



From Interfaith Dialogue to Group-to-Group Connection

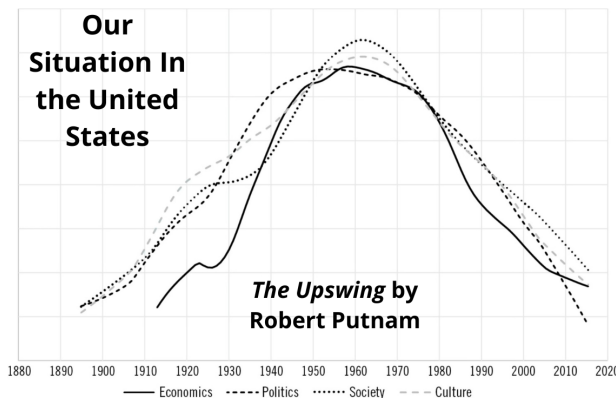
A Moment of Opportunity—and Challenge

For decades, interfaith leaders have nurtured sacred relationships across religious and spiritual traditions. You've built trust where others saw only difference. You've held space for shared values like compassion, justice, and the dignity of all people while honoring deeply held convictions and rituals.

And yet, we face a widening social crisis:

- Rising polarization and extremism, often driven by fear of “the other”
- Isolation across cultural, racial, economic, and ideological lines
- A fraying social fabric, where people struggle to trust those beyond their in-group

This moment calls for a broader application of your wisdom and skills.



Jonathan Haidt: Vibrant Democracies have
Social capital | Strong institutions | Shared stories

Divided by More Than Tradition

Today, Americans are divided along many lines:

- Cultural background
- Economic situation
- Race and ethnicity
- Geography (rural, suburban, urban)
- Age and life experience
- Religious or non-religious identity
- Disability and neurodiversity

In addition, there are many Americans who select “none” in their religious preference. To these people interfaith gatherings feel exclusive.

Expanding the Circle

The Potluck Project offers a way to extend the interfaith movement’s relational strengths into **group-to-group civic engagement**.

- Instead of beginning with shared beliefs, we start with shared meals and stories.
- Instead of theological dialogue, we begin with life experiences.
- Instead of only faith-to-faith connections, we invite partnerships across all identities and communities—faith-based and secular.

Why Interfaith Leaders Are Uniquely Equipped

The interfaith movement already knows how to:

- Hold space for difference with grace and curiosity
- Facilitate respectful conversations grounded in personal stories
- Navigate identity, culture, and power dynamics in meaningful ways
- We have access to meeting spaces in every neighborhood in the nation

The Potluck Project simply broadens the table. It offers a replicable model to connect not only churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples—but also community centers, LGBTQ+ orgs, immigrant groups, veterans’ organizations, civic clubs, and more.

This is an opportunity to **model what’s possible** beyond the interfaith world.

What the Potluck Project Offers

- A free, downloadable toolkit with step-by-step guidance to plan inclusive, low-barrier gatherings
- A national tour that models group-to-group table fellowship and strengthens local ecosystems
- A chance to be part of a growing movement for social cohesion grounded in relationships, not rhetoric

Why It Works

- **Low-threshold.** It doesn’t require theological literacy or political agreement—just a willingness to show up.
- **Culturally flexible.** Every tradition and culture has food and stories to share.

- **Scalable.** One potluck leads to another, growing community by community.
- **Deeply human.** People connect not as representatives, but as neighbors.

What We're Inviting You To Do

- Use the toolkit to host a Potluck gathering that includes interfaith and non-faith-based partners
- Share the model with other religious and civic groups ready to build trust across boundaries
- Co-host a Potluck Project Tour stop in your community, building a broader web of connections
- Document and uplift the stories of connection your work inspires
- Help us train others to carry forward this bridge-building work beyond traditional interfaith settings

Let's Expand the Table

The wisdom of the interfaith movement is needed more than ever—but it's time to bring more groups to the table such as:

- Service clubs
- Cultural centers
- Indigenous elders
- Veteran organizations
- Environmental groups
- LGBTQ+
- Groups in rural, suburban, and urban areas
- Quilting groups
- Book clubs


When neighbors from different backgrounds eat together, laugh together, and share their lived experiences, we rehumanize one another. We lay the groundwork for solidarity, resilience, and shared action.

This is interfaith wisdom applied to civic life.

This is how we build a society of belonging—one potluck at a time.

About PTU:

Paths to Understanding is a 501c3 working for a world in which all belong and all can thrive. We do this work in partnership with local and regional organizations in Washington State and across the nation. Our partners include secular and religious bridge building organizations and networks.

	
Who can host a potluck?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Groups of Friends • Community Groups • Wisdom Communities or Interfaith Group
What do you need to get started?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 or more people ready to organize • A date and time for your potluck • A location to host your event • Courage to gather with others
What will you find in this toolkit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample invitation • Pre-event press release template • Event agenda & considerations for planning an intercultural event • Post-event press release template
QUESTIONS? Contact us via email Together@PathsToUnderstanding.org	



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