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[www.kzoo.edu](http://www.kzoo.edu)

Dear Kalamazoo College Faculty & Staff,

In 2023, I anticipate Ramadan to begin on Thursday, March 23rd and end on Friday, April 21st. Eid al Fitr, a major Islamic celebratory event indicating the end of Ramadan, will be May 2-3rd. (Source: [The Fiqh Council of North America](https://fiqhcouncil.org/fcna-announcement-for-ramadan-shawwal-1444/)) The holy month of Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar and is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. Ramadan involves obligatory fasting for Muslims who are capable, from sunrise until sunset, for 29 or 30 consecutive days.

Religious & Spiritual Life and Creative Dining have developed a system to keep our observant students fed during this season. While the material needs of eating are met, students report Ramadan is a depressing and isolating season. At home, Ramadan evenings are filled with celebrations, worship, and shared meals. Here, students say they feel invisible. While Kalamazoo College cannot replicate a larger religious community, we can help mitigate the isolation students feel during this sacred month.

***I’m asking that individuals, departments, and organizations consider hosting an evening meal one night during the holy month of Ramadan.*** Hosting a dinner would mean providing food for approximately 25 students, being physically present for the meal, and celebrating with observant students. Religious & Spiritual Life can help to provide funding for departments or groups with financial constraints.

Please see the attached sheet for information on dates, times, and food options. As always, I am available to answer questions about Ramadan. Thank you for your help in making Ramadan a joyful and holy time of celebration for our Muslim students.

Sincerely,   
Chaplain Liz Candido  
[ecandido@kzoo.edu](mailto:ecandido@kzoo.edu)  
PH: x7361

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| **When?** | Every Monday/Thursday night of Ramadan. Depending on the date, dinners either start at 8pm, 8:15pm or 8:30pm in the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (basement of Stetson). (Dates: 3/27, 3/30, 4/3, 4/6, 4/10, 4/13, 4/17, 4/20) |
| **What?** | Hosting means providing a meal for 25 people. Paper plates, silverware, napkins, and juice boxes will be provided. |
|  | Hosts are responsible for bringing the food and cleaning up the space after the meal (but please enlist the students to help do this.) |
| **Can I cook?** | You can certainly prepare the meal yourself! Please remember that each meal should be Halal. This means no pork products or alcohol may be used in the preparation of any aspect of the meal (including vanilla extract). Dairy and meat products must be certified Halal. You can find a Halal grocer just off campus (International Gourmet Pantry), but you can also find Halal foods at Aldi, Hardings, and several other local markets. Call Chaplain Liz Candido anytime to talk through specifics. |
| **I don’t cook!** | Kalamazoo offers some great catering options: Shawarma King, Cumin Indian, Middle Eastern Appetite, Rasa Ria, Saffron, Bab El Salam (When ordering, please note that some restaurants have a limited Halal menu while others are completely Halal. Clarify when you order.) |
| **What should I order?** | Talk to Chaplain Liz Candido. She can help you plan a cost effective, delicious menu. Last year, the various hosts and Religious and Spiritual Life collaborated to create a google doc including menu suggestions and helpful hints for future hosts. |
| **Can I collaborate with someone else to host?** | Yes! We want to bring together members of our community including family and friends to join in this celebration. Please feel free to bring children, family and non-Muslim students. You may want to encourage departmental student advisers to attend or majors in your discipline. Perhaps one or two departments might co-host a dinner! |
| **How do I sign Up?**  **Will it be fun?** | Email: [ecandido@kzoo.edu](mailto:ecandido@kzoo.edu) or Phone: 7361 by Friday Apr. 1, 2022. Please let Chaplain Liz Candido know which date or dates you are willing to host!  Ask any previous host, the job is easy, meaningful, and a great time spent with students in a celebratory context. Really fun for everyone! |