

**Association of Partners In  
Christian Education (APCE)**

**2026 Annual Event  
Workshop**

**Techniques for Building Interfaith Bridges**

**January 22, 2026**

**Workshop Leaders**

**Diane and Bob Frankle**

**Co-Founders**

**Building Bridges Together™**



# **Building Bridges Together™**

## **Overview**

Building Bridges Together™ is a nonprofit whose mission is to develop trust and relationships among Christians, Jews and Muslims through shared meals and structured, facilitated small group dialogue. Our Interfaith Bridges™ interfaith dialogue programs for faith communities, colleges and universities enable participants from different Abrahamic faiths to develop deep and meaningful relationships. Such relationships lead to greater understanding, cooperation, and allyship among the participants. We believe such bridge building is essential to confront stereotypes and bias, create community, reduce polarization and engender hope and constructive solutions to today's significant problems.

Through our Interfaith Bridges programs, participants learn about each other's faith journeys by sharing their personal stories. Participants are not expected to be experts in their own faith but are asked to bring their own faith experiences into the discussions. Short videos provide relevant content for each faith represented on the themes of each session, providing context and vocabulary for participants. Topics like holidays and food, symbols, stereotypes and the place of faith in the world allow participants to share their authentic selves and learn about each other's lives and values.

## **Our Story**

Co-Founders Bob and Diane Frankle have a 40+ year interfaith marriage; Bob is a practicing Jew active in his Reform synagogue, and Diane is a practicing Episcopalian, active in her local church. Bob and Diane have a shared vision that Christians, Jews and Muslims can be strong allies for each other in healing the world, peacemaking, and standing up to bigotry and hate. They believe that key to such alliances is relationship building through dialogue and shared experiences.

In 2012 Bob and Diane developed a curriculum to promote interfaith dialogue between Christians and Jews. From 2013 through early 2020, they offered this bi-faith program, which they called "Building Bridges," eight times to 200 participants at four different churches and two synagogues in their local area, to universally positive reviews.

In 2018 Bob and Diane concluded that more effort was needed to confront antisemitism and Islamophobia and began developing relationships with local San Francisco Bay Area Muslims. In 2019 they formed a nonprofit, Building Bridges Together (BBT), and began to develop a tri-faith interfaith dialogue program for Christians, Jews and Muslims. Bob and Diane worked with a 14-member volunteer Interfaith Advisory Board, with representatives of all three faiths, to develop their current Interfaith Bridges program curriculum, which BBT launched in 2022. In March 2024, after the beginning of the war in Gaza, BBT launched a derivative version of this program for colleges and universities at San Francisco State University. Hundreds of people have

experienced the Interfaith Bridges facilitated dialogue program, as well as Interfaith Passover Seders and Interfaith Thanksgiving Dinners, fostering relationships between people from diverse faith communities.

Building Bridges Together is now offering Interfaith Bridges to faith communities, colleges and universities across the United States.

### **Why Build Bridges**

***Relationships.*** Our collective hope for healing our fractured and polarized world is in bridging across difference, practicing curiosity rather than judgment, listening and learning to appreciate and love “the other.” Interfaith Bridges programs invite participants into relationships with those with different faith experiences, revealing shared values and reducing unconscious bias.

***Building Capacity for Listening.*** Storytelling breaks down barriers and moves hearts toward curiosity and empathy. Our Interfaith Bridges programs offer needed practice in these skills, and a model for society as a whole. These programs build capacity for empathy and offer a window into lives outside the individual faith communities, leading to new ways of interacting and serving the local community.

***Allyship in a Hard World.*** Allies in our local communities help us to heal in the face of horrific public acts of terror which are all so common these days and offer an antidote to hatred. Our alumni regularly come together to offer support and consolation in the face of traumatic local and national events and provide strong support to confront the ongoing scourge of bigotry and hate. Interfaith Bridges programs not only dispel the stereotypes inherent in antisemitism and Islamophobia, but they also foster lasting relationships among Jews, Muslims and Christians who learn firsthand about bias and prejudice and become stronger allies.

***New Engagement.*** Moreover, each cohort of Interfaith Bridges participants offers community and relationships beyond the program, and chances for new engagement. Our alumni often continue and deepen their relationships with their fellow participants following the conclusion of the program. They often become more engaged in their own faith communities following the conclusion of the program. Following the pandemic, faith communities have sometimes struggled to regain active members. A program like Interfaith Bridges offers community and a sense of hope and openness to new relationships and activities that draw in participants of all ages. Further, sharing one’s faith breaks down barriers and creates new relationships among participants from the same faith community.

## **Our Workshop**

### **Techniques for Building Interfaith Relationships**

This workshop will demonstrate proven techniques to engage in effective interfaith outreach and conduct programs that build relationships with neighboring Jewish and Muslim faith communities.

Diane and Bob Frankle will share their story about their interfaith work and describe how their programs develop trust and sustainable relationships among Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faith communities. They will also discuss outreach to neighboring faith communities. Workshop participants will be divided into groups to demonstrate two different proven interfaith engagement techniques, an art project and a small group discussion. Participants will reconvene to share their experiences and discuss how these techniques and other activities can create trust and relationships with neighboring Muslim and/or Jewish communities. The workshop is designed so that participants can take what they learn home and put it into practice!

For further information contact us

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