Equipping Tomorrow’s Religious Leaders Today
The manipulation of religion to promote violent conflicts is an ancient and tragic reality.
But religion also inspires and motivates those who seek peace.
“Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.”

Psalm 34:14
“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

Matthew 5:9
“If God had willed, He would have made you one religious community (umma), but (He desires) to test you in what He has given you: so compete with each other in doing virtuous deeds. To God you will all return; and then He will show you the truth of the matters in which you dispute;”

Sura 5:48
Unfortunately, today there are those who mis-represent and exploit religion in order to promote hatred and violent conflict.
The way to counter their negative message is to empower religiously inspired peacemakers.
Our mission:

1. to prepare, empower and encourage emerging leaders from religious communities to be more effective peacemakers.
2. to create national and global networks of religious peacemakers who will share ideas and support each other
Initially funded by a pilot grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and now the Endeavor Foundation, the first Drew Institute invited emerging Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders from five societies with complex histories of conflict between religious communities.
Participants - both male and female - were drawn from the ranks of both clerical and lay leadership.
For nearly a month the 24 participants in the first Drew Institute:

- Lived together
- Studied together
- Argued with each other
- And learned from and about each other
...on the beautiful forested campus of Drew University, located 25 miles west of Manhattan.
They were introduced to cutting edge techniques and theories of conflict transformation by some of the world’s leading experts.
Peter Ochs of UVA Introduced Scriptural Reasoning (SR) and Textual Reasoning (TR)
as methods to achieve deeper understanding and respect within and between different religious communities
Joe Bock of Notre Dame led a workshop on technology new social media & conflict
Marc Gopin of George Mason University discussed the role of citizen diplomats.
Peter Coleman of Columbia focused on “intractable” conflicts
Arjuna Parakrama spoke passionately about collective trauma and conflict.
Important senior religious leaders also inspired participants.
Dr. Ali Gomaa, recently retired Grand Mufti of Egypt
and the Most Rev. Mouneer Hanna Anis
Primate of the Anglican Province of
Jerusalem and the Middle East
and Rabbi Michael Melchoir Former Israeli Minister of Diaspora Affairs and Member of Knesset
And leading practitioners of religious peacemaking, fresh from the field, came to offer their insights and encouragement.
Imam Muhammad Ashafa from the Interfaith Mediation Center in Kaduna, Nigeria
and his partner in peacemaking, Pastor James Wuye
Their inspiring work is documented in the film *The Imam and the Pastor*
and Dr. Abdul Mu’ti, Secretary of the Central Leadership of Muhammadiyyah, a 30-million member religiously inspired social service organization in Indonesia
And Azi Hussein, doing courageous work with madrassas in Pakistan
Participants also visited the worship space of each other’s religious tradition.
Where most had never been before.
Congregation Shearith Israel
and the Islamic Center of NY
and the Cathedral of St. John the Devine
They discussed issues like the role of collective trauma in conflict.
and then visited the U.S. Holocaust Museum
and Ground Zero
Conversations were deep
and frank
and often painful
but in the end
participants developed lasting respect for each other.
They learned how to listen deeply and to speak frankly but compassionately.
They were inspired by established peacemakers
of great passion and great courage
and by bold leaders of vision and imagination
People who initially doubted they could even speak together
found that they could.
respectfully with integrity
They worked hard and collaboratively.
They learned from each other
and about each other.
They visited NY together
and Washington, DC
They visited the United States Institute of Peace.
The participants made many
lasting friendships
and had lots of fun too!
Can we change the equation?
Can we empower and encourage emerging religious leaders to become more effective peacemakers?
Can we cultivate national and global networks of emerging religious leaders who will work effectively together?
It’s too early to tell, but...

the results of the first Drew Institute on Religion & Conflict Transformation suggest
there is room for real
hope and optimism.