



ISLAMIC CENTER OF
BRUSHY CREEK



ANNUAL UPDATE

2017





ISLAMIC CENTER OF BRUSHY CREEK

OUR OBJECTIVE:

To please Allah (SWT^I) by following the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of His Prophet, Muhammad (SAWS^I).

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^{II}).

^ISubhānahu wa ta'alā

"Glory to Him, the Exalted"

^{II}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 Barakatuh!

In July of 2007, a group of dedicated and committed community members banded together to close on a piece of land in an unincorporated section of Williamson County. The address—1950 Brushy Creek Road—has since been incorporated into the beautiful City of Cedar Park. And that was the year that the Islamic Center of Brushy Creek (ICBC) was established with the Grace of Allah (swt). It would take another year for the organization to obtain the necessary governmental approvals to formally open its doors for salah and other activities. It has been over ten years since that watershed year and there have been quite a few more moments for ICBC since, *SubhanAllah*.

From the time when we had about fifty congregants for Jumu'ah salah, in 2007, to presently when our Center is overflowing with about three hundred fifty men, women and children attending Jumu'ah every week, ICBC has mirrored and even surpassed the growth rate of the City of Cedar Park and Greater Austin areas. We cannot thank Allah (swt) enough for blessing us with a wonderful place where we can pray, learn, socialize, and nurture our future generation as good Muslims and citizens of this country.

The exponential growth in our community has had a profound yet positive impact on the numerous programs and services being offered at ICBC. With a growing number of men, women and children of all age groups requiring a diverse set of programs, the activities stretched our facilities to its limits. To address this, the ICBC Shura Council adopted a two-pronged approach. While marching on with the ICBC Master Plan—a multi-million dollar strategic initiative spanning several years with a goal of building comprehensive facilities at our premises—a short-term plan was put in place to meet the rapid growth. The changes at our facility could not have gone unnoticed; from a nicely turned out outdoor area for members to socialize to a set of covered structures that alleviate not only space constraints for salah but also limitations in classroom facilities for the myriad children and adult programs.

The past year has been especially memorable in that we were able to secure all the necessary permits to formally commence construction of the center piece of the Islamic Center of Brushy Creek—the Masjid. Members cannot miss the concrete foundation slab already in place! With over seventeen thousand square feet of utilizable space, construction is in full progress and is expected to be completed in late 2018, *Insha Allah*.

All of our achievements could not have been possible without, first and foremost, the blessings 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 work with fervent urgency in completing the new Masjid construction 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
February 2018

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 blessings of Allah (swt), continued in 2017 as well.



With the joining of our new Imam, the educational and learning programs took a whole new dimension altogether. Sheikh Yassir Fazaga took on the challenge of leading the adult educational programs.

The daily **After-Isha Khatera** (short talk) by Sheikh Yassir continued throughout 2017. Our Imam reflected on the verses of

the Holy Qur'an recited during salah and how they related to various current events. These short talks, lasting no more than ten minutes, have come to be of enormous benefit owing to their relevance and direct applicability to our daily lives.



Another program by Sheikh Yassir offered for adults was the **Exegesis of the Holy Qur'an**, in chronological order. This class was started in the fourth quarter of 2016 and continued in 2017, and was held every Saturday after Fajr salah. The class was usually followed by a lively social activity—**Coffee with the Sheikh**—that served as a great opportunity for the brothers to interact and get to know each other.

The **Islamic Psychology** class started in 2016 Q3 was held on Friday nights until 2017 Q1. This weekly class, attended by men, women and youth, connected the dots between our faith and Psychology, and explored the scholarly work of

great Islamic and non-Muslim scholars in the field of Psychology and social interactions. This class was replaced by another one—**Tough Questions about Islam**—in 2017 Q2. Sheikh Yassir addressed difficult, yet important questions about Islam in this class.

From September 2017, Sheikh Yassir conducted another highly relevant lecture series on the **History of Islamic Jurisprudence**. The class touched on the approach of the various Islamic schools of thoughts to matters of *Deen*. Held in an interactive format, the topics usually attracted numerous questions from the audience.

Imam Yassir offered a weekly **Qur'an Tafseer class** in English, exclusively for our sisters, every Thursday during mid-day. This class was attended by several sisters from all over Austin and provided a great forum for them to engage the Imam in a variety of topics ranging from contemporary issues and family matters to the spiritual.



The weekly **group study of Qur'an Tafseer** by the sisters continued in 2017 with active participation by our community. This program, held every Monday, attempts to enhance our understanding of the *Qur'an*.

SISTERS CLASS



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

MONTHLY GUEST LECTURES: *“from spiritual to mundane”*

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, contributing to enhancement of our knowledge. The guest lectures were well attended by our community members. Following table provides a summary of lectures held in 2017.

| Speaker | Organization | Topic |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Sheikh Omar Husain | MCECC, San Antonio | The Only Thing To Fear is Fear Itself |
| Br Amjad Mohammad | Community volunteer | From Noah (AS) to Muhammad (pbuh). A Chronology of the Message of Islam through geographical locations |
| Dr. Mujahid Fletcher | Spanish Institute, Houston | History of Islam in the Latino community |
| EIXSYS Healthcare System | EIXSYS Healthcare System | Healthy Eating in Ramadan |
| Sheikh Abdullah Oduro | Bayyinah Institute | Qur'an and Science |
| Sheikh Yassir Fazaga | ICBC | One Year After |
| Dr. Iqram Haque | Islamic Scholar | The Conquest of Makkah: Grace and Humility in Victory |
| Br Amjad Mohammad | Community volunteer | Community Projects: Helping our Community , Be the Change, Lead the Change |
| Sheikh Abdullah Oduro | Bayyinah Institute | The New Muslim Experience Workshop |
| Br. Abdul Hye | Scholar & dae'e, Houston | Historical locations of the Prophets |



As we plan and organize lectures for 2018, 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, 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 true Center of learning.

JUMU'AH KHUTBAH AT ICBC

During 2017, 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.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| ● Sh. Abdullah Oduro | ● Br. Kareem Abdi |
| ● Sh. Ahmad Momoh | ● Br. Mohamed Bedaiwi |
| ● Br. Amjad Mohammed | ● Br. Momin ur Rahman |
| ● Br. Anwar Taufique | ● Br. Mujahid Fletcher |
| ● Sh. Attia Omara | ● Br. Mustafa Erwa |
| ● Br. Essam Atalla | ● Br. Seyed Salahuddin |
| ● Br. Hasan Ali | ● Br. Wael Elessawy |
| ● Br. Jilali Kattass | |

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

In 2017, we were blessed to have brothers in the Tablighi Jamaat visit our Center from Houston and San Antonio as well as Bangladesh, England and Malaysia.

May Allah (swt) reward our guests for their efforts, *Aameen!*

RAMADAN REFLECTIONS: “recapping the blessed month”



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 10th Ramadan at ICBC and it was yet another memorable one for us. We were privileged to have the services of Hafiz Asim Thanwi from Houston who led Taraweeh prayers at our masjid.

With the rapid growth of our community, a record number of people attended prayers at our Center, *MashaAllah*. On some Taraweeh nights and Jumu'ah prayers in the holy month, the Men's prayer hall, the Men's deck and the Men's tent were full; translating to about 300 Men in attendance. So many sisters attended ICBC during Ramadan that the Sisters' hall and the newly converted Sisters rooms were full.

Taraweeh Prayers

Taraweeh prayers were led by Hafiz-ul-Qur'an—Hafiz Asim Thanwi, assisted by our community youth huffaz—Hafiz Abdullah Mohseen and Hafiz Luqman Haroon.

Khatam-ul-Qur'an

The Hafiz completed recitation of the Holy Qur'an on the 29th night followed by beautiful dua'a by Sheikh Yassir Fazaga and Hafiz Asim Thanwi. After Taraweeh, mouth-watering refreshments were provided by local Muslim-owned businesses and generous community members.

Qiyaam Al-Layl Prayers

Qiyaam Al-Layl prayers were led during the last ten nights by Hafiz Asim Thanwi and Sheikh Yassir Fazaga. It was a wonderful experience to have so many men, women, and children attend Qiyaam prayers at our masjid.

Jumu'ah Khutbah

Jumu'ah Khutbahs during the blessed month were delivered by Br. Amjad Mohammed, Br. Essam Atalla and Sheikh Yassir Fazaga.

Daily Khatera

Every day after Fajr salah and during Taraweeh prayers, Sheikh Yassir Fazaga gave short yet beneficial khateras, focusing primarily on the ayahs from the Qur'an recited during Taraweeh.

I'tekaf

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

Iftar/Dinners

We had Iftar/dinners sponsored by generous community members every Saturday and Sunday, and on June 23rd. We had a potluck Iftar on June 24th. A record number of people attended Iftar/dinner at ICBC this year; about 450 people on some days. Several sisters volunteered for Iftar and dinner setup at the sisters' side. For the Men's side logistics, the Shura Council members were split into four groups and were assigned responsibilities each weekend. We had community members donate over three hundred cases of water and twenty boxes of dates.



Sahoor Meals

During the last ten nights, Sahoor meals were provided by a few families and a local Muslim-owned restaurant, at the end of Qiyaam al-Layl prayers. *Jazakum Allahu Khairan* to the sponsors!

Youth Activities

We had special programs geared towards youth during Ramadan. We held an Islamic Quiz contest every day on various topics. Prizes were given out every week and grand prizes were given at the end of the month. We had the following weekly programs for youth.

- “Welcome Ramadan” (Lecture + Quiz with prizes) for Boys & Girls (12 and Up)
- “Find Dua’a in Every Ayah of Quran” (Interactive) for Boys & Girls (12 and Up)
- “Qur’an & Science” (Interactive) for Boys & Girls (12 and Up)
- “Open Youth Talk” (Real Issues & Solutions) for Boys & Girls (12 and Up)
- Girls Henna activity

Sheikh Yassir conducted an interactive session with youth boys and girls after Khatam-ul-Quran on the 29th of Ramadan. Adults and youth played cricket after 8 rak’ah Taraweeh on weekends.

We conducted a soccer training camp for 8-12 years old boys after 8 rak’ah Taraweeh on weekends.

Qur'an Tafseer Class for Sisters

Sr. Anjum, a member of the ICNA Sisters' Wing, conducted Qur'an classes in Urdu for community sisters in the month of Ramadan. The class was held after Dhuhr salah during weekdays. *Jazakum Allahu Khairan* to the sister for her dedication to the teaching of the Noble Qur'an.

Bake Sale

During the blessed month, our youth girls conducted bake sale during two weekends to raise funds for the new masjid construction. Approximately \$4,100 was raised from the sales and matching donations from generous community members. *Jazakum Allahu Khairan* to all the community youth girls and their parents for their participation as well as to the general community for its support of this great initiative by our youth.

Zakat Al-Fitr

Zakat al Fitr was collected at ICBC and the funds were disbursed to the needy before Eid salah.

Facilities Maintenance

In preparation of Ramadan, we performed several facility improvements.

Children's Playground Upkeep—Added mulch; Re-stained the play structure; Installed additional lighting in the areas immediately outside the prayer halls; Steam cleaned the carpets; and performed pest control treatment. Most importantly, we erected tents for use by Men as prayer overflow area.

In early 2017, we converted the Men's deck to an enclosed room and the Sisters' deck was covered and carpeted. The newly completed room (previously Men's deck) was assigned for the use of sisters 14 years and above. The covered deck (previously Sisters' deck) was used by Men.

Throughout Ramadan, a professional cleaning crew was contracted to clean the masjid on a regular basis.

Parking Arrangements

This was the first Ramadan during which we got to fully utilize the new parking lot. Yet, with the rapid growth of our community, all 230 parking spaces were occupied on some days, *SubhanAllah!* We had secured permission from our neighbor to use their lot to park cars on the Ramadan 29th night.

With the parking lot lighting work completed and additional lighting installed, our premise was well lit up, *Alhamdu lillah*.

Masjid Security

We had regular contact with the Cedar Park Police department and requested increased patrol of our premises, particularly at nights, throughout the blessed month.

ICBC Membership

With so many new faces at ICBC this Ramadan, we encouraged members to sign up for ICBC membership and other features such as email and SMS text service. Several people joined *Alhamdu lillah*.

Outreach Activities

The ICBC Da'wah & Outreach Committee held bake sale by youth during the weekend of June 17th. It included baked goods, face painting, henna, and non-edible goods, and a hijab drive with the teen girls.

Approximately \$2,700 was raised from sales as well as donor matching. Proceeds were donated to the NAMCC food pantry project to provide food for those in need in the Austin Metropolitan community.

We also conducted a drive to collect food for baskets to be delivered to families in need throughout the blessed month. Collection boxes and a list of all requested items to complete a basket were placed at the Men's and Sisters' prayer areas. We distributed 32 food baskets. In addition, about 409 pounds of food (equivalent to 341 meals) was donated to the Central Texas Food Bank.

ICBC Master Plan Update and Fundraising

We conducted several fundraisers during the blessed month towards the next phase of the master plan—Masjid construction. We also held a fundraiser to install security fence around our premises.

On June 23rd, we shared the great news that we had secured the building permit to start construction work on the new masjid, *Alhamdu lillah*. The community support at the fundraisers was truly overwhelming! We raised approx. \$325K in pledges and donations during this blessed month. May Allah (swt) reward you and your families by multiplying manifold your generous donations and effort, *Allahumma Aameen*.

CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Just as has been the unwavering focus since the inception of the organization, as we entered the 10th year, this attention on children's education continued at an even greater magnitude. Each and every program at ICBC went thru' a series of discussions and introspection, continually soliciting feedback from the programs' biggest stakeholders—our 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 supervision of our Imam who 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 regular schooling.



Programs such as the **Nazira** (Qur'an reading) class, the **AlFurqan Academy** for young children and the **Weekend Islamic School** continued in 2017. While these programs offered a diverse curriculum, a new program targeting the very young children was introduced. The program—**Connect the Dots**—was designed to introduce the concepts of *deen* to children starting in elementary grades and allowing an age appropriate way to connect *deen* to the start of the school life. 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 groups and knowledge level of the students, interspersed with various activities. These 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. While the goal of the activities is to allow students to connect with their peers, it also serves to reinforce the concept of Islamic brotherhood and sisterhood and be able to have a sense of belonging.

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 in addition to learning the importance of inculcating Deen and a spirit of community service in their lives.

An opportunity to expose our neighbors and peers of our Sunday school students from their public schools arose when members of a local church approached one of the Shura members to request attending and observing the school activities and our prayers. It was a truly amazing sight to have our visitors actively engaged in the class as Sheikh Yassir went about his instructions.



A second aspect is incorporating the theme of ChAMP with the Weekend Islamic School, resulting in the annual cultural day activity used to raise awareness about autism.

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

While the feedback that we have received from the parents over the years is immeasurable, it is the dedication of our teachers that has

been the cornerstone of our programs. They bring a unique blend of professionalism and passion for teaching and for inculcating the love of Deen, for which, we as a community, cannot thank them enough. May Allah (swt) reward our teachers and volunteers for their tireless service to Islam, *Aameen!*



SISTERS' PROGRAMS: *“educating the mothers”*



The weekly **Qur'an Tafseer** program for sisters continued in 2017 by Dr. Atiya Arshad in the first half of the year. This highly interactive program covered topics from the Qur'an that directly impact our daily life. To better understand Qur'an and Sunnah, the *Tafseer* included discussions about varied academic disciplines: Medical and health sciences, Physics, Geology, Astronomy, and Biology. These classes were interspersed with special events focusing on topics of greater significance enabling the participants to better understand and gain guidance from the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Enumerated below are some of the key highlights:

- Detailed Tafseer of Surat Al Mulk
- Special event on the topic of “Astrology, horoscope and Islam” to help get the answers of many unclear questions from the Quran and Ahadeeth
- In depth study of the last segment of Surat Al Furqan that talks about the characteristics of Allah's servants whom Allah called as “Ibaad Ur Rahman”
- An event on “Important Aspects of Terbiyah”
- Specially design session for mothers on “How to respond to Deen related questions that our kids are getting answers for?”
- Special Session on Ramadan

Yet another program held during the year was the **Sisters' Weekly Halaqa** conducted every Wednesday by Sr. Nashwa Badawy. These classes were conducted in Arabic with the stated purpose of studying the Qur'an and providing a healthy social life for women by learning about our *deen*. To accommodate sisters with pre-school children, the program allowed these kids to be present during class, which also provided an opportunity for them to interact with one another.

Class participants divided the time between practicing *Surahs* assigned in the previous class, studying the general rules of *Tajweed*, followed by learning the meanings of the Holy Qur'an from the book—*Khawater Al-Sharawy*. Inculcated in the class curriculum are mundane activities of mutual interest, thereby serving to be a platform for social interaction. Under the aegis of this program, several bake sale events were organized with stated goals of supporting the displaced refugees from countries such as Syria.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES: “the next generation of leaders”

Keeping the youth engaged and attached to the masjid is a challenging task, one that the Executive Board had tasked the youth activities committee to stay focused on. Whereas in the past, the youth activities at ICBC were primarily driven by the committee members, a different approach was adopted in 2017 whereby some in the youth circle were involved in helping us coordinate and run the programs. In addition, interested community members were also tapped to help the youth committee with the various

activities. With inputs from community members and from Sheikh Yassir, a series of programs were put in place throughout the year.



The first was a weekly hour long program for the youth led by Sheikh Yassir, called “**Youth matters**”. This was an interactive discussion forum, similar in format and structure to a round table held every Sunday after Dhuhr salah and attended by boys and girls over 13 years. The program covered a wide array of topics and was attended by over 30 youth. This class also served to highlight the specific areas that the youth in our community wanted us to focus on.

This led to several programs being put in place during Ramadan, the first of which was an interactive forum exclusively for teenaged boys that was co- led by our visiting Ramadan Hafiz Asim Thanwi and a community youth member, Hashir Murtaza. A parallel session was organized for the teenaged girls in our community led by sisters, Dr. Atiya Arshad and Sr. Affifa Rashid. These interactive sessions attempted to bridge the spiritual teachings with the mundane by exposing the audience to an exposition on Ayah and miracles of the Qur'an, connecting with the sciences of Neurology, Embryology, Medicine, Astronomy and Biology. A unique facet was providing an opportunity for our community youth girls to present on topics of their choice. A different session was held for the youth to instill in them the love of the beloved Sahaba and the Holy Qur'an.





As in past years, the tradition of **Ramadan Quiz** continued with active and sustained participation throughout the month, by over 15 children. This has become an annual tradition now, championed by youth committee members, and ably assisted by Sheikh Yassir and other interested members.

With the aim of instilling the spirit of giving during the holy month, the community youth were encouraged to participate in the program, “**Ramadan food baskets**”. The youth enthusiastically engaged themselves in filling out and distributing food baskets during Ramadan to needy families, going above and beyond by purchasing necessary items on their own.



Even as the efforts towards the spiritual development were ongoing, an effort to engage the youth to give back their talents to help others in the community was underway in a different manner. Some of our young community members were identified to coordinate and lead a weekend soccer camp in Ramadan after 8-rakat of Taraweeh for boys in the age group of 8 to 12 years. While overseen by the youth committee, it was an attempt to allow our teenagers to plan, coordinate and drive the camp with minimal adult intervention; adults providing support only when asked.





The annual tradition of **Henna night** for our daughters and community sisters continued with energetic participation by all at the end of the holy month.

The ICBC Youth community has time and again stepped forward to volunteer whenever asked; one of its biggest impact was at the annual ICBC Fundraising event. ICBC Shura Council extended its sincerest appreciation and in order to recognize the effort of our youth, we hosted separate luncheons for boys and girls.



A **Ping Pong Tournament** for Adults and Boys was also organized during spring. It was a well-attended event by both youth and adults alike, and in true championship form the winning members were awarded with prizes.

During the last quarter of the year, Sheikh Yassir conducted a six-week program for teenagers **“Struggling To Be”**. The program was an interactive session that allowed teens to have an open discussion on topics that impact their daily lives.



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

The Social Committee had a very active year in 2017. We held a **carnival** to celebrate Eid. It was very successful, with over 400 community members attending. 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.



WELFARE AND ORIENTATION: *“taking care of one another”*

To better streamline synergies across the committees, the Executive Board decided to merge the Community Welfare committee and the New Member Orientation committee. The rapid growth in the city of Austin has also meant an increased number of families moving into the Northwest Austin area.

With new families moving to Austin on a regular basis, particularly to neighborhoods near ICBC, the Welfare & 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 addition, while supporting the newer members, this committee is also tasked with reaching out all over the Greater Austin area for those families in need. 2017 saw several refugee Muslim families moving into the Greater Austin area from different parts of the world. This Committee provided the necessary assistance to these brothers and sisters. The committee effectively coordinates with the Austin-wide Greater Austin Muslim Relief Committee (GAMRC).

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

DA’WAH AND OUTREACH: *“spreading the word”*

We had a busy and productive 2017, by the permission of Allah (swt). The Da’wah & Outreach Committee started the year with a show of solidarity to our Jewish neighbors after acts of vandalism shocked the community. ICBC sent postcards to neighboring Jewish groups with words of love and encouragement that we would stand together against hatred.

We organized and hosted an Open House in April to allow our neighbors in the community to visit ICBC and learn about Allah, our Prophet, and Islam. The event included lectures by Sheikh Yassir Fazaga, Q&A session, informational booths, literature and, of course, delicious food. The event coincided with a blood drive on the grounds of ICBC with the area blood bank—“We Are Blood”.

As during past years, the committee was busy in Ramadan with a large scale food drive encouraging our community members to get involved. Dozens of food baskets were prepared and distributed to needy families in the Austin area by volunteers. Funds raised were donated to the ICNA food pantry as well as

food, by the pound, were donated to the Capital Area Food bank. Sisters in the D&O Committee organized a Ramadan bake sale complete with food, face painting, henna, and a hijab drive for teen girls.

ICBC also hosted students from Texas State University for a social project and informational session.

On one day in Ramadan, a local Mormon church hosted a potluck Iftar dinner for our community. Some of the members of the Mormon faith fasted on that day in solidarity with us. Several members of the ICBC community, led by Sheikh Yassir, participated. It was a wonderful opportunity for us to interact with people of other faith.



A significant achievement by the D&O Committee this year was the creation and maintenance of a Youth Volunteer Database to organize outreach activities. Notable accomplishments included a “Back to School” backpack and school supplies drive for distribution to the needy families in the City. Youth also created Emergency Kits for homeless people in our area.

The year ended with a viewing party with outreach committee leaders of ICBC and St Thomas Catholic Church for the debut of the PBS documentary “The Sultan and the Saint”, a film about interfaith exchange during the time of the Crusades and how we can use the message of love, prayer, and common ground between Muslims and Christians in current times. *Insha Allah*, we will build on this to plan future viewing parties and interfaith exchanges in 2018.

For the first time ever, on account of Eid al Fitr, we distributed sweet baskets (baklava) to the Cedar Park City Council; City Building department; Cedar Park Police department; local Methodist and Mormon churches, and a synagogue. The gesture was greatly appreciated by all. Cedar Park Police Chief tweeted his appreciation for our initiative. The sweets were sponsored by a generous community member. May Allah (swt) reward everyone who assisted in this effort.



FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT: *“work always under way”*

One of the challenges that the Executive Board has faced during the past year was accommodating the exponential growth in our community. With this in mind, the Facilities Maintenance committee was asked to devise a plan to expand not just the prayer space but also classroom capacity, keeping the twin goals of costs and maintenance. With this mission, the Facilities Maintenance Committee was very busy throughout the year in making improvements to the current infrastructure to address our immediate needs for space, taking into consideration the financial limitations. For this purpose, the Shura Council approved a renovation at a budget of \$30K.

The renovations could not have gone unnoticed. The former men’s deck area was covered and air conditioned, creating a second multi-purpose hall. The sister’s deck was remodeled to add carpeting and covering to protect against the elements. This additional space was utilized by our sisters during Ramadan and has served as class room space for the various weekend programs as well as the Sisters programs during the week.

Furthermore, with Phase 2 of the Master plan underway with the pouring of concrete for the foundation of our new Masjid, we experienced a change in the direction of water flow during a heavy downpour. This led to the sisters' hall getting flooded. To ameliorate the flooding issue, the Facilities Maintenance committee installed additional pumps around the Multi-Purpose Hall to quickly remove ponding water. All of this was completed well within the allocated budget.

With most of our programs employing audio visual (AV) and multi-media tools as part of instructions and presentations, the committee installed TV monitors in all class rooms. These were all contributed by generous community members.



The construction of the parking lot has created a safe space inside our premises that serve as a courtyard. This has been of immense benefit during Ramadan and various events, providing a safe area for children to play and members to socialize. The committee worked to ensure that the area remained well lit.

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

The Executive Board extends its appreciation to the volunteers who have stepped up time and again with generous donations of equipment and valuable time to help the facilities team complete the necessary renovation. This has gone a long way in ensuring that we have a viable facility that addresses our short term needs without straining Masjid finances.

FINANCIAL UPDATE: “*money matters*”

Construction Fundraisers:

We conducted fundraisers in February '17 and Ramadan '17 to execute the ICBC Master Plan and the community support was truly overwhelming! We raised approx. \$784K in pledges and donations in 2017. May Allah (swt) reward you and your families by multiplying manifold your generous donations and effort, *Allahumma Aameen!*

Sadaqah & Zakat:

We collected approx. \$33K in Zakat funds and approx. \$31K in Sadaqah funds in 2017. The money was disbursed to the needy after a thorough review of the applicants.

Zakat al Fitr:

As in prior years, Zakaat ul Fitr was collected and distributed to the needy before Eid salah.

Supporting Outside Organizations:

Several organizations held fundraisers at ICBC in 2017, as listed below:

- Austin Peace Academy (APA)
- Darul Uloom Austin (Hifz School)
- Islam in Spanish organization
- Islamic Relief USA
- Muslim Legal Fund of America (MLFA)
- Renaissance Academy (REF)
- SEED (Relief agency from Dallas)

SHURA COUNCIL ELECTIONS: “*community involvement*”

Pursuant to the ICBC Constitution, we held elections for four open Shura Council positions in December 2017. This was the **sixth election at ICBC**. As part of the preparation for the elections, we launched an extensive membership drive for several weeks. Approximately 400 community members were eligible to vote based on the criteria set forth in the ICBC Constitution, *Alhamdu lillah*.

We received ten nominations for the four 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 2017 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 2017

- D'Shah Karanch
- ElMustafa Erwa
- Hisham Hammour
- Syed Arshad Murtaza

Members elected to the Shura Council (in December 2017)

- Ehtesham Hoq
- Nazmul Qureshi
- Sheik Abdul Hameed
- Thufail Malackayi

EXECUTIVE BOARD: “*leading from the front*”

As per the ICBC Constitution, the Executive Board (EB) is the highest authority at ICBC and is responsible for the day-to-day operations. A new EB was elected in January 2018 and will serve a two-year term. The following is the list of officers.

| | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Chairman | Tom Cloyd |
| Vice-Chairman | Khwaja Murshed |
| Secretary | Iba Sambe |
| Treasurer | Salah U Din |
| EB Member | Sayed Naina |

SHURA COUNCIL: “*serving the community*”

The Shura Council consists of 19 members who are elected by the community. The following table provides the list of current Shura Council members.

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| Asif Zaidi | Asim Humayun | Ehtesham Hoq | Erik Lough |
| Hassan Al Sukhni | Iba Sambe | Imtiaz Hussain | Kalim Mirza Baig |
| Khwaja Murshed | Masood Khan | Momtazul Karim | Nazmul Qureshi |
| Sheik Peer Abdul Hameed | Salah U Din | Seyed Naina | Shaik Mohseen |
| Thufail Malackayi | Tom Cloyd | Wael Elessawy | |

In January 2018, Shaik Mohseen was elected to serve as the Shura Council Coordinator

ICBC MASTER PLAN: *“working to build Allah’s House”*

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 consultations with community members and administrations of other masajid in and outside Austin, 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 of 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 great 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 Phase 1, members could not have helped notice the transformation 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 the new ones under consideration necessitate a comprehensive facility and this is where the next phase of the Master Plan is critical.

After several discussions with the City, we acquired the necessary building permits, finalized selection and contracting for construction, and have poured the foundation for our new Masjid. The steel framing for the structure has been ordered and *Insha Allah* we will see a big difference by Ramadan 2018.



Below is a breakdown on the steps for the construction (with pictures)

- Framing the foundation boundary and the plumbing were completed and inspected by City.
- Termite treatment was completed and inspected as well.
- Electrical & other low voltage contractors visited the site.

We contracted a structural engineer to obtain professional expertise and approval of shop drawings. Soon after the Engineer's approval, foundation steel was installed for the (foundation) pad. Sleeve for fire sprinkler system was installed and the applicable City inspections were completed.





Cardboard material needed for the foundation was delivered on site and the following work were completed—Trenching for underground beams, Installing the cardboard, Binding the foundation steel over cardboard, and Engineering & City inspections—before pouring the concrete.



Later, vapor barrier sheet and cardboard riser were installed. Iron rebars had to be assembled for underground beams.





We passed all the required inspections for pouring concrete for the foundation slab, *Alhamdu lillah*. These include:

- Structural engineering inspection;
- Foundation inspection by third party agency (per City Code); and
- Plumbing, fire sprinkler and foundation inspections by the City.



The pouring of concrete for the future masjid slab was completed on November 27th *Alhamdu lillah*. This was major milestone for us! ICBC attendees could not miss the new concrete slab as they approach the current masjid!

Safety and security is of paramount importance for us at ICBC. To that effect, we have installed a 6-foot high chain link fencing along the railroad (back) side of the premises. While providing an aesthetic appeal, the fence provides much needed security for our Center.



We are exploring options to install wrought iron fencing along the Brushy Creek Road (front) side of our premises as well.

PLANS FOR 2018: “*looking forward*”

Our primary focus for 2018 is the **completion of the new masjid construction**. In addition, we will be launching the following programs in 2018, *Insha Allah*.

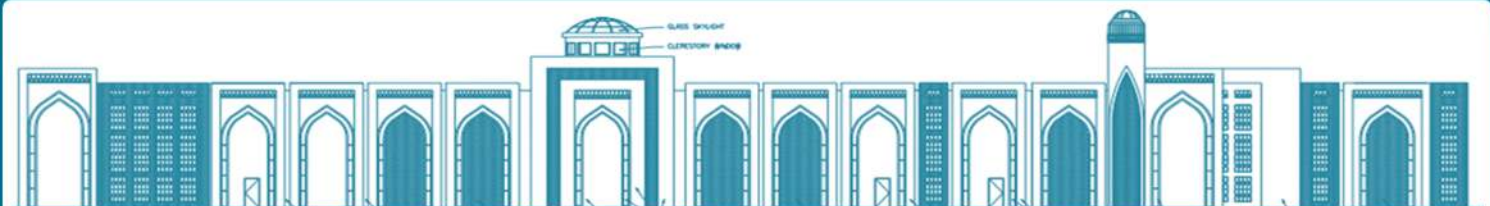
- 👍 **Qur'an Tafseer class in Urdu** for Sisters
- 👍 **Youth Activity** for the boys every week
- 👍 **Interfaith Seminar** for the Greater Austin community

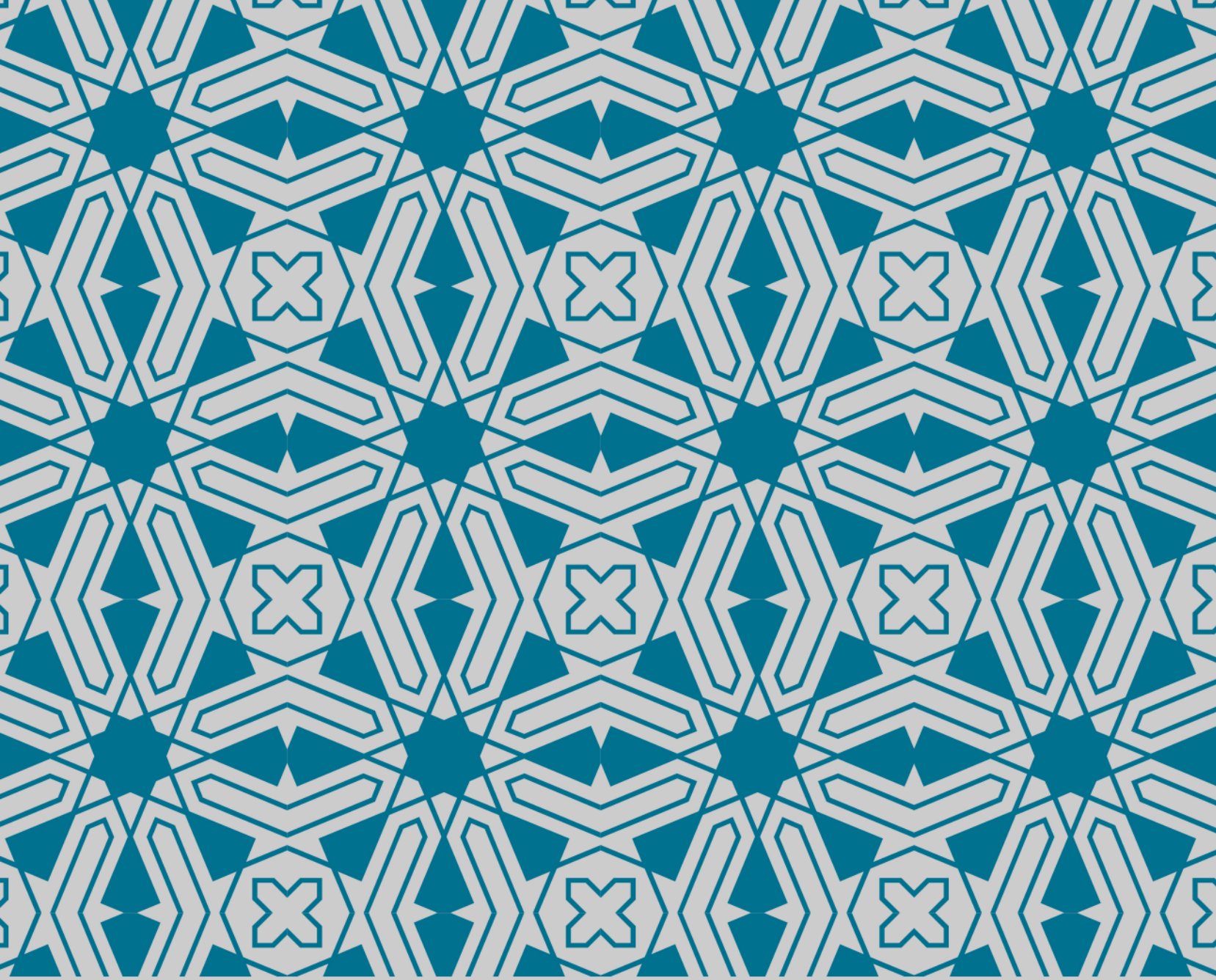
Increased participation by sisters in our community in all aspects of ICBC activities is another goal for 2018.

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



ISLAMIC CENTER OF BRUSHY CREEK





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