Chaplain

Dear Tufts Community,

As I prepare for the coming season of fasting, prayer and inward reflection marked by Ramadan on the Islamic calendar, I find myself welcoming a season that embodies the idea that sometimes, less is more. What do I mean by that? Much of our lives are spent in accumulation – of degrees, experiences, accomplishments, and well, stuff. We

acquire these things as rites of passage and often wear them as badges of honor. However, when Ramadan comes each year, I am reminded of the hollowness of this focus on accumulation, and of the richness available to us in the life of the soul. When we set out in the season of fasting with intention each day to consume less, to argue less, to waste less, to spend less time on the things that don't matter – we often find that we feel more, we reflect more, we are present – more and more. And with presence comes both joy and pain, as we witness both the beauty of creation all around us as well as bear witness to the suffering.

This Ramadan in particular, when I feel the pangs of hunger arise throughout the day, I know my heart will travel like lightening to the places on this earth where hunger is brought on not by ritual fast, but by the ravages of war and the climate crisis. Palestine, Afghanistan, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Yemen, Pakistan....the list seems to only grow longer each year. How do I make meaning of my fast alongside the endless hunger of others? How might this awareness change me, my priorities, and my actions?

While it's true that Ramadan is known most for the food-related aspects – the abstaining from food from dawn to dusk and the breaking of the fast in the evening – as I look forward to Ramadan this year, I find myself seeking the deeper meanings embedded within it. How will I respond, internally, to this regimen of discipline and self-restraint? Will I allow it to awaken my heart and soul? Will I be able to access the higher levels of fasting, of nearness to God and increased awareness of and compassion for my fellow beings? Will I emerge from the month any different, any more alive, awake, and in tune with myself and my Creator? I hope so, inshallah (God willing).

I invite you to come and reflect on these questions with us and more at this year's annual Interfaith Iftar, which will be held next Tuesday, March 12 at 7:00 p.m. in Breed Memorial Hall. We will share food as well as reflections on fasting and community. All are welcome. You can RSVP below to attend.

In peace,  
Najiba Akbar  
Muslim Chaplain

[RSVP for the Interfaith Iftar March 12](#)

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## Upcoming Signature Programs



# MY JOY IS MY WEAPON

Lyrics, Prayer, and  
Spiritual Repair

with  
**DEE-1**

Wednesday, March 6, 2024 · 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.  
Distler Performance Hall · 20 Talbot Ave.



We look forward to welcoming Tisch Scholar-in-Residence Dee-1 as our Russell Lecture speaker this year, with support from the Tisch College Solomont Speaker Series. A transformative lecture from Dee-1, detailing how his spiritual roots have given him the courage and confidence to become a disruptor inside the fields of entertainment and education, will also include special performances with Voices for Peace and Light, a student-led Q and A, and a fabulous reception!

**Please scan the QR code to register for the event**

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Chaplaincy

**TONIGHT - Russell Lecture on Spiritual Life and Solomont Speaker Series with Dee-1**

Wednesday, March 6, 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., Distler Performance Hall (20 Talbot Ave)

We look forward to welcoming Tisch College for Civic Life Artist and Scholar-in-Residence Dee-1 as our Russell Lecture speaker this year, with support from the Tisch College Solomont Speaker Series. A transformative lecture from Dee-1, detailing how his spiritual roots have given him the courage and confidence to become a disruptor inside the fields of entertainment and education, will also include special performances with Voices for Peace and Light, a student-led Q and A, and a fabulous reception! Register to attend in person for via livestream below.

[Register for the Russell Lecture](#)



# Wendell Phillips Speaker Auditions



Come support the four finalists  
Wednesday, March 13 12pm at Goddard Chapel

## **Wendell Phillips Speaker Auditions**

Wednesday, March 13, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m., Goddard Chapel

Come hear the four finalists for the Wendell Phillips Award at Goddard Chapel! These seniors audition for the Award, and the winner will speak at the Baccalaureate Ceremony for the Class of 2024 during Commencement Weekend. We invite you to hear the speeches, cheer for all four finalists and enjoy refreshments. The winner will be announced on Friday, March 15.

[Find more about the Wendell Phillips 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](#).**

# True Colors

Queerness and Spirituality Group



DINNER & FILM  
NIGHT  
THURSDAY  
MARCH 7  
6:30-8:30 PM  
LGBT CENTER

Join us to watch and talk about *My Name is Pauli Murray*, an inspiring film about a pioneering non-binary activist, writer, priest, and lawyer who shaped landmark litigation—and consciousness—around race and gender equity.

All are welcome.

RSVPs appreciated.

Contact: Chaplain Dan Bell  
[daniel.bell@tufts.edu](mailto:daniel.bell@tufts.edu)

## True Colors: Dinner & Film Night

Thursday, March 7, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., at the LGBT Center

Join True Colors, the University Chaplaincy's and the LGBT Center's Queerness and Spirituality Group, to watch and talk about *My Name is Pauli Murray*, an inspiring film about a pioneering non-binary activist, writer, priest, and lawyer who shaped landmark litigation—and consciousness—around race and gender equity. All are welcome. RSVPs appreciated. Please email Protestant Chaplain [Dan Bell](mailto:Dan Bell) with questions and to RSVP.

*Invites You To A Guest Lecture.:*

# RESTORATIVE ISLAMIC THEOLOGY

**IMAM TAYMULLAH  
ABDUR-RAHMAN**

Black Muslim thought leader and  
decarcerationist. Author of *American Imam:  
From Pop Stardom to Prison Abolition*



**FRIDAY MARCH 8TH 2-3PM  
TUFTS INTERFAITH CENTER  
58 WINTHROP STREET**

## **Restorative Islamic Theology**

Friday, March 8, 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m, Tufts Interfaith Center (58 Winthrop Street)

Join the the Muslim Chaplaincy for a guest lecture by Imam Taymullah Abdur-Rahman on resorative Islamic Theology. At age twelve, Tyrone Suttone was a teen pop star with Perfect Gentlemen, scoring a top-ten hit and appearing on national TV shows. Despite success, he faced challenges upon returning home, becoming a teen father. Converting to Islam as Taymullah Abdur-Rahman, he worked as a chaplain in a maximum-security prison, later expanding his perspective through interreligious dialogue. Now, as an Imam and author, he advocates for prison abolition and racial justice, blending his unique journey with broader societal issues. All are welcome. RSVPs appreciated. Please email Muslim Chaplain [Najiba Akbar](#) with questions and to RSVP.



# Misa Católica en Español

Confesión 4pm en Spanish and English  
Santa Misa 5pm en Goddard Chapel  
Domingo, 11 Febrero, 11 Marzo, 7 Abril



**Tufts**  
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Catholic Chaplaincy

## Misa Católica en Español

Domingo, Marzo 11, 5:00 p.m., en Goddard Chapel

Nuestra misa en español del año será esta semana! ¡Todos son bienvenidos! Si te gustaría ayudar a planear o apoyar en cualquier forma, por favor contacta [Sebastian Fernandez](#).

Our monthly mass in Spanish will be this week! Everyone is welcome! If you would like to help plan or support in any way, please contact [Sebastian Fernandez](#).

AFRICANA SPIRITUALITY DINNER SERIES

# Decolonizing Practices in the Caribbean

with Vialcary Crisóstomo Tejada, PhD.

Assistant Professor of Spanish and Comparative Literature at University of Rochester, NY

**MARCH 11, 2024 · 5:00 - 6:30 P.M.**

**THE AFRICANA CENTER, 8 PROFESSORS ROW**



This dialogue will delve into the concepts of coloniality of being and knowledge and the enduring legacies of colonialism that continue to shape the region. We will explore how coloniality has deeply ingrained itself in the collective psyche of the Afro-Caribbean community, impacting not only how knowledge is produced and disseminated but also the very essence of being. It will also shed light on the practices of resistance and reconstruction that Afro-Caribbean communities are actively engaging in to reclaim their histories, narratives, knowledge systems, spiritual traditions, and ways of being.



Please RSVP  
by scanning the  
QR code



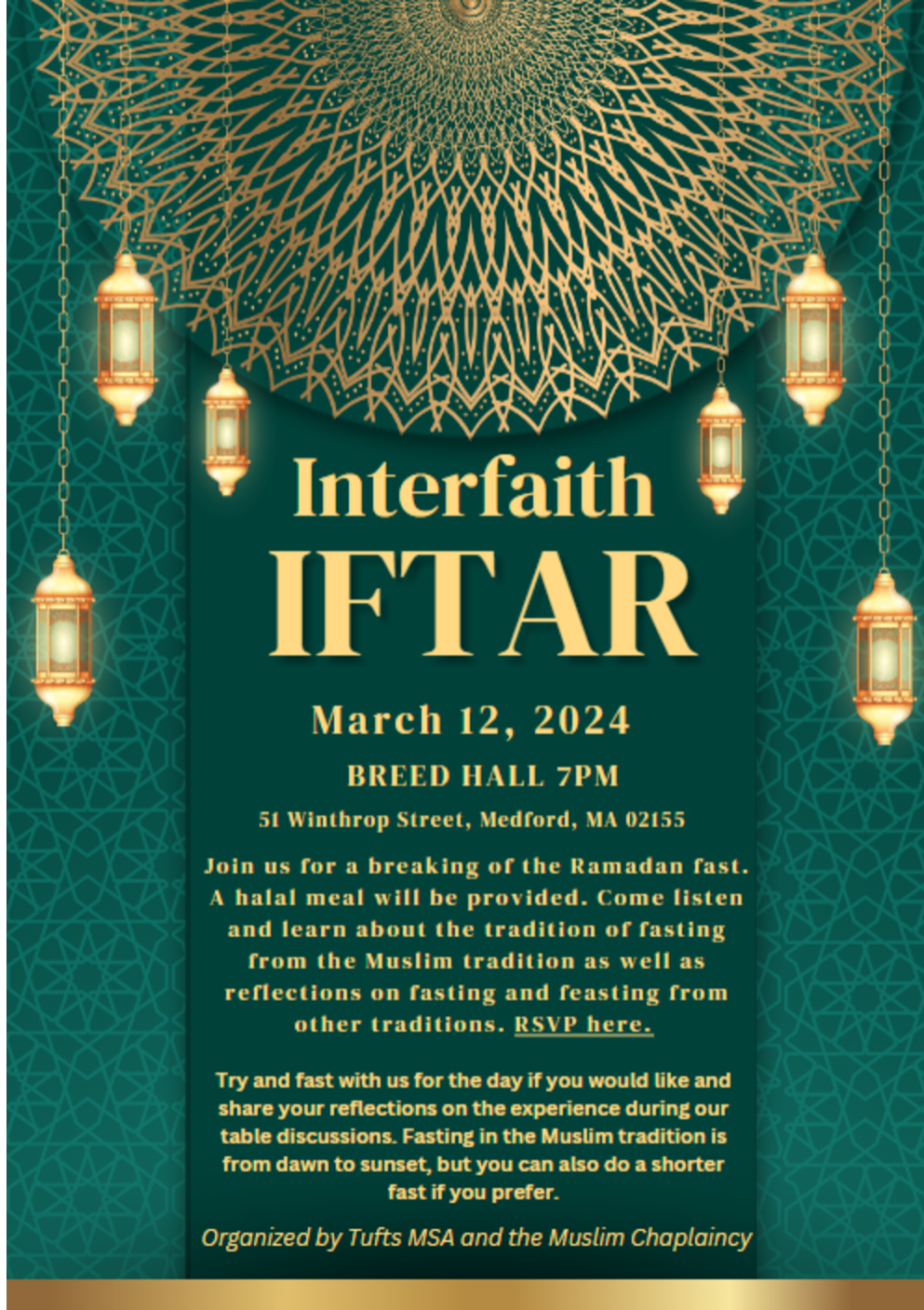
## Decolonizing Practices in the Caribbean

Monday, March 11, 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., at the Africana Center (8 Professors Row)

This dialogue will delve into the concepts of coloniality of being and knowledge and the enduring legacies of colonialism that continue to shape the region. We will explore how coloniality has deeply ingrained itself in the collective psyche of the Afro-Caribbean community, impacting not only how knowledge is produced and disseminated but also the very essence of being. It will also shed light on the practices of resistance and reconstruction that Afro-Caribbean communities are actively engaging in to reclaim their histories, narratives, knowledge systems, spiritual traditions, and ways of being. For more information, contact Humanist Chaplain and Africana Spirituality Series coordinator, [Anthony Cruz Pantojas](#).

Register for Decolonizing Practices in the Caribbean





### **Interfaith Iftar**

Tuesday March 12, 7:00 p.m, Breed Hall (51 Winthrop Street)

Join members of the Tufts' Muslim community for a breaking of the Ramadan fast. A halal meal will be provided. Come listen and learn about the tradition of fasting from the Muslim tradition as well as reflections on fasting and feasting from other traditions. [RSVP here](#).

Try and fast with us for the day if you would like and share your reflections on the experience during our table discussions. Fasting in the Muslim tradition is from dawn to sunset, but you can also do a shorter fast if you prefer.

[Interfaith Iftar Sign up](#)







**Are you observing Ramadan this year? Volunteer to be an Iftar Helper!**

The Muslim Chaplaincy needs volunteers to help with our community iftars! We cannot put on these iftars without your support! Please [sign up here](#) for a slot here to setup, serve food, and/or cleanup. You can sign up for all tasks on one day if you would like to help out for the entire event.

[Sign up Here to Volunteer](#)



## 55th Annual Convention of the Northeast Modern Language Association

Friday March 08, 2024 / 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

“ *Resistant Liveness: The Creolizing Sites of Casa Silvana and Corredor Afro* ”



Anthony Cruz Pantojas

**55th Annual Convention of the Northeast Modern Language Association**

Friday, March 8, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., at the Sheraton Hotel Boston

The Tufts University School of Arts and Sciences is hosting the Northeast Modern Language Association's 55th annual national convention. The Northeast Modern Language Association is a non-profit organization of teachers, scholars, and students of literature, language, and culture and the largest regional affiliate of the Modern Language Association (MLA). Humanist Chaplain Anthony Cruz Pantojas will participate in a session featuring the recent work of the Caribbean Philosophical Association and will present a paper entitled "Resistant Liveness: The Creolizing Sites of Casa Silvana and Corredor Afro." For the schedule and more information on the event, click [here](#).

For More Information

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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](#).

### **Nineteen Day Fast**

Thu., Feb. 29 – Tue., Mar. 19, 2024

Tradition: Baha'i

A designated 19-day period of fasting each year immediately before the Bahá'í New Year. The fasting is seen as a period of spiritual preparation and regeneration for the new year ahead.

### **Maha Shivaratri**

Fri., Mar. 8, 2024

Tradition: Hinduism

A feast dedicated to the Hindu deity Shiva. The night before the feast fasting is observed, texts are recited, songs are sung, and stories told in honor of this God whose cosmic dance creates, preserves, destroys, and recreates the world.

### **Ramadan**

Mon., Mar. 11 – Wed., Apr. 10, 2024

Tradition: Islam

The Holy Month of Ramadan is the month of fasting during which Muslims who are physically able do not eat or drink from the first sign of dawn until sunset in honor of the first revelations to the Prophet Muhammad. The evening meal is celebrated with family.

### **Sri Ramakrishna Jayanti**

Mon., Mar. 11, 2024

Tradition: Hinduism

Celebrates the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna, teacher of Swami Vivekananda.

### **Ghambar Hamaspathmaedem**

Sat., Mar. 16 – Wed., Mar. 20, 2024

Tradition: Zoroastrianism

Celebrates the creation of human beings and honors the souls of the deceased.

### **Great Lent**

Mon., Mar. 18 – Sat., May 4, 2024

Tradition: Christianity-Orthodox

In Orthodox churches, the first day of Lent marks the beginning of the Great Fast, the final six weeks of a 10-week period leading up to Holy Week and Easter (Pascha). In the churches that follow the Gregorian calendar, Lent is a six-week observance (40 days excluding Sundays) beginning with Ash Wednesday and culminating in Holy Week. It is a time of repentance and sacrifice in preparation for Easter.

### **Naw Ruz**

Tue., Mar. 19, 2024



Tradition: Baha'i

The seventh greatest festival, "New Day" is the first day of the Zoroastrian/Persian and Baha'i New Year. It falls on the spring equinox and symbolizes the renewal of the world after the winter. For Zoroastrians, Naw Ruz also celebrates the creation of fire that is symbolic of Asha, or righteousness. It is also the day on which Zarathustra received his revelation.

### Ostara

Tue., Mar. 19, 2024

Tradition: Wicca/Paganism

Vernal Equinox, celebrating the equivalence of light and dark and the arrival of Spring.

### Naw Ruz

Thu., Mar. 21, 2024

Tradition: Zoroastrianism

The seventh greatest festival, "New Day" is the first day of the Zoroastrian/Persian and Baha'i New Year. It falls on the spring equinox and symbolizes the renewal of the world after the winter. For Zoroastrians, Naw Ruz also celebrates the creation of fire that is symbolic of Asha, or righteousness. It is also the day on which Zarathustra received his revelation.

### Purim (Feast of Lots)

Sat., Mar. 23, 2024

Tradition: Judaism

Celebrates the rescue of the Jews of ancient Persia from a plot to destroy them as related in the Book of Esther, which is read at this time. Purim is a joyous holiday, celebrated by wearing of costumes, giving gifts to friends, giving to the poor, and socializing. Preceded by the Fast of Esther, Purim is a day of feasting. 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.

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## 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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