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Icons & Images, Texts & Traditions: Towards the Development of an Interfaith Prayer Space at Illinois Wesleyan

Lisa Mishra
*Illinois Wesleyan University*

Nawaraj Chaulagain, Faculty Advisor
*Illinois Wesleyan University*

Elyse Nelson Winger, Faculty Advisor
*Illinois Wesleyan University*

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As the contours of American religious demography continue to develop and expand, there arises a need to engage its growing plurality in sincere and meaningful ways. Interfaith work has been instrumental in addressing this social transformation. Moving beyond the limits of tolerance – which, while necessary, cannot be the ultimate goal – pluralism uses the commonalities of all while celebrating the particularities that distinguish them from one another. On a college campus, this work manifests itself in the conversations we have, the programs we create, the communities we build, and the architectural spaces we provide. First, I study the religious history and spaces of Illinois Wesleyan. I then research worship across five faith groups in the US – Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Lastly, I research issues and challenges concerning multi-faith centers on other college campuses and make suggestions for our own space to be opened fall of 2015.