

Declaration of the Triangle Imams Council on Unification of Prayer Times

Feb 4, 2023

All praise is due to Allah (*subhanahu wa ta'ala*) and may His blessings and peace be upon the Prophet Muhammad (*salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*).

Respected brothers and sisters of the Triangle area:

Assalamu alaikum wa rahmatu Allahi wa barakatuh [may peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings].

We hope you and your families are well.

Unification of Muslims

Amidst many ideological and societal challenges that we as Muslim face today, we find hope in one of the prioritized aims of our beautiful *Deen*: the unity of the Muslims throughout the *Ummah*. Our scholars have, therefore, emphasized this in every matter in which it is feasible. Leading jurists of the four major schools of *fiqh* (i.e., *Hanafi*, *Maliki*, *Shafi'i*, and *Hanbali*) have frequently given precedence to unity or have allowed adherents to follow other valid differences of opinion when necessary and toward a greater *maslahah* (e.g., benefit for the larger Muslim community).

Ongoing Process

Alhamdulillah, it has been a longstanding legacy of our esteemed scholars over the centuries to optimize the articulation of the Islamic legal system into practice per the advancements in technology and scientific knowledge. The Triangle Imams Council's [TIC] last declaration on *Ramadan* and *Eid-ul-Fitr* aimed to address several practical hardships and to unify the Muslims on that matter, both while benefiting from relevant progress in human knowledge and understanding. The TIC's unification on the amount for *Zakat-ul-Fitr* and *Fidyah* is another example of this ongoing process of optimization.

Another Step Forward: Unification of Prayer Timing

Process

In this light, members of the Triangle Imams Council met and explored the concept of a unified prayer timetable. A task force was formed and assigned the task of researching the topic. Alhamdulillah, after an exhaustive process of reviewing the works of and interacting with Muslim scholars, researchers, and experts on prayer time calculations throughout the world, the task force was able to identify a path forward.

Findings

For *Fajr* timing, there was overall agreement among the Muslim jurists on what is considered the beginning time. The difference in calculated timing currently is simply due to rendering the *fiqhi* (legal) understanding into technological, technical, and scientific parameters. This is an ongoing process and requires Islamic legal, scientific, and technical (computer programming) expertise and other resources. The updated guidance that correlates with observational data in the United States and addresses the difficulty in developing models that accurately account for altitude, latitude, time of the year, and other variables, is that *Fajr* time starts at approximately 15° (from the horizon downward to the top of the sun's disk).

For *Asr* and *Isha* timing, the primary *Maliki*, *Shafi'i*, and *Hanbali*, and secondary *Hanafi* scholarly opinions align on the start time.

Conclusions

A unified prayer timetable is possible to unify the Muslims in the Triangle. At present, the model that aligns with the updated guidance is the ISNA calculation method in many prayer apps. Therefore, the undersigned Imams and mosque representatives of the TIC have agreed to use the ISNA calculation method for the prayer timetables at their mosques.

The *iqamah* times may vary to accommodate local needs as identified by your local *Imams*.

We ask Allah (*subhanahu wa ta'ala*) to guide all of us Muslims to what He loves and is pleased with, to accept from us the good we do for His sake, and to grant us success in this life and in the Hereafter, aameen.

Steps Ahead: Optimization

Due to the many factors that make rendering *fiqhi* guidelines into calculations very complex, the TIC will continue to stay connected with scholars and researchers in this field. If you are interested in assisting in this process, please reach out to your local Imam. Required skills or knowledge include *usul al-fiqh*, *fiqh* of prayer timing, physics, and computer programming,

Local Masajid, [in alphabetical order],

AlNoor Islamic Center - H. Radwan

ArRazzaq Islamic Center - Rashad

Apex Mosque - Mohamed Diouana

As Salaam Islamic Center – Oliver Muhammad/Salahuddin Muhammad

Burlington Masjid - Shahir

Islamic Association of Raleigh – Muamar Dahnoun/Mohamed Badawy

Jamaat Ibad Arrahman – Abdenaser Zouhri/Hicham Jabal

King Khalid Masjid – Juma/Musa

Madinah Quran and Youth Center - Abdullah Khadra

MYCC (North Raleigh Masjid) - Ayazuddin Ahmed/Khalid Baloch

North Durham Masjid - Othman

Raleigh Islamic Institute Masjid - Othman Jallow