

NEWSLETTER :: Tuesday, November 1st, 2016 / 1 Safar 1438 A.H.

### ISGVF Community Picnic



### Welcome Back Hujjaj and Eid-ul-Adha Dinner



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

ISGVF Connections – October 2016 Edition

السَّلَامَةُ عَلَيكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ

*All praise and thanks are due to Allah (SWT) for His Mercy and endless Blessing. We pray that ISGVF Connections always finds you and your family in the best of health and Imaan, (Ameen)*

#### In This Connection

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#### Pray daily at masjid

Make your intention and plan to pray daily at masjid at least one Salah in congregation. If you are already praying one Salah a day in congregation plan to do it two and so on .... We pray to Allah (SWT) to reward us all for good intentions and frequently visiting His house.

## Weekly Activities

### **Monday and Thursday:**

Hifz (Quran Memorization) Classes every Monday and Thursday in School Bldg. from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM.



### **Wednesday:**

Quran Learning (Reading) Classes every Wednesday in School Bldg. from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM.

### **Friday:**

Friday Halaqa held after Maghrib prayer. Different topics of interest are covered by different speakers every week. Halaqa ends with potluck snacks and tea.

Visit our website at <http://www.isgvf.com/> for an updated list of all events and activities.



## **IQAMAH TIMES**

November 2016

DATES	FAJR* (AM)	ZUHR** (PM)	ASR (PM)	MAGHREB (PM)	ISHA (PM)
10/30 – 11/05	6:30*	1:30	4:30	5 Min. After Sunset	8:00
11/06 – 11/12 (Daylight Saving Time Ends)	5:45*	12:30**	3:30	5 Min. After Sunset	8:00
11/13 – 11/19	6:00*	12:30**	3:30	5 Min. After Sunset	8:00
11/20 – 11/26	6:00*	12:30**	3:30	5 Min. After Sunset	8:00
11/27 – 12/03	6:00*	12:30**	3:30	5 Min. After Sunset	8:00

\* Fajr Iqamah on Weekends – 30 Min. before Sunrise

\*\* Zuhr Iqamah on Weekends – 1:30 PM

1<sup>st</sup> Jumma Salah 12:30 - 1 PM

2<sup>nd</sup> Jumma Salah 1:30 - 2 PM

## ISGVF Updates

### **ISGVF Annual General Body Meeting & Elections**

Annual General Body meeting of the Society will be held on Sunday, December 4, 2016, Insha'Allah. The meeting will start at 1:45 PM after the Zuhr Salaat in Activity Hall, the lower level of Main Masjid. The agenda will include the Society's annual reports and other items as necessary. The elections of new officers of the Society for 2017 will be held following the GB meeting. The new officers will be elected for the following positions:

Member, Board of Trustees ... 6 year term, 2017-22

#### **Executive Council Positions:**

President .....1 year term 2017  
 Vice President .....1 year term 2017  
 Secretary .....1 year term 2017  
 Treasurer .....1 year term 2017

### October Month Events

#### Oct 01 - ISGVF Community Picnic

ISGVF annual picnic was held at the Wilson Farm Park on Oct 1st, 2016.



It was a great gathering of all community members – many of whom hadn't seen each other in a while others who were new to the community. This provided an opportunity for all to catch up and have a wonderful time. On behalf of ISGVF, we would like to thank you for your active participation and making this event very memorable with delicious food and lots of games. Thanks to all the volunteering families for their dedication, and enthusiasm. May Allah (SWT) accept everyone's efforts, Ameen!

#### Welcome Back Hujjaj and Eid-ul-Adha Dinner



### Daylight Savings Time Ends November 6th, 2016



Please note that Daylight Savings Time will end on Sunday, November 6th, 2016 at 2:00 AM and we will be moving our clocks back by one hour.

As a result of this, beginning, **Friday, November 11th, the Jummah Prayer schedule** will be as follows:

**First Khutba & Salah:** 12:30PM to 1:00PM

**Second Khutba & Salah:** 1:30PM to 2:00PM

#### Donation through Self service card machine

Alahmdolila, ISGVF is pleased to announce that Masjid donations can also be made by Credit or Debit card self-service machine installed in the main building's lobby

#### Birth Announcement

On November 4, 2016 Br. AbdulHai & Sis. Jabeen Shaik were blessed with a baby girl. They named her 'Manahal Aisha Shaik'. Congratulations to their family. May Allah (SWT) provide the newborn with the best of Imaan and health. (Ameen)

#### Weekend School Updates

The Elective Quranic Arabic class for existing students aged 11-18 began on October 8th and 9th. We have been receiving very positive feed back from both students and parents. May Allah (swta) reward the teachers who took the extra initiative to introduce this class to our school and are volunteering their time to teach our children. May Allah (swta) also grant these

ISGVF held its annual Welcome Back Hujjaj & Eid Dinner on October 8th. Several hujjaj families attended this event and shared their valuable experiences with the community. The evening was wrapped up by delicious dinner. On behalf of the ISGVF Board of Trustees and Executive Council, we once again congratulate these families on performing Hajj and pray to Allah SWT that he give us all the opportunity to fulfill this Fard, Ameen!

**Adopt-A-Highway cleanup program - Sunday, Oct 30, 7:30 AM**



JazakAllah to those who were able to make it to this morning's program. Everyone's participation was very important - those who purchased and set up breakfast (very important!), to those who walked the roads to pick up litter, and to those who cleaned up afterwards and helped put our equipment back.

teachers and students much success in this new endeavor.

We are also planning to extend this class to adults to be offered during school hours. An announcement will be coming very soon with all of the details.

We had a successful Open House for Elementary and Mid High on October 15th and 16th. We had hoped to see many more parents, however we received some helpful suggestions which we will attempt to implement this school year and in the coming years to follow. All suggestions are seriously considered and we are open to any ideas to help make the school more efficient and smooth flowing. Thank you to all of the parents who participated!

**Important dates to remember**

Thanksgiving break: no classes on Saturday, November 26 and Sunday, November 27.

Elementary School First Trimester Exams: Saturday, December 10th and Sunday, December 11th. Teachers will prepare the students for this exam and provide the appropriate study guides as needed.

**ISGVF Reflections**

Allah (s.w.t) gives a way to relax throughout the day. Allah (s.w.t) says

**Central Importance of “Ash-Shukr” (Gratitude) in Islam**

Gratitude holds great importance in Islam. Allah (Subhanu Wa Ta’ala) parallels it with His mention. He Says:

“So remember Me; I will remember you. And be grateful to Me and do not deny Me” [Quran 2: 152]

This very eloquent Ayah (verse) also expresses the idea

## ISGVF Distribution

## Food

The Food Distribution Program that provides food to low-income households. ISGVF will distribute food every Wednesday between 5:30 pm and 8:00 pm, Insha'Allah.



Your donation are important to support the program.

## Contact Us

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that to be ungrateful to Allah (SWT) is tantamount to unbelief in Him, meaning that to be ungrateful to Him for the innumerable blessings and favors that He has bestowed upon us is to, in fact, deny Allah. This is why the opposite of “Shukr” is “Kufr” or Unbelief. Indeed, RasoolAllah (SAW) explained that Iman (Belief, Faith) itself is composed of two components: half Shukr and half Sabr (perseverance, patience). Gratitude is the first instruction given to man as soon as he begins to comprehend. Allah Says:

“And We have enjoined upon man [care] for his parents. His mother carried him, [increasing her] in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning is in two years. Be grateful to Me and to your parents; to Me is the [final] destination.” [Quran 31: 14]

A core teaching of Islam is that one should praise and be thankful to Allah in every circumstance. Muslims answer the question, “How are you?” with “Alhamdulillah,” which means, “Praise and thanks be to Allah.” This response reflects the acceptance that Allah, Who is loving and kind, cares for all His creatures with unbounded tenderness, mercy and wisdom. Regardless of whether we interpret our situation as easy or difficult, as Muslims, we believe that Allah places every situation we face before us for a reason, and that ultimately in that reason there is good and benefit for us. For this we are thankful to Allah. Gratitude is about expressing thanks and appreciation to those who do any favor to us. Obviously, none can come close to our creator, Allah, who gave us everything. As the Quran states: “Who created you, fashioned you perfectly, and gave you due proportion” [Quran 82:7].

The Quran teaches that human beings were created by Allah and for that we must be grateful to Him. “It is he who brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers when you knew nothing, and he gave you hearing and sight and intelligence and affection so that you may give thanks (to Allah)” [Quran 16:78].

Allah tests human beings in order to see who will

practice gratitude and who will not. In many places in the Quran, Allah divides people as being grateful and as ungrateful to motivate us to join the camp of those who are grateful. In one of such verses, Prophet Sulaiman (AS) said, as stated in the Quran,

“...then when (Sulaiman) saw it placed before him, he said: "This is by the Grace of my Lord to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful! And whoever is grateful, truly, his gratitude is for (the good of) his own self, and whoever is ungrateful, (he is ungrateful only for the loss of his own self). Certainly! My Lord is Rich (Free of all wants), Bountiful" [Quran 27: 40]

Having a sense of gratitude is thus a great blessing and those of us who instill that sense within ourselves not only seek Allah’s pleasure but embody a sense of happiness, relieving us of the many pressures and anxieties. Although the blessings and benefits of gratitude are many, certain important ones are highlighted here that we should recognize and use as a means to motivate that sense within ourselves. Gratitude is to acknowledge that whatever we have is from Allah. Gratitude helps us focus our minds on Allah, something that has unfortunately become so difficult today on account of life’s distractions and attractions. Gratitude, therefore, corrects our perceptions by reminding us that everything that happens to us doesn’t happen because of its own volition and thus we shouldn’t take matters for “granted.” Allah says in the Quran: “And whatever of blessings and good things you have, it is from Allah” [Quran 16:53].

Let’s therefore constantly remind ourselves of Allah’s bounties by constantly expressing our gratitude to Him in whatever situation we’re in. Gratitude helps us to slow down and to enjoy and be content with what we have rather than always waiting for the next wish to come true. Gratitude can help us recognize that we already have enough of what many people have for long been yearning for. We must therefore tame our Nafs to understand that if we can’t find happiness in the blessings that we have today, then we won’t be happy with what we get tomorrow. You see, gratitude is a sense of fulfillment that comes not from wanting more

but rather from a sense of knowing that Allah has already blessed us with what we need.

In one of the hadiths, the Prophet (SAW) said: "...if the son of Adam has one valley, he will wish that he had a second, and if he had two valleys, he would wish that he had a third. The stomach of the son of Adam will be filled only with dust (i.e., he is never satisfied while he is alive, and ultimately his appetites will only be satisfied when he is dust, ie, dead)..." (Reported by Ahmad, 5/219; Saheeh al-Jaami', 1781). So, let's use gratitude to learn to enjoy what we have rather than always worrying over what we don't. Gratitude is going beyond words and instead thanking through our actions. We see this in the example of the Prophet (SAW) whose sins were forgiven by Allah although he continued to strive for His pleasure.

It was narrated that Aa'ishah (RA, may Allah be pleased with her) said: "When the Messenger of Allah (SAW) prayed, he would stand for so long that his feet would become swollen." 'Aa'ishah asked: O Messenger of Allah, why are you doing this when Allah has forgiven your past and future sins? "He said: O 'Aa'ishah, should I not be a thankful servant?" Narrated by al-Bukhari (4557) and Muslim (2820). Let's, therefore, pray the extra 'nawafil' as one way to thank Allah for His blessings.

Gratitude helps us recognize other people's favors to us. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW), through his sayings, made it quite clear that expressing our gratitude to Allah (SWT) by thanking Him also involves that we thank people who do favors for us. The Prophet (SAW) said as narrated by Abu Hurairah: "He who does not thank people, does not thank Allah" (Ahmad, Tirmidhi). He also said: "Whoever does you a favor, then reciprocate, and if you cannot find anything with which to reciprocate, then pray for him until you think that you have reciprocated him" Abu Dawood (1672). In another hadith, he said: "Whoever has a favor done for him and says to the one who did it, 'Jazak Allahu khayran,' has

done enough to thank him” ” [Classed as Saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi]. Let’s therefore ensure that we do our part to sincerely thank our families and all those who have done good to us.

The importance of gratitude was further emphasized by the Prophet (SAW) when he took the hand of Mu’aadh ibn Jabal and said: “O Mu’aadh, by Allah I love you, by Allah I love you.” Then he said, “I advise you, O Mu’aadh, do not fail to say this after every prayer:

“O Allah help me to remember You, to thank You, and to worship You properly.”

Let’s ensure that we memorize it and recite it after every prayer. Finally, remember that being grateful is not an option and being grateful brings us closer to those whom we thank and appreciate.

**By Dr. Arshad Amanullah**