



ISLAMIC CENTER OF  
BRUSHY CREEK

# 2016 ANNUAL UPDATE

## OUR OBJECTIVE:

To please Allah (SWT<sup>1</sup>) by following the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of His Prophet, Muhammad (SAWS<sup>2</sup>).

## OUR VISION:

To become a comprehensive center of learning and spirituality for all age groups and demographics within the Muslim community.

## OUR MISSION:

To serve the Muslim community by providing various services to meet their spiritual and social needs and by promoting the values and teachings of Islam in accordance with the Qur'an and Sunnah of His Prophet, Muhammad (SAWS<sup>2</sup>).

<sup>1</sup>Subhānahu wa ta'alā

"Glory to Him, the Exalted"

<sup>2</sup>Sallā llāhu alay-hi wa-sallam

"May the blessings and the peace of Allah be upon him"

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# FOREWORD

*Assalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakaatuh!*

It is with a great honor that we write the foreword to the ICBC Annual Update—an annual tradition for us. It has been almost ten years since our Center was established, *SubhanAllah*, and it has truly been a blessing to have the opportunity to witness our rapid growth. From the time when we had about fifty congregants for Jumu'ah salah to these days when our Center is overflowing with more than two hundred men, women and children attending Jumu'ah and Taraweeh prayers, we cannot thank Allah (swt) enough for blessing us with a place where we can pray, learn, socialize, and nurture our future generation as good Muslims and citizens. This exponential growth in our community has resulted in increased participation by our members at various ICBC programs and activities; thereby constantly challenging us to improve our facilities to accommodate the growing needs.

Just as the year 2012 was a watershed at ICBC that saw us adopt a Constitution leading to the first-ever elections and a formal three-tier governance model, 2016 was yet another inflexion point for our beloved organization as we not only completed Phase 1 of the ICBC Master Plan, albeit behind schedule, but also made a significant investment towards our spiritual and intellectual growth when a renowned scholar—Sheikh Yassir Fazaga—joined our community as our Imam and Youth Director.

Sheikh Yassir has excited and re-energized not just the ICBC congregation but the entire Austin Muslim community, and especially our youth, as he launched several programs targeting various segments of our community such as the Qur'an Tafseer classes, Islamic Psychology class, Counseling service, etc., as well as actively participating in our children's educational activities and our da'wah and outreach initiatives. This only underscores the need for and an urgency in enhancing our current facilities that will allow us to conduct concurrent programs, for various segments and age groups, while providing a tranquil place for us to pray.

2017 will be a memorable year for all of us at ICBC, *InSha Allah*, as we execute the Phase 2 of the ICBC Master Plan, i. e., start construction of a new masjid this year.

All of this could not have been possible, first and foremost, without the mercy of Allah (swt), and secondly, the trust that you have reposed in us and the support that you have provided us whenever needed. This has enabled us to launch various programs and activities at our Center that are of enormous benefit for our current and future generations.

As we embark on the building of a new Masjid this year, we are confident of your continued dua'a and support; and more importantly, your energetic engagement at ICBC as always. It is our humble request that you continue to provide us with your valuable feedback and suggestions that will help us take ICBC to the next level, *InSha Allah*.

*Jazakum Allahu Khairan*

The Executive Board  
Islamic Center of Brushy Creek

January 2017

## MASJID ACTIVITIES: “a retrospective and in continuum”

Spiritual learning and growth through various activities at our masjid has always been a stated goal and cornerstone. To this effect, we organized and coordinated a variety of programs and activities. This effort, with the grace of Allah (swt), continued in 2016 as well.

The daily reading of Hadith from the book, *Riyad-us-Saleheen* and the Qur'an Tafseer class on Wednesdays conducted by knowledgeable and committed members of our community continued during the first half of 2016. However, with the joining of our new Imam, the educational and learning programs have taken a whole new dimension altogether. Sheikh Yassir took on this challenge of leading the adult educational programs.

The daily after-Isha reading of Hadith from *Riyad-us-Saleheen* has transitioned into the **daily after-Isha Khatera** (short talk) by Sheikh Yassir on the ayahs of the Qur'an recited during salah and how they relate to various contemporary and current events. These short talks, lasting no more than 10 minutes, have come to be of enormous benefit due to their relevance and direct applicability to our daily lives.

A new class, **Islamic Psychology**, was started in 2016. This weekly class, attended by well over 80 men, women and youth, connects the dots between our faith and Psychology, and explores the scholarly work of great Islamic and non-Muslim scholars in the field of Psychology and social interactions.

The weekly **group study of Qur'an Tafseer** by the sisters continued this year with active participation by our community members. This program, held every Tuesday, attempts to enhance our understanding of the Deen.

The weekly **Arabic class for Sisters** held every Wednesday also continued with greater participation in 2016. The inclusion of the “Arabic with Husna” (Bayyinah Institute) curriculum continued this year.

Another program, exclusively for our sisters, led by dedicated members of our community is also held every Wednesday. The aim of this program is the **study of the Holy Qur'an**.

Imam Yassir has added to the weekly roster of programs by offering **Qur'an Tafseer classes** exclusively for our sisters, every Thursday. These classes are offered in Arabic and English, in succession.

Yet another program by Sheikh Yassir introduced for adults was the **Exegesis of the Holy Qur'an** in chronological order. This program was started in the fourth quarter of 2016 and is held every Saturday after Fajr salah.



## MONTHLY GUEST LECTURES

The **Guest Lecture program** held every month continued to benefit us enormously, with topics ranging from the spiritual to the mundane. All of the lectures and workshops involved detailed discussions with our visiting scholars, thereby contributing to enhancement of our knowledge. The guest lectures were well attended by our community members. Following table provides a summary of lectures in 2016.

Speaker	Organization	Topic
Sheikh Jawad Rasul	Masjid At-Taqwa Atlantic City, New Jersey	"The Missing Element: Intelligent Parenting"
Jason Finkelman	Finkelman Law Firm	Immigration seminar
Aijaz Hussain	University Islamic Financial	Home buying and Islamic financing
Dr. Nader Elmarhoumi	Imam and Community leader	" Victory ( Nusrah / Nusrat) Modus Operandi"
Professor Nasser Aziz	Lahore University of Management Sciences	"Building Beautiful Minds"
Aliredha Walji	Sharia Portfolio	Islamic Financing
Alia Salem	CAIR Dallas	"Know your Rights"
Zahra Shakur Jamal	Asian Family Support Services of Austin (AFSSA)	Domestic Violence, Internet Safety and Cyber bullying
Sheikh Amr ElSamny	Mercy for Mankind	Da'wah workshop
Hafidh Usman Qureshi	Attorney, Dallas	Preparing an Islamic Will
Abdus Salam Sikder	Matrix Private Wealth Management	Sharia Compliant Investments

As we plan and organize lectures for 2017, we request everyone to attend and acquire valuable knowledge on a variety of subjects. We will continue to work on improving the quality of the current programs and add new ones in the future, *InSha Allah*.

With our long standing goal of making ICBC the spiritual center of our lives, the joining of Sheikh Yassir in our community has indeed helped us make great strides towards achieving this noble goal. We are truly blessed to have a pool of dedicated and motivated community members whose active, and at times, animated participation in the various lectures and talks have allowed ICBC to advance into a Center of learning.



## JUMU'AH KHUTBAH AT ICBC

During 2016, Jumu'ah Khutbah at ICBC was delivered by the following community members when Sheikh Yassir Fazaga was traveling out of town or delivering Khutbah at other Austin-area masjid.

- Br. Ahmed Mahmood
- Sh. Ahmad Momoh
- Sh. Amr El Samny
- Br. Amjad Mohammad
- Br. Essam Atalla
- Br. Faizullah Bhayat
- Br. Hassan Ali
- Sh. Islam Mossad
- Br. Momin ur Rahman
- Br. Mustafa Erwa
- Br. Shoaib Malik

We were also blessed to have scholars visiting Austin give *Khutbah* at our masjid on a few occasions. We thank all these brothers for their assistance and pray that Allah (swt) reward them abundantly, *Aameen!*

### VISITS BY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Brothers in the Tablighi Jamaat visited ICBC in 2016 from various cities in the U. S. and overseas, *Alhamdu lillah*. Jamaats from Chicago, Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio as well as England visited our masjid last year. May Allah (swt) reward our guests for their efforts, *Aameen!*

## RAMADAN REFLECTIONS

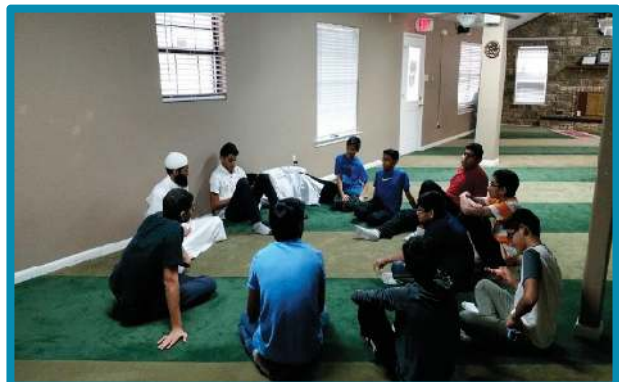
All praise be to Allah (swt) who blessed us with yet another opportunity to worship Him during the blessed month of Ramadan, *Alhamdu lillah!* This was the ninth Ramadan at ICBC and it was yet another memorable one indeed. We were privileged to have the service of Hafiz Faizullah Bhayat from U. K., for the second year in a row.

With the rapid growth of our community, a record number of people attended prayers at our Center, *Masha Allah*. On some Taraweeh nights and Jumu'ah prayers in this holy month, the Men's prayer hall, the Men's deck and the Men's Tent were completely full, which translates to about 260 Men. So many sisters attended ICBC during Ramadan such that the Sisters' prayer hall as well as the Sisters' deck area was fully occupied at times.

**Taraweeh** prayers were led by Hafiz-ul-Qur'an—Hafiz Faizullah Bhayat, assisted by youth huffaz in our community—Hafiz Abdullah Mohseen, and Hafiz Luqman Haroon. It was a unique experience to listen to the beautiful recitation of our community youth. They finished recitation of the Qur'an on the 29th night followed by a heart rendering concluding dua'a by Hafiz Faizullah.

Every day after Fajr salah in Ramadan, Hafiz Faizullah offered a short **khatera** on a variety of topics.

**Qiyaam Al-Layl** prayers were led during the last ten nights by Hafiz Faizullah Bhayat. A record number of men, women, and children attended Qiyaam prayers at our masjid.





Few community members observed **I'tekaf** at ICBC during the last 10 days of Ramadan. May Allah (swt) accept their *Ibaadah, Aameen*.



As in past years, we had **Iftar/dinners** sponsored by community members every Saturday and Sunday, as well as the last two Fridays. And during the last ten nights, **Sahoor** meals were provided by generous members at the end of Qiyaam al-Layl prayers. *Jazakum Allahu Khairan* to all our sponsors!

The visiting **hafiz taught Qur'an** to children on weekdays after Asr salah. Several community members brought their children to learn Qur'an from the Hafiz. In addition, Hafiz Faizullah took time out of his packed schedule to hold several discussions with our youth.

And as in previous years, we had **Youth Iftar** at ICBC—for boys on Wednesdays and for girls on Fridays. The programs had excellent participation from our youth. Also, we conducted a **quiz competition for youth** during Ramadan. Prizes were awarded at the end of the month.

## EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Just as has been the unwavering focus since the inception of the organization, as we enter the 10<sup>th</sup> year, this focus on children's education continues at an even greater magnitude. Each and every program at ICBC goes thru' a series of discussions and introspection, continually soliciting feedback from the programs biggest stakeholders, the parents. An engaged and informed community constantly challenging the Education Committee to enhance the quality of education being offered, this team effort has indeed has started to reflect on the students, even as we watch some of the former students of the program take on varying roles in volunteering to drive tasks and to teach, *Alhumdu lillah*.



A key mission of ICBC is instilling the role of *Deen* in the lives of our children. These future leaders of our Ummah must be first and foremost educated in the Word of Allah (swt)—The Holy Qur'an. With the added supervision of our esteemed scholar and Imam who, since joining ICBC has been actively reviewing the scope of the various programs with our team, this has brought an added perspective to our mission. It is with this aim in mind, that ICBC provides our children an environment in which to nurture and grow their spiritual needs. These programs are targeted to complement the environment that children experience during their weeklong regular school.

Programs such as the **Nazira (Qur'an reading)** class, **Friday evening Halaqa** for young children and **Weekend Islamic School** continued in 2016. And with an increasing demand, we have had to diversify the curriculum in the Friday program to include teaching of Arabic language to our children. These



programs offer the following—teaching students how to read the Holy Qur'an, learning Arabic as a language, enabling students to better understand the basic beliefs and teachings of Islam in order to be practicing and responsible Muslims and citizens, in addition to providing a comprehensive and interactive forum for girls to learn more about their religion and strengthen the foundation of their beliefs.

With these goals in mind, we have attempted to make the curriculum tailored more to the age group and knowledge level of the students, interspersed with various activities. These once-a-month activities, so eagerly looked forward to by our students, range from outings in the park to the International culture day festival that showcases various cultures of our diverse community.



The feedback that we have received from the parents is immeasurable. As in previous years, we had several local high school Muslim students volunteering their time and talent at ICBC. These students earned valuable credits for community service for their volunteer work in addition to learning the importance of inculcating Deen and a spirit of community service in their lives.

Blessed with highly dedicated, well-qualified teachers and volunteers, enrollment today stands at over 150 students in the various programs.

May Allah (swt) reward our teachers and volunteers for their tireless service to Islam, *Aameen!*



## SISTERS' PROGRAMS

To understand the Noble Qur'an with the objective of instilling its teachings in our daily lives, a **Qur'an Tafseer Class** was held every Tuesday last year, exclusively for sisters, by Dr. Atiya Arshad. The program covered many topics from the Qur'an, *Alhamdu lillah*. Events on select topics were also conducted under the umbrella of this program to further enhance our understanding of the Qur'an and Sunnah in certain specific areas as given below.

- 👍 A seminar on Qur'an and Embryology was held on the topic of "SCIENTIFIC MIRACLE OF THE NOBLE QURAN ON STAGES OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT".
- 👍 A three week long INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP FOR AN ACCELERATED LEARNING OF QURAN was held to teach ways in which one can take counsel from the Qur'an and Sunnah in our daily affairs. Interactive brainstorming activities, discussions and a hands-on approach using the Internet were essential strategies employed to find answers and solutions to various life events and matters from authentic teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

- 👍 A special event was organized to raise social awareness on Islamic guidance against "DOMESTIC VIOLENCE".
- 👍 RAMADAN SPECIAL SESSION was held prior to the blessed month.



These weekly sessions, in presentation format, covered a set of *ayaat* from the Noble Qur'an encompassing topics that impact our daily lives. Within the framework of a conventional Tafseer of the Qur'an, the course attempted to impart attendees with an understanding of the topics of Qur'an, as it applies to current times, and was primarily based on the following sources—Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim. In order to better understand the message of the Qur'an concerning the various subjects, the lectures were supplemented with explanations from various academic disciplines, such as Medical sciences, Astronomy, Earth sciences, etc., as relevant and applicable. The program format heavily emphasizes class participation, with intense interactive discussions through analytical questions which not only helps acquire a better understanding of the subject but also maintains the interest level of the attendees.

The **Weekly Sisters Arabic Class** held on Wednesday mornings focused on learning Arabic in a classroom setting. The goal of the program is to help understand and uncover the hidden gems of the Qur'an that are often lost in translation. With the assistance of carefully drafted Slides and infographics, Sr. Shafaq Kazi, a Bayyinah Institute graduate, teaches the Qur'anic Arabic class. The learning is also supplemented by Arabic Practice Questions and Quizzes regularly posted on the Class Facebook Group. These posts are meant to boost the confidence of the sisters participating in the class and encourage interaction. The class is inspired by the "Arabic with Husna" course from Bayyinah TV.

In addition to enhancing understanding of our *deen*, the class also provides a platform for sisters to socialize with one another. Every year, the class hosts a potluck lunch/gift to honor all the Hujjaj sisters from Metro Austin Area.



Yet another program for sisters is the **Sisters' Weekly Halaqa** held every Wednesday by Sr. Nashwa Badawy during the day time. The class is conducted in Arabic with the stated purpose of learning the Qur'an and providing a healthy social life for women by learning about our *deen*. This program is rather unique in that sisters bring their children along with them when they come to the class; so our young ones get an opportunity to interact with one another while learning masjid etiquettes. Since the Halaqa was started, it has continued to attract new attendees,

A typical class consists of reciting and practicing assigned surahs from the prior week's session. Participants then learn general *Tajweed* rules of the Qur'an. Lastly, they study the meanings of the Holy Qur'an from the book—Khawater Al-Sharawy. In addition to studying the Qur'an and various topics of our *deen*, other activities in this program include general education, cooking, arts, social activities, etc.

Regular picnics were also organized under the auspices of this program. The sisters conducted several bake sale events to collect clothes and supplies for our beloved brothers and sisters from Syria who have been forced to flee their homes as refugees and are now living in Austin.

## YOUTH ACTIVITIES

ICBC is blessed with a vibrant youth community, *Alhamdu lillah!* The year 2016 saw a renewed focus on developing activities that enabled the youth in our community to stay connected to our *Deen* as well as served to reinforce the role of masjid in their lives. Several programs were launched by the ICBC Youth Committee to promote this initiative.

In 2016, the ICBC Youth Committee conducted a community wide online survey as well as invited our youth along with their parents to multiple brainstorming sessions to come up with activities for our youth. This list has become our guide for all the youth programs conducted in 2016 and will be a template for activities in the future as well.

The **Girls Saturday Halaqa** is conducted on alternate Saturday afternoons by Sr. Hella Cloyd. Each session concludes with an open discussion on various concerns raised by the girls; usually related to contemporary socio-political issues. The program entailed the following:

- Focus exclusively on middle and high school girls in our community.
- Conduct a comprehensive and interactive program to help girls learn more about their religion and strengthen the foundation of their beliefs.
- Reinforce the Islamic identity of today's Muslim girls through the study of Tafseer of the Qur'an
- Provide a platform for teenagers to bring up topics of their choices to discuss and share their opinions.

**"Crafty Saturdays"** was a new and unique program on arts and crafts that was introduced in 2016! Conducted by Sr. Aicha Bahriz and Sr. Safura Parveen, the class is held bi-weekly on Saturdays and is open to girls and boys aged 6 years and up. In addition to acquiring a valuable skill, the class also provides a great opportunity to enhance our kids' talents and develop mentally, socially, and emotionally. The kids get to spend time with other Muslim children and pray together at the masjid!



The class is immensely popular with the youngsters in our community, so much so that we are planning to add another class level for boys and girls aged 5 years and below in 2017 Q1, *InSha Allah*.



During Ramadan 2016, we held a **Daily Quiz Contest** on various Islamic topics for our children and youth. The contest was hugely popular with several boys and girls participating with great enthusiasm. Prizes were awarded at the end of Ramadan.

Like during prior years, we arranged **Weekly Youth Iftar**—for both boys and girls separately on Fridays and Saturdays respectively, which was very successful. In addition to Iftar dinner, the program consisted of lecture and games as well as an interactive session with the visiting Hafiz from the U. K.

Our youth are our biggest assets and in order to cultivate the mindset of helping others, they engaged in **various volunteer activities** throughout the year.

👍 **Youth Girls volunteers serving food at the Neighborhood Da'wah Outreach Open House**



👍 **Youth Boys volunteers sorting and loading food for the needy families of Austin!**



👍 **Youth got engaged with the visiting and resident scholars to acquire the knowledge of Deen**





As in prior years, our community girls held a very successful and delightful bake sale at ICBC during Ramadan to raise funds for the new masjid construction. This instilled the love of the Masjid in them and the responsibility to help in whatever way possible, to the best of their abilities, *Masha Allah!*

Now, more of the *fun* part!

- Girls Ping Pong Tournament
- Girls Mehndi Night organized before Eid



- Islamic Jeopardy for Girls was arranged and prizes were distributed



- Fathers & Sons enjoyed playing *Night Cricket* on ICBC grounds during Ramadan





**Al-Qur'an:** *Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is [rightly] guided.* (Surah Al-Nahl, 16 Ayat 125)

*Alhamdu lillah*, for the first time since ICBC was founded, we conducted a highly successful community outreach event—“**Meet Your Muslim Neighbor**”, in 2016. The response was overwhelming, with over 75 people of other faiths, attending the three-hour long event. The event was also well represented and fully supported by officers in the Cedar Park Police department. More than 60 packages containing Islamic literatures were gifted to our guests. A plethora of emails received from our guests after the event thanking us and expressing their appreciations served as a great testimony to the success of the event!



In our continued efforts to build closer bonds with our neighbors and the community at large, ICBC engaged and fully participated in a four-week long “**Neighborhood Gathering**” program hosted by residents at a condominium community adjacent to our Center.

During the blessed month of Ramadan, we invited our neighbors and friends of other faiths to join us in breaking fast. During this time, two attendees accepted Islam at our Center, *Alhamdu lillah*.



We have developed excellent relationships and have been offered enormous support from our State and City elected officials—Texas State Representative Tony Dale, Cedar Park City Mayor Matt Powell, Cedar Park Police Chief Sean Mannix, City Council members Cobby Caputo and Kristyne Bollier, etc.

ICBC remained fully engaged with various organizations of other faiths and local educational institutions. For example, we were represented regularly at the LISD Faith Based Leaders event in an initiative of supporting various educational uplifting programs for underprivileged students of the wider community.





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Similarly, ICBC represented our faith at the Georgetown Ministerial Alliance meetings for interfaith learning and understanding as well as at the Southwestern University under the Office of Spiritual & Religious Life to promote awareness and remove common misconceptions about Islam. ICBC is also a partner in an upcoming series of events with several area churches and other centers of worship.

As in prior years, ICBC partnered with AFSSA (Asian Family Support Services of Austin) to observe nationally recognized awareness month against Domestic Violence and Sexual Harassment.



As during previous years, we conducted yet another da'wah workshop led by Imam Amr ElSamny of Mercy for Mankind, *Alhamdu lillah*. Several community members attended and benefited from the workshop, learning the techniques of conducting da'wah in our daily lives. Additionally, we put theory into practice by conducting a “*Street Da’wah*” near the grounds of the Texas State Capitol. Imam Amr participated with us in engaging passers-by in conversation about Allah (swt), Islam, and our beloved Prophet (pbuh). We spent several hours talking to people on the street and we even had one person take the *shahada* during this effort, *Alhamdu lillah!*



We were also honored to host community members of other faiths at our Islamic Center. On various occasions, pastors from local churches, a book club reading about the Prophet (pbuh), and a few youth groups visited our masjid. These visits allowed us to meet and get to know our neighbors and have open discussions with them about various aspects of Islam; including the oneness of Allah (swt), divine guidance, Allah’s messengers and the Angels, and the Afterlife. We discussed practical matters of marriage and family, women in Islam, our rituals and worship, and finally, disapproval of terrorism in our beautiful religion. Tours of our Masjid provided a great opportunity for our guests to witness the rituals of *wudu* and *salah*. These visits also allowed our neighbors to meet and discuss matters of religion with our Imam, Sheikh Yassir Fazaga.

We also continue to help new Muslim reverts with educational and social support, as needed.

As always, ICBC Web Site continues to be a useful gateway for people with inquiries about Islam.

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES: *“it’s not all work”*

The Social Committee had a very active year in 2016. We held **two carnivals**, one in Spring and the other in Fall, to celebrate Eid. Both events were hugely successful, with over 400 community members attending each event. In addition, several City and State elected officials also joined our celebrations.



**Community Potluck Dinner** was held on the first Friday of the month, during May through October. During the winter months, our infrastructure does not allow us to hold community dinners.

We also organized **Iftar and Sahoor** during Ramadan. As during past years, we had **Iftar/dinners** sponsored by community members every Saturday and Sunday, as well as the last two Fridays in the blessed month. And during the last 10 nights, **Sahoor** meals were provided by generous members and local Muslim-owned businesses at the end of Qiyaam al-Layl prayers. *Jazakum Allahu Khairan* to all our sponsors!



## WELCOME & ORIENTATION: *“making everyone feel at home”*

With new families moving to Austin regularly, particularly to neighborhoods near ICBC, the Welcome & Orientation Committee was assigned the task of welcoming newcomers to our community and addressing their immediate needs. As part of its scope of work, the Committee developed a welcome package that provided details about local Austin-area Masajid, ICBC membership benefits, Islamic schools, grocery stores selling halal foods, etc.

In 2016, several refugee Muslim families moved to Austin from other parts of the world. This Committee was tasked with providing the necessary assistance to these brothers and sisters.

New members were added to the ICBC mailing list so they can stay tuned to our events and activities.

## FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT: *“work always under way”*

The Facilities Maintenance Committee was busy throughout the year in making improvements to the current infrastructure to address our immediate needs for space and taking into consideration the financial limitations. Facilities Maintenance team was tasked by the Executive Board to devise and implement a plan to accommodate the increased attendance at our Masjid, especially during Ramadan. For this purpose, the Shura Council approved the proposal for renovation of the Sisters’ restrooms and the kitchen area. Work was completed in about four weeks just before Ramadan, at a cost of approximately \$10K.

A sump pump was installed under the Sisters’ deck to address the issue of water getting under the deck.

To accommodate the growing attendance at our Center, two large sized tents were erected at the parking lot and the sisters’ deck for use by Men and Sisters respectively for prayers. We also rented two generators for lighting the parking lot.

We have contracted a professional cleaning services firm to clean the restrooms throughout the year and do general cleanup after Iftar during Ramadan.

We installed two water fountains, one each outside the Men’s prayer hall and the Sisters’ prayer hall.



With heightened concerns about the safety and security of our members and our premises, we have installed security cameras at the property. Additional cameras are in the process of being installed.

This year, in an effort to inculcate the importance of taking care of our environment, we had installed special recycling stations for plastic water bottles at our Center. We recycled > 7,000 bottles in 2016!

Introduction of new programs for adults and children have placed a serious strain on our infrastructure. The new masjid will be ready in two years, *InSha Allah*. To alleviate the lack of space in the interim, we have converted the Men’s deck into a fully enclosed room; with proper insulation, walls, windows, doors and an air-conditioning unit, which will allow us to use the room year round. This additional space will be utilized by our Sisters during Ramadan and will be used by various programs, especially the Weekend Islamic School and the Friday Halaqa for Children, throughout the year.



## ChAMP: “a support group at ICBC for parents of special needs children”

In 2015, ICBC started ChAMP (Championing and Assisting Muslim People) - a peer-to-peer support group for parents of special needs children. This is the only one of its kind in the Austin area, and we hope to extend our reach even further. In 2016, we continue to pursue the goals of this program: providing a forum for discussion, support, and comfort for our families.

In 2016, we had several activities: The mothers of this group met regularly to discuss strategy and determine how to best address the varied needs of our community. They pinpointed the issues surrounding our children that have long been ignored, and decided the best ways to resolve them. One way they achieved this was by attending district meetings, called SEPAC, which offered novel ways of dealing with the struggles of special-needs parents.

The group has an existing framework of ideas and activities we adhere to, but the arrival of Sheikh Yassir Fazaga has significantly broadened the possibilities for this program. With his help, we plan on increasing community participation through youth and masjid-wide activities. His fresh ideas will go a long way in raising awareness for ChAMP, and we hope to bring some new vigor and involvement to our cause.

Right now, we have very dedicated and hardworking members, but ChAMP families would love to increase their support group. Those interested in joining can attend ChAMP meetings and participate in the activities.



## FINANCIAL UPDATE: “money matters”

We conducted fundraisers in April '16 and Ramadan '16 to execute the ICBC Master Plan and the community support was truly overwhelming! We raised approx. \$547K in pledges and donations in 2016. *Jazakum Allahu Khairan* for your support. May Allah (swt) reward you and your families by multiplying manifold your generous donations and effort, *Allahumma Aameen!*

**SADAQAH AND ZAKAT FUNDS:** We collected approx. \$34K in Zakat funds and approx. \$27K in Sadaqah funds in 2016. The money was disbursed to the needy after a thorough review of the applicants.

**ZAKAT UL FITR:** As in prior years, Zakaat ul Fitr was collected and distributed to the needy before Eid salah.

Several organizations held fundraisers at ICBC in 2016, as listed below:

- Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR)
- Furqan Foundation
- Indian Muslim Relief & Charities
- Islamic Center of Louisiana
- Islamic Relief USA
- Mercy for Mankind

## SHURA COUNCIL ELECTIONS: “community involvement”

Pursuant to the ICBC Constitution, we held elections for six open Shura Council positions in December 2016. This was the **fifth election at ICBC**. As part of the preparation for the elections, we launched an extensive membership drive for several weeks. Approximately 300 community members became eligible to vote based on the criteria set forth in the ICBC Constitution, *Alhamdu lillah*.

We received eight nominations for the six open positions. We take this opportunity to thank the community for participating in the election process by nominating dedicated and committed people to serve on the Shura Council. It is truly a blessing for our Center that we had an excellent group of our community members who were nominated for the open positions.

Below is the list of members who retired from the Shura Council in 2016 and those who were elected to the Shura Council. We thank the retiring members for their tireless service in the ICBC Shura Council. May Allah (swt) reward them for their efforts, *Aameen!*

### **Members whose terms ended in 2016 and did not return to the Shura Council**

- Ahmed Mahmoud
- Chand Basha

### **Members elected to the Shura Council (in December 2016)**

- Asif Zaidi
- Asim Humayun
- Iba Sambe
- Kalim Baig
- Seyed Naina
- Wael Elessawy

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

As per the ICBC Constitution, the Executive Board is the highest authority at ICBC and is responsible for day-to-day operations. The following is the list of office bearers.

<b>Chairman</b>	Shaik Mohseen
<b>Vice-Chairman</b>	Altaf Hussain
<b>Secretary</b>	Iba Sambe
<b>Treasurer</b>	Salah U Din
<b>EB Member</b>	Hisham Hammour

## SHURA COUNCIL

The Shura Council consists of 19 members are elected by the community. The following members are currently serving in the Shura Council.

Altaf Hussain	Arshad Murtaza	Asif Zaidi	Asim Humayun
D'Shah Karanch	Erik Lough	Hisham Hammour	Hassan Al Sukhni
Iba Sambe	Imtiaz Hussain	Kalim Mirza Baig	Masood Khan
Mohamed Khanfar	Mustafa Erwa	Salah U Din	Sayed Naina
Shaik Mohseen	Tom Cloyd	Wael Elessawy	
<b>Imtiaz Hussain is serving as the Shura Council Coordinator</b> since January 2016.			

## ICBC MASTER PLAN: *“working towards a DREAM project”*

As the community grew, so did the various programs and services. Back in 2012, the Shura Council realized the challenge this would pose to the facilities. After several rounds of discussions and under advise from various community members and masjid administrations of other like-organizations in Austin and beyond, the Shura Council embarked on an ambitious project in 2012—the **ICBC Master Plan**—the culmination of which led to formulating a comprehensive future plan for our Center. With an overall plan in place, the Shura Council then debated extensively on splitting the project into manageable phases, keeping in mind the financial constraints and resources. Thus was born the phased approach of execution for the Master Plan and as we deliberated on the components of each phase, the feedback and advise from our biggest stakeholders, our community members was of immeasurable value. This was coupled with data points from the program coordinators of the various programs being offered at ICBC.

This concentrated data-driven and informed decision making process, led to the formation of the various phases of the master plan, that have been shared at several forums with our members.

As we started and finished execution of the Phase 0 and subsequently Phase 1, members could not have helped notice the transformation that this has festooned at our beloved Center. Members can now have easy access to the facility even as the premises offered an area for men, women, youth and children to be able to enhance their spirituality while also festering an atmosphere of community. In addition to the play structure for younger children, we now have a fully paved and marked basketball court, professionally installed, for our youth.

*Alhamdu lillah*, as we approach the most critical phase, the building of a new Masjid, this could not have come at a better time. Despite the several rounds of short





term expansion initiated by the Executive Board, the programs and services currently being offered and those new ones under consideration necessitate a comprehensive facility and this is where the next phase of the Master Plan is extremely critical.

After several discussions with the City, we are in the process of acquiring the necessary building permits even as we work to finalize on contracting with the company that will engage in building construction.

## IMAM HIRE: “investing in the spiritual leadership”

The spiritual growth and development of our community is of paramount importance to ICBC. To help our community not just grow, but prosper, in July 2012, the Shura Council embarked on an ambitious mission to bring an Imam to our Center. This goal was pursued over the next four years and encompassed multiple stages. The search was well thought through and structured, having a number of critical elements:

- 👍 Community input on to determine the needs, wants, and desires
- 👍 Research and understand the processes and activities used and ongoing at other Masjids
- 👍 Establish the profile for an Imam to fill our community’s needs
- 👍 Definition of the Imam’s Roles and Responsibilities – a critical element
- 👍 Identify the key sources and methodologies to find and source potential candidates

After an exhaustive search and interview process, ICBC hired Sheikh Yassir Fazaga as its Imam and Religious/Youth Director in August 2016. Sheikh Yassir is an inspiring, multi-lingual speaker sought-after from USA through Canada to the Middle and Far East. Sheikh Yassir was born in Eritrea in Northeast Africa and moved to the United States at the age of 15; has a Bachelor’s degree in Islamic Studies from the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in Virginia; and received a Master’s degree in Marriage and Family Counseling from the California State University of Long Beach.

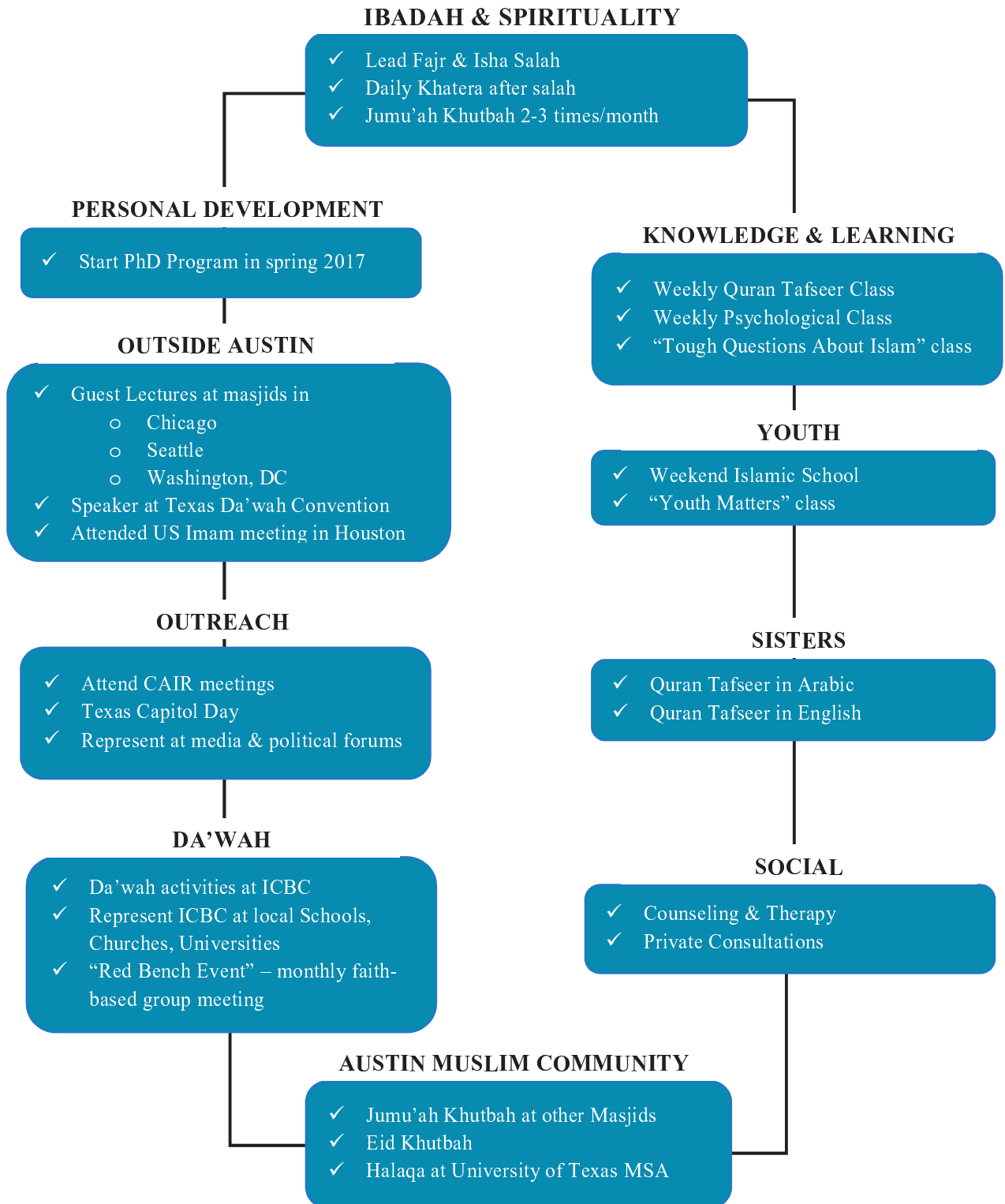
## PLANS FOR 2017: “in the works”

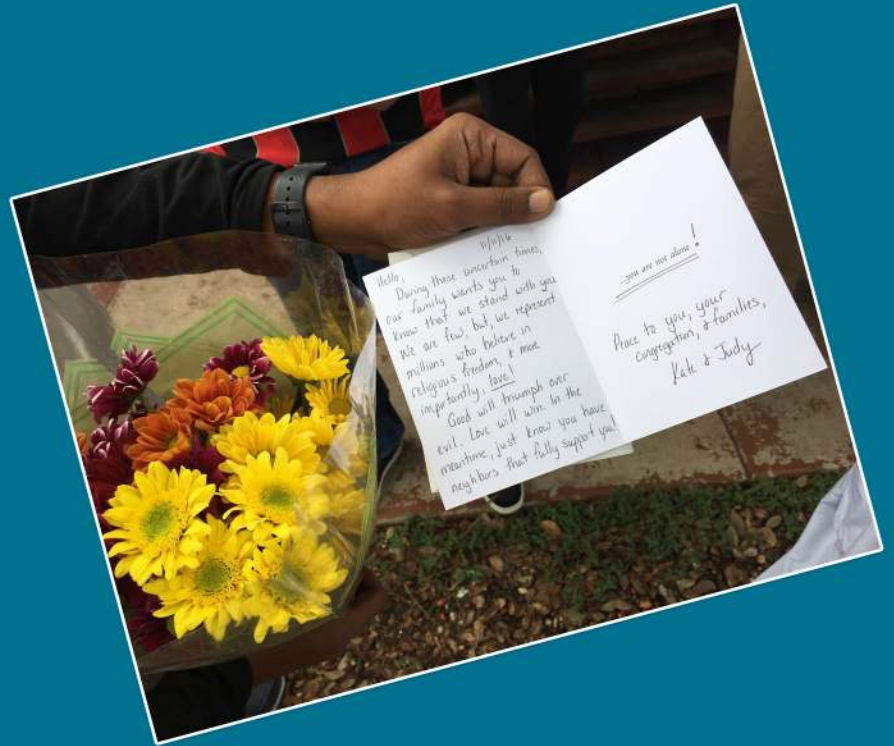
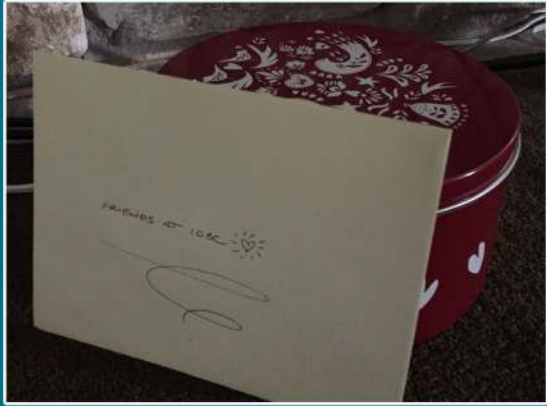
Our primary focus for 2017 is to start construction of the new masjid. In addition, we will be launching the following programs in 2017, *Insha Allah*.

- 👍 **Qur’an Tajweed class** for Men
- 👍 **“Tough Questions About Islam”** - A series of sessions by Sh. Yassir Fazaga for adults and youth
- 👍 **Islamic Calligraphy class** for the youth
- 👍 **“Youth Matters”** - A series of sessions by Sh. Yassir Fazaga for the youth
- 👍 **“Young Muslims”** – a regular session by the youth, for the youth.
- 👍 **Counseling and Therapy** sessions by Sh. Yassir Fazaga open to the Austin Muslim community
- 👍 **“Interfaith Seminar”** for the Greater Austin community

As always, we will, *Insha Allah*, continue our focus on the educational activities, for both adults and children, as we work towards increasing attendance at our beloved Center.

# OUR IMAM: *“spearheading spiritual & intellectual growth, Austin-wide”*





“During these challenging times for our community, words of comfort from our neighbors”



Dear ICBC Community,  
Our family wanted to tell you that we value your presence in Cedar Park. You are an important part of the community. Thank you for being here! We wish you peace, love, and friendship! ♡ The Wroblewskis—  
Jim, Jessica, Silas & Violet





# ISLAMIC CENTER OF BRUSHY CREEK

📍 1950 Brushy Creek Road Cedar Park, TX 78613

☎ (512) 850-4786

📘 fb.com/icbrushycreek

✉ info@icbrushycreek.org

🌐 http://icbrushycreek.org

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