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Do Christians and Muslims worship the same God?

This study guide is intended for use with five articles published in the *Christian Century* in 2004 by scholars from three faith traditions: Christian, Jewish and Muslim. The materials included in this study work with adult groups. There are several options:

a 4-week study—Use articles by Levinson and Abd-Allah, and choose one of the articles written from a Christian perspective. Use a fourth session as an introduction or conclusion.

a 6-week study—Use all 5 articles plus an introductory or concluding session.

an 8-week study—Begin with 2 weeks of introduction, study all 5 articles, and end with a concluding session.

Note: For help in downloading the pdfs, go to

Background for the study

In preparation for leading this study, leaders should do some additional reading about the Muslim faith tradition. One fairly recent and accessible source is Diana L. Eck's *A New Religious America, How A "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation* (HarperSanFrancisco, 2001). Chapter Five, "American Muslims: Cousins and Strangers" provides a wealth of information about the growing community of Muslims in this country. We recommend it for everyone in the class.

Another excellent resource is the CD-ROM, *On Common Ground: World Religions in America*. This was developed out of Eck's leadership with the Pluralism Project. For more information, visit www.pluralism.org, which offers a wealth of resources. Click on "images," for example, to select from a number of slide shows that describe religious diversity in this country. Showing one of these slide shows is an excellent way to introduce this topic.

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Included with each of the *Century* articles was this statement:

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Dennis O'Brie

In late 2003 President Bush said, in response to a reporter's question, that he believed Muslims and Christians "worship the same God." The remark sparked criticism from some Christians, who thought Bush was being politically correct but theologically inaccurate. For example, Ted Haggard, head of the National Association of Evangelicals, said, "The Christian God encourages freedom, love, forgiveness, prosperity and health. The Muslim god appears to value the opposite."

"Sanctified un
Eugene F. Ro

Do Muslims and Christians worship the same God? The question raises a fundamental issue in interfaith discussion, especially for monotheists. We asked several scholars to consider the question.

[For the complete study guide, download the PDF in the column above right.]

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