Guidelines for Butler University Faith-Based Community Responses: Vigils, Memorials, and Gatherings

At times students may desire a faith-based response to a local, national, or global set of events. This document is designed to articulate the guidelines for a community-wide faith-based response if it is to be sponsored by Butler University (and coordinated in conjunction with the Center for Faith and Vocation), representing the wider campus communities.

Terminology: This document addresses Butler University-sponsored faith-based responses to recent events that are designed for the broader University community. The document will refer to these events as "faith-based responses." These events will always intend to include secular voices in addition to faith representation when possible.

The kinds of faith-based responses this document addresses includes but are not limited to:
-Community vigils
-Community marches/demonstrations
-Memorial events

Who decides when a faith-based response to a recent event is warranted?
The best practice used in recent years has been to give students the agency to express when they have a need for a faith-based response. In the event of a religious act of violence or hate crime, it has been the CFV's practice to send a note of care to affected students. When students respond seeking support or guidance, the CFV is well-positioned to explore options of leading a faith-based response with student leaders from various areas of campus. Thus, neither Butler University nor the CFV are actively deciding when a particular kind of response is organized; instead, we respond to student needs as they are made known. *Note – this document is primarily drafted as a guideline for students. However, if faculty or staff are seeking a faith-based response, the CFV will work with them following largely the same process.*

What constitutes a Butler-sponsored faith-based community response?
There are several guidelines for a faith-based response that are meant to be sponsored by and represent Butler University. Below is an outline of several of these guidelines. However, every event is in a unique context and may require unique consideration.

A. Expectations from the CFV on Behalf of the University:
To navigate the unique nature of faith-based responses, the Center for Faith and Vocation should be an involved partner on behalf of the University. The CFV's role will be to set the following expectations, which are described in further detail below:

    1. Plan the event with multifaith character so that the full diversity of our campus religious and secular community is represented as best as possible.
    2. Plan the event for the Butler community specifically; external partners are approved by the CFV.
    3. Utilize the CFV as a resource for content; provide a close-to-final version of the program 24 hours prior to the event for the CFV to review and offer feedback leading up to the event.

The CFV will communicate these expectations up front. The CFV will not be the ultimately responsible approver of the final content, but the CFV fully expects the described expectations are followed to the

best of everyone's ability. If expectations are agreed to, the CFV's role will be to support student leaders in creating the event.

> **1. Plan the event with multifaith character:** A University-sponsored response to recent events must be welcoming to all students, faculty, and staff. This not only includes who is welcome to attend, but also includes who is welcome to speak or participate in the program itself. Given Butler's diverse student body and its secular affiliation, any faith-based response should be multifaith by design. Leaders designing the program will work with the CFV to invite voices from a variety of faith and secular identities and backgrounds, depending on the circumstances. It may not always be the case that the end result is fully representative of all invitations made, but the process of designing these events will always start by inviting a wide set of voices. The multifaith character of faith-based programs reflects the University's values of diversity and inclusion as well as the unique opportunity of building solidarity across difference that often occurs when communities respond in a unified way to recent events.

> **2. Plan the event for the Butler community specifically:** The primary focus for the CFV as an institutional leader for Butler faith-based responses is the localized Butler community, which includes students, faculty, staff, and wider community partners as well. The CFV will guide student leaders in creating relevant partnerships within the University. External partnering organizations can be very valuable to build wider solidarity with the community, enrich content, add voices, and develop further outreach. However, a Butler faith-based response is not meant to become an Indianapolis faith-based response and the focus should be on the University communities. External partners must be vetted and approved by the CFV, in accordance with campus policies on [Campus Demonstrations and Free Speech](#) found in the Student Handbook. For a University Sponsored response, as these events are, the CFV reserves the right to review speakers and programs.

> **3. Utilize the CFV as a resource for content:** The CFV is in a unique position to help student leaders develop the content for a faith-based response to recent events. Ideally, students will drive this important and creative work and use the CFV as a resource for review, guidance, and suggestions. The CFV will expect student leaders to provide a final version of the program by 24 hours prior to the event, giving the CFV the opportunity to share feedback. It is the expectation that the feedback would be incorporated by the planners. The CFV does not expect to create the content nor is it regulating/approving the content, but the CFV does serve as the representative of Butler for a faith-based program and thus it would expect to see the planning work and have room to provide input and guidance as needed.

B. Campus Safety: It is best practice to connect with BUPD in order to inform them of a timely response program and to discuss safety concerns. BUPD has always been able to provide support and presence as needed.

C. Marketing and Butler Leadership: Before student leaders reach out and publicize a program, best protocol includes informing the Provost's Office in order to share details with the Executive Council; the Associate VP of Marketing and Communications is also provided details.
> -There are instances where the University President or other members of the leadership cabinet may wish to be present or involved; running early plans through their offices is an important step prior to marketing the event.

-Similarly, the Marketing and Communications division has protocols about communicating out to the campus or using the wider Butler online platforms to communicate about a special event. Their approval for communication language is important.

-Any faith-based response program that has partnership with the CFV and represents Butler needs to include the CFV wordmark on all marketing material.

D. Logistics: Students leaders are largely responsible for organizing the logistics of an event; however, if students are meeting about specifications for a University-sponsored response, the CFV is happy to assist as needed. Logistical items student leaders should navigate with CFV support include reserving space, reserving sound equipment, plans for inclement weather, coordinating with BUPD and other partners, etc. Ideally, a podium with Butler University signage would be present.

E. Cost: In some cases there is a cost associated with these kinds of programs. Costs can be incurred due to the venue, ordering tech support, providing an honorarium for a guest speaker, purchasing special materials, etc. If the event is being organized by a recognized SGA organization, traditionally the costs have been covered in part by that organization. The CFV has also sponsored events and contributed towards costs as needed. Cost can be navigated on case-by-case basis depending on needs.

Typical Flow of Planning
-Students voice a need to the CFV.
-Time, date, location is determined with students and using University Events resources.
-Prior to any outreach, the CFV communicates the general plan to the Office of the Provost as the chief academic officer, who can then communicate details to Butler University leadership, including the Office of the President, Vice President of Student Affairs, the Office of the Dean of Students, and others. The CFV will also share details with Marketing and Communications for coordinated approval.
-With approval, logistics steps can occur to reserve spaces and continue planning with partners.
-CFV puts student leaders in contact with BUPD.
-Flyer and social media visuals are developed with CFV wordmark and other relevant logos.
-Marketing and Communications, the Office of the Dean of Students, and the Office of the Provost assist in outreach with the broader campus using the flyer and social media content developed.
-Student leaders develop the program and CFV can support as needed.
-Program is finalized in communication with all partners, including the CFV.
-Program is delivered and student leaders are responsible for final steps related to space reservation, tech reservation, etc.
-The CFV debriefs with student leaders and relevant partners as needed.

What if a group does not want to follow these expectations or this process?
If a group does not wish to follow the expectations or process outlined above, recognized student groups can create faith-based programs that respond to recent events on their own, within the limits of the Student Organizations Policies, Guidelines, and Procedures. The distinction would be that the program would not be a university-wide event, and it would not include support from the CFV, other senior leadership offices on campus, or Butler's Office of Marketing and Communications. BUPD would still be involved as needed. The event would reflect the message the organizing group wanted to share with the members of the community they invited rather than serving as a community-wide approach for all students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the wider Butler community.