

## Muslim and Christian Celebration

A meeting that provided the girls an opportunity to combine a Christmas Celebration and learn about Muslim Ramadan and Id Celebration. This was done with a Brownie unit of 11 girls. The meeting plan comes from Sandra Anderson in Calgary.

Preparations:

The meeting before, we made bags (using a template) out of red Bristol board, painted a black belt around the middle and put some quilt batting around the bottom to make a Santa bag.

The girls would the put their finished things in this bag next meeting.

Meeting Opening: A mom whose family is of Muslim faith shared the following story from Festivals and Celebrations (Primary Three), Book 2, Islamic Publications Limited for The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London

### A Day of Giving and Sharing

Far up in the sky, the thin silver crescent of the new moon appears. There is a loud shout of joy from the people.

Ramadan, the month of fasting, has ended and the day of the Id has finally arrived. Muslims celebrate id al-fitr all over the world. It is a time of great joy for us.

On this day, we come together to offer prayers and exchange greetings with one another. It is also a time for visiting relatives and friends, and those who are sick, lonely or in need of help.

In the following story, we learn how one boy in Syria celebrates the Id.

Hashim finds himself wide-awake even before the sun has risen. He wonders why he has woken up so early. Suddenly, he remembers that this is no ordinary day. "Today is the day of the Id!" he shouts and leaps out of his bed.

In no time at all, he has woken everyone in the family. Hashim washes himself and then gets dressed. He puts on his best shirt and a new pair of trousers. His parents have bought these clothes especially for the Id. Hashim's brothers and sisters also put on their best clothes. When they are ready, Hashim and his family set off to join the jamat.

People from all around are gathering in the prayer hall. Then it is time for the Id namaz to begin. A man in the front begins to recite the namaz in a loud, clear voice. It echoes across the hall as he leads the jamat in prayer. The people raise their hands, bow their bodies, and prostrate on the ground as the namaz is recited.

When the namaz is over, everyone in the jamat gets up. "kull 'am wa-antum bi-khayr!" the people greet each other warmly. This means, "May you be well throughout the year!" Families, relatives and friends hug one another. They smile and laugh with joy, and wish each other well on this happy day.

Hashim has many aunts and uncles. They all hug and kiss him when he greets them. Each of them puts some money in the palm of his hand as a gift for the Id. Later, Hashim and his family visit the homes of their close relatives and friends.



The first house they visit is that of the eldest uncle. Next they stop to greet a very good friend of the family. Then they head for their aunt's house. At each house, they are offered food and sweets. Hashim gets so many sweets that his pockets are soon bulging with them. Hashim then goes with his mother to visit their neighbour. This is where his best friend Jafar lives. Jafar and his three little sisters are very happy to see Hashim. They have been feeling rather lonely this Id. Their father has gone away on a long journey. They have not seen him for many weeks, and they miss him very much. Hashim has a wonderful idea. He knows how to cheer up the children. "My father is taking me to the fair this afternoon. Would you like to come with us?" he asks. Jafar and his sisters nod their heads excitedly. Jafar's mother is very happy and agrees to let her children go.

Later that day, the children arrive at the fair. There are many other families here. Some of the children have balloons in their hands. Some are sitting on the merry-go-rounds. Others are playing on the swings. Hashim and his friends have a wonderful time at the fair. This has been a happy Id for them.

For the rest of the meeting the girls worked in stations making various things for their Santa bag.

- Station 1: Henna painting
- Station 2: Sugar cookie decorating and baking
- Station 3: Chocolate making
- Station 4: Beaded snowflakes
- Station 5: Christmas hanger

To end the meeting, we made a silent wish for another person or persons in our group.

