

Ottawa

'We're all human': Ottawa's faith communities remember Quebec mosque shooting



6 killed, 19 injured in one of the worst shootings in Canadian history

[Amanda Pfeffer](#) · CBC News · Posted: Jan 29, 2018 4:00 AM ET | Last Updated: January 29, 2018



nam Sikander Hashmi said the bonds he made with other faith leaders following the shooting in Quebec City was the 'silver lining' following the tragedy. (Amanda Pfeffer/CBC)

More than one hundred people from different faith groups gathered at the Kanata Recreation Complex Sunday afternoon, on the eve of the first anniversary of a tragic mass shooting at a Quebec City mosque.

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The gathering was one of a number of events organized in the nation's capital to mark what's been called one of the worst mass shootings in Canadian history.

On Jan 29, 2017, a gunman entered a mosque in Quebec City and opened fire, killing six people and injuring 19 more.

'Hard day to be a Canadian'

"It was a very hard day to be a Canadian," said Sikander Hashmi, when asked how he felt immediately following the shooting.

Hashmi, the Imam with the Kanata Muslim Association, said those feelings changed when he saw the outpouring of support for Muslims from across the country.

"Some of the faith leaders we had today, really, we got to know them after this tragedy," he said. "And so I see that as the silver lining in this terrible incident."



Hanaa Barka, left, and Sahil Ahmadzai, right, read stories Sunday about the lives of two of the people killed in last January's shooting. (Amanda Pfeffer/CBC)

Important for the children

The Kanata Muslim Association helped organize Sunday's interfaith event.

In one of the more emotional moments, children lined up to read the stories of the men who died — and the families left behind.

Sahil Ahmadzai, 13, said he could hear people sniffing as he told the crowd about Aboubaker Thabti, one of the victims.

"We're all just humans," Ahmadzai said, adding that sharing those stories while surrounded by people of different religions made a big difference.

"It makes me feel that I'm not alone."

Nodding in agreement, 12-year-old Hanaa Barka said that marking the tragedy as a community "made me less afraid."



Zarri Nisar, on the right, said it was important to bring her children to Sunday's event in Kanata 'to reinforce the idea that this is what Canada is about.' (Amanda Pfeffer/CBC)

'This is what Canada is about'

A number of the parents at Sunday's gathering said it was important to bring their children to Sunday's gathering.

"It will teach them to accept everyone, and when tragedies happen, how you come together as one," said Kanata resident Zarri Nisar, who showed up with her son and daughter.

"It's just to reinforce the idea that this is what Canada is about."

Jeanette Mather said she felt compelled to come to show solidarity with her Muslim neighbours.

"I want them to see that other people care," said Mather. "That we feel for them, and that we understand the pain that they're going through."



Anglican priest Kerri Brennan, left, was one of several faith leaders who attended Sunday's event. Jeanette Mather, right, said she felt it was important to show solidarity with the Muslim community. (Amanda Pfeffer/CBC)

Day of remembrance

More events will take place Monday — the actual anniversary of the shooting.

Mayor Jim Watson has declared Monday a day of remembrance and action against hate and bigotry.

- [Ottawa to mark anniversary of Quebec mosque shooting](#)

A memorial will be held at noon at Jean Pigott Place inside Ottawa City Hall, where people will have the opportunity to send messages of condolence.

At 5:30 p.m. Monday, a vigil for the victims will be held at the Human Rights Monument on Elgin Street.

People will then be invited back inside city hall for a community forum, followed by a screening of *Your Last Walk in the Mosque*, a documentary about the attack and its aftermath.



Amanda Pfeffer - CBC

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