with the prayer, "O God, for You I fasted, and in You I believe, and with Your provision I broke my fast. After eating, Muslims say "*al-hamdu lillah* ("Thanks be to God")."

The Night Prayer

The final of the five daily prayers is said as night falls. Like the four other prayers, it is preceded by the *adhan* and is carried out in congregation.

The *Taraweeh* Prayer

A special, lengthy prayer called *salat al-taraweeh* is said only during the month of *Ramadan*, after the night prayer is completed. It is an optional act of worship carried out to gain God's pleasure. The *taraweeh* is sometimes characterized by long recitations of the *Qur'an*, and can last from twenty minutes to over one hour. Some *imams* recite one-thirtieth of the *Qur'an* nightly during this prayer.

Standing for this prayer can be strenuous, so it is broken into parts. A short spiritual teaching is often read during a break. The elderly, pregnant women and the sick who wish to participate sometimes sit during the prayer if they become tired.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) is a non-profit, grassroots organization dedicated to presenting an Islamic perspective on issues of importance to the American public. In offering that perspective, CAIR seeks to empower the Muslim community in America through political and social activism.

CAIR's mission is carried out through:

- Media Relations
- Conferences and Seminars
- Publications
- Anti-Defamation Work
- Action Alerts
- Lobbying
- Training

For more information, call CAIR's Washington, D.C., office at (202) 638-6340, or fax (202) 638-6412.

For more information about the Muslim community in your area, contact:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Welcome to Our Ramadan Fast Breaking

published by

CAIR

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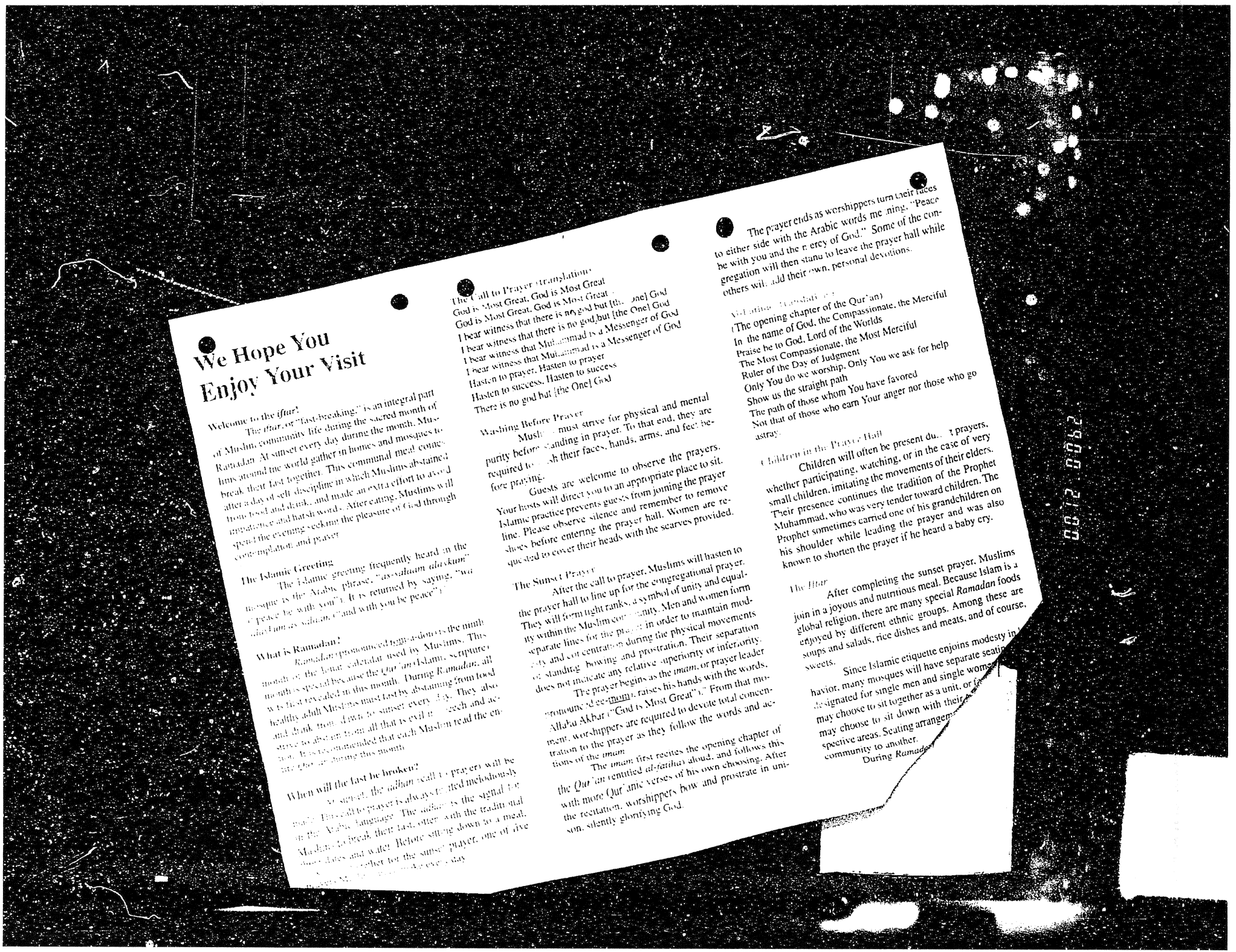

We Hope You Enjoy Your Visit

Welcome to the *iftar*!

The *iftar*, or "fast-breaking," is an integral part of Muslim community life during the sacred month of Ramadan. At sunset every day during the month, Muslims around the world gather in homes and mosques to break their fast together. This communal meal comes after a day of self-discipline in which Muslims abstained from food and drink, and made an extra effort to avoid impatience and harsh words. After eating, Muslims will spend the evening seeking the pleasure of God through contemplation and prayer.

The Islamic Greeting

The Islamic greeting frequently heard in the mosque is the Arabic phrase, "*as-salaam alaykum*" ("peace be with you"). It is returned by saying, "*wa alaykum as-salaam*" ("and with you be peace").

What is Ramadan?

Ramadan (pronounced ragga-dawn) is the ninth month of the lunar calendar used by Muslims. This month is special because the *Qur'an*, Islam's scripture, was first revealed in this month. During *Ramadan*, all healthy adult Muslims must fast by abstaining from food and drink from dawn to sunset every day. They also strive to abstain from all that is evil in speech and action. It is recommended that each Muslim read the entire Qur'an during this month.

When will the fast be broken?

At sunset, the *adhan* (call to prayer) will be made. The call to prayer is always recited melodiously in the Arabic language. The *adhan* is the signal for Muslims to break their fast, often with the traditional dates and water. Before sitting down to a meal, together for the sunset prayer, one of five [illegible] every day.

The Call to Prayer (translation)

God is Most Great, God is Most Great
God is Most Great, God is Most Great
I bear witness that there is no god but [the One] God
I bear witness that there is no god but [the One] God
I bear witness that Muhammad is a Messenger of God
I bear witness that Muhammad is a Messenger of God
Hasten to prayer, Hasten to prayer
Hasten to success, Hasten to success
There is no god but [the One] God

Washing Before Prayer

Muslims must strive for physical and mental purity before standing in prayer. To that end, they are required to wash their faces, hands, arms, and feet before praying.

Guests are welcome to observe the prayers. Your hosts will direct you to an appropriate place to sit. Islamic practice prevents guests from joining the prayer line. Please observe silence and remember to remove shoes before entering the prayer hall. Women are requested to cover their heads with the scarves provided.

The Sunset Prayer

After the call to prayer, Muslims will hasten to the prayer hall to line up for the congregational prayer. They will form tight ranks, a symbol of unity and equality within the Muslim community. Men and women form separate lines for the prayer in order to maintain modesty and concentration during the physical movements of standing, bowing and prostration. Their separation does not indicate any relative superiority or inferiority.

The prayer begins as the *imam*, or prayer leader pronounced ee-mom, raises his hands with the words, Allahu Akbar ("God is Most Great"). From that moment, worshippers are required to devote total concentration to the prayer as they follow the words and actions of the *imam*.

The *imam* first recites the opening chapter of the *Qur'an* (entitled *al-fatiha*) aloud, and follows this with more Qur'anic verses of his own choosing. After the recitation, worshippers bow and prostrate in unison, silently glorifying God.

The prayer ends as worshippers turn their faces to either side with the Arabic words meaning, "Peace be with you and the mercy of God." Some of the congregation will then stand to leave the prayer hall while others will add their own, personal devotions.

Recitation (translation)

(The opening chapter of the Qur'an)
In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful
Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds
The Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful
Ruler of the Day of Judgment
Only You do we worship. Only You we ask for help
Show us the straight path
The path of those whom You have favored
Not that of those who earn Your anger nor those who go astray.

Children in the Prayer Hall

Children will often be present during prayers, whether participating, watching, or in the case of very small children, imitating the movements of their elders. Their presence continues the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad, who was very tender toward children. The Prophet sometimes carried one of his grandchildren on his shoulder while leading the prayer and was also known to shorten the prayer if he heard a baby cry.

The *Iftar*

After completing the sunset prayer, Muslims join in a joyous and nutritious meal. Because Islam is a global religion, there are many special *Ramadan* foods enjoyed by different ethnic groups. Among these are soups and salads, rice dishes and meats, and of course, sweets.

Since Islamic etiquette enjoins modesty in behavior, many mosques will have separate seating designated for single men and single women. [illegible] may choose to sit together as a unit, or [illegible] may choose to sit down with their [illegible] respective areas. Seating arrangements [illegible] community to another.

During *Ramadan*

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

CAIR

Council on American-Islamic Relations

goodly word (is) like a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed and its branches (reach) to the heavens."

The Noble Quran, chapter 14, verse 24

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CAIR has representatives, or is currently building chapters, in these cities across the United States and Canada:

Los Angeles
San Francisco
Chicago
Detroit
Indianapolis
New York
Dallas
Houston
Seattle
Philadelphia
Boston
Washington, D.C.
Atlanta
Minneapolis
Madison
Milwaukee
Paterson, N.J.
St. Louis
Windsor, Ont.
Toronto, Ont.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Council on American-Islamic Relations
1511 K Street N.W., Suite 807, Washington, D.C. 20005

YES, I would like to be part of CAIR's nationwide network.

Type of membership (one year):

___ Individual $25
___ Family $50
___ Student/Limited Income $10
___ Organizational $100

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

I would like to help CAIR accomplish its goals through a one-time donation of:

___ $50 ___ $100 ___ $250 ___ $500 ___ $1000 ___ $1500 Other $_____

Why was CAIR established?

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) is a nonprofit, grassroots membership organization. We have headquarters in Washington, D.C., and CAIR chapters exist or are being formed in most major cities across America.

CAIR was established to promote a positive image of Islam and Muslims in America. We believe misrepresentations of Islam are most often the result of ignorance on the part of non-Muslims and reluctance on the part of Muslims to articulate their cause.

What is CAIR's mission?

CAIR is dedicated to presenting an Islamic perspective on issues of importance to the American public. In offering that perspective, we seek to empower the Muslim community in America through political and social activism.

How does CAIR carry out its mission?

Media Relations

We work with media professionals around America to help shape a positive image of Islam. CAIR activists also monitor the local, national and international media to challenge negative stereotypes of Islam and Muslims.

Conferences and Seminars

We organize conferences and seminars for media professionals, government officials and the academic community. These events are designed to present otherwise unavailable information about Islam and Muslims.

Publications

A variety of publications addressing the needs of Muslims in America are offered to opinion leaders and the public. We also publish a quarterly newsletter *CAIR News*.

CAIR also produces practical handbooks, such as "*Hajj* and *Ramadan* Publicity Resource Kits," for use by Muslim leaders and activists.

Action Alerts

CAIR issues action alerts to local communities as a means of promoting local activism and generating a grassroots response on important issues. We believe local response is a key factor in making our voices heard.

Research

CAIR undertakes research on subjects relevant to the American Muslim community, including gathering data for an annual report on the status of Muslim civil rights. This report details anti-Muslim bias and violence.

Position papers on a variety of issues relating to Muslims in America are produced as required.

Anti-Discrimination Work

CAIR works through its legal advisors and local activists in fighting discrimination of any type directed against Muslims in America. This discrimination often relates to misuse of Islamic symbols or the violation of civil rights in the workplace.

Lobbying

We lobby American political leaders on issues related to Islam and Muslims in America. Issues of particular interest include freedom of expression and religious practice for Muslims in America.

Training/Outreach

CAIR trains American Muslim community activists and leaders in techniques of effective media and public relations, lobbying and public speaking. Experts are available to offer seminars in local communities.

Internships

CAIR offers internships to students and other interested individuals who wish to gain experience in media relations, political activism and anti-discrimination work.

Inter-Faith Relations

Islam places much stress on promoting mutual respect and good relations between followers of the Abrahamic faiths. CAIR works toward this goal through public education and inter-faith cooperation.

How can I help?

Membership in CAIR is open to individuals who share our goals and principles. You can help us achieve our goals by 1) using the attached application form to become a member, 2) establishing your own CAIR chapter, and 3) donating generously to help defray the expenses involved in this work.

I would particularly like to work in the following areas:

- ___ Media Relations and Monitoring
- ___ Fundraising
- ___ Lobbying
- ___ Anti-Defamation Work
- ___ Organizing Conferences and Seminars
- ___ Speakers Bureau
- ___ Forming a Local Chapter
- ___ Other _____

For Office Use Only

Membership Dues Received:
___ Cash ___ Check # _____
Donation Received:
Amount $ _____
Membership ID# _____