

Christina Campbell

Site Visit #2 Report

I use to be a member of a Methodist Church but I only went for a little over a year and I haven't gone back in about a year. For my second site visit I went with others from our class to the Islamic Center of Cleveland in Parma on December 1, 2013 at noon. When I pulled I was welcomed by a large sign that read The Islamic Center of Cleveland The Grand Mosque then turned to and was amazed by the beautiful structure that was in front of me. The building is large cream colored with blue strips running horizontal across it. In the middle of the building there are 2 domes one is a large gold dome and a smaller gold dome in front of the large one. Off to either side of the small gold dome is a large white pointed pillar. There are also 2 smaller gold domes on the front on either side of the entrance area. When you walk into the building through the front door there is a very large beautiful flower arrangement in the lobby area with closets on the walls with shelves for your shoes. They do not allow you to wear your shoes because they are dirty and they sit on the floor in the worship area. The worship area is a large room with high vaulted ceilings and a huge chandelier in the middle of the room surrounded by large white pillars. The carpet is a burgundy color which we were told came from Turkey and is the same carpet that is in the most well-known Mosque in Turkey called in English the Blue Mosque. The front of the prayer room faces to the direction of the Kaaba in Mecca, which is the direction that Muslims pray. There is only one painting on the wall which is that of Kaaba in Mecca because most Mosque's do not have anything on the walls in the Prayer Room. In the front of the Prayer room looks like a symbol but it is Allah written in Arabic which mean God in English. Below that is more Arabic writing that we were told is in honor of one of the founder's fathers. A long

the walls are book shelves lined with the Quran which is the religious text of Islam. During our visit to this center we had a brief introduction into the Muslim religion by one of the founders of this prayer center his name is Ahmad Ansari. He explained Muslim religion very well and he seemed to a very humble and funny gentleman. He is very passionate about his beliefs and you can see the love he has as he was explaining things to our class. His introduction lasted about 45 minutes then children came into the Prayer Center to have their afternoon prayer and they were able to show us how they pray. Prayer lasted about 20 minutes and was very ritualistic. Ahmad said some prayers are longer than others just depend on which one you are doing. All prayers are in Arabic and most of the time they are silent prayers. During prayers the person carries out several rituals from different positions of the hands to kneeling on the floor with your head to the floor. The prayer in Arabic sounds almost like a song. During this Prayer there were about 100 children in attendance and a few adults. Children seem very well behaved even though the whole prayer but they do get a little restless. Ahmad explained to us that women normally pray in the upstairs but during this time the girls were in the back. This is to make sure the men or boys are not distracted by the women. Women also wear head coverings because they practice modesty. We only witnessed a short prayer service with the Sunday school children. So I wanted to just explain a few things that Ahmad explained about the Muslim religion. Muslim's follow the book called Quran. The Quran is written in Arabic and has been memorized by many that don't even speak Arabic. If you have memorized the Quran you are called a hafiz, which this prayer center is honored to have a hafiz. There are 5 pillars of Islam; 1. The belief in one God and that Muhammad is the last prophet, 2. Prayer which is done 5 times a day, 3. Fasting which is required the month of Ramadan, 4. Charity which is the rich giving to the poor within the community, and 5. Hajj – which is to go visit Mecca once in a lifetime if one can afford it and is physically able.