Biryani & Belonging: Coordinators' Guide

Our world is often divided by religion, politics, culture, and misunderstanding. Yet some of the most meaningful friendships begin when people simply sit down together, share a meal, and listen to one another's stories.

Biryani and Belonging Peace Feasts bring Hindus and Christians together to share food, conversation, and friendship. Like biryani itself, each person brings unique experiences, beliefs, traditions, and perspectives. When we gather with curiosity and respect, we discover something richer than any one ingredient alone.

This guide will help you and your co-host plan a Biryani and Belonging Peace Feast. Use it like a workbook. Discuss the questions together, write down your ideas, and make the gathering your own.

The goal is simple: Share food. Share stories. Build friendships.

What others have said:

🗨 *My favorite part of Biryani and Belonging was getting to talk about my experiences and listening to other people's stories and experiences.*

🗨 *I enjoyed eating lol, and open discussion, especially private discussion about personal faith and values.*

🗨 *The best part was that everyone was able to come together and share about their views.*

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STEP 1: IDENTIFY A CO-HOST

Ideally, your co-host:

- Identifies with the other faith tradition
- Is enthusiastic about building friendships
- Enjoys hospitality
- Has relationships within their community
- Wants to create a welcoming environment

Questions for Co-Hosts:

What excites you about hosting a Biryani and Belonging Peace Feast?

_____

What kinds of friendships do you hope might grow from this gathering?

_____

What is one thing you hope will happen through this Biryani and Belonging Peace Feast?

_____

STEP 2: PLAN THE GATHERING

The Five W's + Follow-through

1. WHO?
    - Who do you hope will attend? (Remember to aim for a 1:1 balance of Hindu and Christian participants if possible.)
    - Potential invitees (see sample invitation in STEP 3):

      _____

      _____

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2. WHAT?
    - Choose a discussion guide topic. Check peacefeast.net (under Resources) for an updated list of premade topical guides.
    - Possible topics: belonging, peace, hope, light, family, hospitality, friendship, meaning and purpose.
    - Which topic are you choosing? _____

3. WHERE?
    - Choose a location that is:
        - Comfortable
        - Welcoming
        - Quiet enough for conversation
        - Accessible
        - Religiously neutral
    - Ideas: apartment, dorm lounge, community room, restaurant, home, coffee shop
    - Your location choice: _____

4. WHEN?
    - Choose a time that avoids major conflicts. Consider religious holidays, school breaks, exams, major campus events
    - Your date & time: _____

5. WHY?
    - Why are you hosting this gathering?
    - Write a one-sentence purpose statement together.

      _____

      _____

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6. FOLLOW-THROUGH
    - Biryani & Belonging Peace Feasts are not meant to be a final "event". Instead, they should be used to spur on further friendships, story-telling, and conversations.
    - Take a moment to consider how you will encourage participants to take a follow-through step with someone that they met at Biryani & Belonging who is of the same gender, but from the other faith.
    - Remember that, if you have registered your Biryani & Belonging Peace Feast, you may have been awarded funds to support follow-through ideas!

Food and Hospitality

Food is one of the easiest ways to communicate welcome. Your gathering does not need to be elaborate. Simple food shared with warmth creates belonging.

- Keep in mind that many Hindu participants may be:
    - Vegetarian
    - Vegan
    - Avoiding beef
    - Following specific religious food customs
- Always:
    - ask guests about dietary needs beforehand
    - label foods clearly
    - allow vegetarian and vegan participants to serve themselves first

Gathering Styles

	Chai & Conversation	Potluck Gathering	Hosted Meal	Restaurant Gathering
Where	Dorm, apartment, coffee shop	Apartment, home, dorm lounge	Home or community space	Indian or other restaurant
Food	Tea, snacks, sweets	Everyone brings something	Prepared or catered meal	Ordered meal
Group size	4-10	8-25	10-40	6-20
Cost	$	$$	$-$$$	$$-$$$

Registering your Biryani & Belonging Peace Feast

For a season, Peace Feasts are being funded through a generous grant! To track, fund, and train your Biryani & Belonging Peace Feast, please register your gathering at tiny.cc/bb-pf-registration.

STEP 3: INVITE YOUR FRIENDS

Aim for an even balance of Hindu and Christian participants. The most important factor is inviting people who are interested in meaningful conversation and friendship.

Sample Invitation: "A friend and I are hosting a Biryani and Belonging Peace Feast on [date]. It's an opportunity for Hindus and Christians to share food, stories, and conversation in a welcoming environment. We'll spend time getting to know one another and talking about the experiences and beliefs that have shaped our lives. It's not a debate or a formal dialogue. The goal is friendship, understanding, and belonging. We'd love for you to join us."

STEP 4: PRE-GATHERING CHECKLIST

Are you ready?

- ☐ Decide who will emcee the gathering by welcoming, explaining the time together, and sharing the Ground Rules (found on next page)
- ☐ Confirm location
- ☐ Confirm food
- ☐ Send reminders
- ☐ Print discussion questions
- ☐ Prepare name tags (optional)
- ☐ Arrange seating
- ☐ Prepare follow-through plans
- ☐ Feedback will be required after Biryani & Belonging. Print or display the feedback link or QR code for folks to use at the end of the gathering. (Found on the last page of this Coordinators' Guide.)

Ground Rules

1. Listen without interrupting
2. Speak from personal experience
3. No debating or correcting
4. Everyone is free to share or to pass

Biryani & Belonging Peace Feast Feedback (required for registered PFs)

tiny.cc/bb-peace-feast-feedback	tiny.cc/bb-peace-feast-feedback	tiny.cc/bb-peace-feast-feedback
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