

Thursday, April 20, 2017

Dear Mr. Bushfield,

Thank you for your correspondence regarding the interfaith symposium. In late 2015, the Delta Police Department was approached by the Baitur Rahman Mosque in Delta regarding violence in the name of religion. Their wish at that time was to host an interfaith symposium on the message of peace brought forth by the major world religions – Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

As the Delta Police, and our fundamental role as peacekeepers in the community, we agreed to partner with them on this symposium. In 2016, it was becoming abundantly clear that the opioid crisis was escalating and the Delta Police began outreach to the community in a variety of ways. We held a community meeting in partnership with Delta School District to educate our students and young adults about the dangers of street drugs and we have used traditional and social media to continue delivering the message of prevention. As a result of extensive media coverage regarding the opioid crisis, the Mosque again approached us regarding a second interfaith symposium to discuss addiction from the perspective of religion. The Mosque is a part of the Delta community and we felt it was important to support their efforts in curbing this serious issue.

Delta Police believes in a four pillar approach to the opioid crisis; prevention, treatment, enforcement and harm reduction. As a part of the pillar of prevention, we support the efforts of religious leaders in their attempt to reach out to their congregations. The evening was hosted by the Muslim Mosque and world religions were represented, however the presentations themselves were not religious. The John Volken Academy was invited to make two presentations, one from a recovering addict and another from a program coordinator on ways to seek help. While the John Volken Academy allows patients to practice a chosen religion, the treatment program is evidence based and explicitly non-religious. The third and only other presentation was by a Delta Police officer who spoke about the investigative aspects of fentanyl and explained why fentanyl and street drugs are so deadly.

The evening was open to the public and focused on prevention and harm reduction, and encouraged those wishing to seek help to do so, whether they identify with a religion or not. Delta Police will continue with community outreach regarding this crisis and other public safety issues, whether it is through the School District, religious groups, youth and seniors groups, not-for-profits and business associations.

Sincerely,



Neil Dubord, M.O.M., PhD  
Chief Constable, Delta Police Department