

## BETHANY PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN in the CONGREGATION

As we reflect on this year's programs offered to all Bethany women,

we are grateful for the opportunity to have shared in the following presentations:

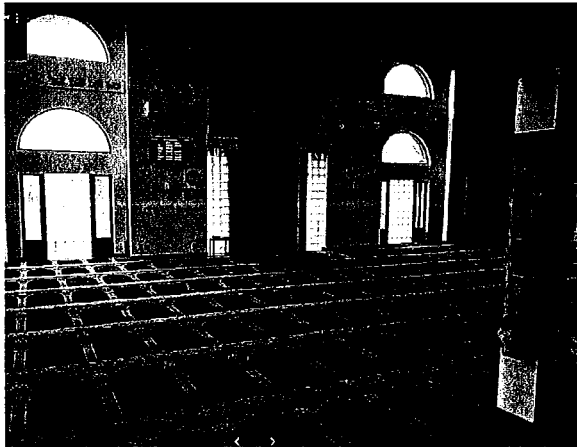


<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
September 14, 2021	“Rehab and Ruth: How Marginalized Women Brought God’s Goodness to God’s People”	Dr. Rebecca Letterman PH. D., Professor of Spiritual Formation at Northeastern Seminary
October 12, 2021	“Women of the Bible”	Reverend Dr. Bob Spratt
November 9, 2021	“History of Sikhism”	Harbhajan Purewal of the Sikh Gurudwara of Rochester
December 14, 2021	Celebration Luncheon	Donated \$245.00 to Heifer International
January 11, 2022	Greece Ecumenical Food Shelf and Clothing Closet	Polly McCubbin
February 8, 2022	P.A.D. Project Initiative	Women assembled 100 kits and were donated to Mary’s Place
March 8, 2022	European Trip	Cherie Livoti
April 23, 2022	Women’s Retreat: WonderFull World- Where Women Explore God’s Wonder and Love	Bethany Presbyterian in the Congregation and Spiritual Growth Committee sponsored a Saturday retreat for approximately 40 women. 36 baby blankets were made and donated.
May 10, 2022	Women took a trip to the Islamic Center of Rochester to learn about the Islamic faith.	Dr. Tabassam Javed Ph. D.- President of the Islamic Center of Rochester
June 7, 2022	Family Promise of Greater Rochester	After the presentation, women voted on BPWC Officers and ended the year with a lunch.

Note: The Coordinating Team will be developing the 2022-2023 Program Schedule and Proposed budget on July 12<sup>th</sup>.

## May Visit to Islamic Center of Rochester

Tabassam Javed of the Islamic Center of Rochester took us on a tour of the mosque and school at their facility on Westfall Road in Brighton. We saw how their sanctuary space (prayer hall) is configured very differently than ours, without a raised pulpit or communion table. They have no



pews, since different parts of the service involve standing, kneeling on the floor and bowing (by those who are able). The floor was covered by a plush rug with a thick pad, with a design that indicated a space for each person. Men and women are separated, with women in a balcony area above the main floor. The Iman (minister) stands at the front in a small alcove to lead the prayer service. Friday night prayers are obligatory and include a sermon, while the prayer services offered five times each day do not. Music and singing are not included in their services.

The Center houses an Islamic school, Westfall Academy, on its second floor. The school area was just as any local grade school might look. They follow the NYS curriculum, with two additional periods for religious study. The children were curious about us as visitors, and everyone was very friendly. Many smiles and waves were exchanged with them and the staff.

The Muslim holy period of Ramadan, lasting about a month, had just ended. It is a time of fasting through the day with celebrations after sundown, when Muslims are allowed to eat. During this time the Center offers a free meal to anyone, on a takeout basis due to the pandemic. The program cost \$70,000 to serve 250 people each evening and was fully funded by members of the mosque, with several families or individuals sponsoring each night. When the food ran out, people were given a gift card to get food at a local restaurant. Muslims came from as far away as Brockport for the Ramadan meals. This was just one of many ways that the mosque funds projects and gives money to help people in the community. Their faith requires that they give away 2 ½% of their savings each year to help others. It is one of the Five Pillars of their faith. Since so many members of their mosque donate to the mosque's Barakah charity fund, they donate to numerous community service organizations, as well as to individuals needing assistance, whether Muslim or non-Muslim.