

# The Department of Religious Studies Presents: Women's Voices Conference

The Women's Voices conference will examine the history, practice, significance, and impact of Muslim female preachers in Africa, focusing on their roles and contributions, and the challenges they face within diverse cultural, social, geographic, historical, and theological contexts. We invite contributions from scholars and practitioners and especially encourage African scholars and practitioners to consider contributing.

## Conference Dates

May 18 & 19, 2026

We are interested in papers that explore, but are not limited to, the following topics: Historical perspectives, including the evolution of women's roles in Islamic preaching and religious leadership. Theological contributions, such as interpretations of scripture and religious discourse by Muslim female preachers. Contemporary dynamics, examining the roles of female preachers in modern Muslim societies, including their impact on religious education, family and community life. Intersectionality and the interplay of gender, race, and class in shaping the experiences of female preachers. Challenges and opportunities that may include societal, institutional, and personal barriers to, or opportunities within women's religious leadership. Comparative analyses or cross-regional studies of female preachers in various Muslim-majority and minority contexts.

We are open to papers that engage different methodological approaches, including but not limited to ethnographic, historical, theological, religious studies, media studies, textual studies, gender studies, ethics, sociological and political. We also welcome studies of Muslim female preachers that are geographical diverse within Africa.



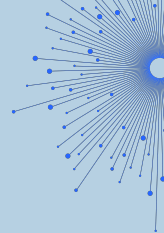
**2026 Women's Voices Conference  
Central Daylight Time in the US (CDT)**

**Day 1: Monday, May 18, 2026 (CDT)**

- 9:00-10:00 Opening Remarks and Keynote
- 10:30-12:30 Panel 1: Gendered Religious Authority and Female Preaching
- 12:30-13:30 Lunch Break
- 13:30-15:30 Panel 2: Ethics, Moral Formation, and Gendered Religious Instruction
- 16:00-18:00 Panel 3: Women as Producers of Islamic Knowledge: Theology, Tafsir, and Law

**Day 2: Tuesday, May 19, 2026 (CDT)**

- 10:10-12:30 Panel 4: Digital Islam and the Transformation of Female Religious Authority
- 12:30-13:30 Lunch Break
- 14:10-16:10 Panel 5: Institutional Authority and Female Religious Leadership: Al-Azhar and Beyond
- 16:10-18:00 Panel 6: Community, Voice, and Social Transformation

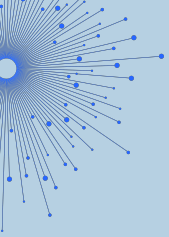


**Detailed Conference Program**  
**Day 1: May 18, 2026**  
**Central Daylight Time in the US (CDT)**

Day 1: Monday, May 18, 2026 (CDT)

- 9:00-10:00      Opening Remarks and Keynote
- 10:30-12:30      **Panel 1:** Gendered Religious Authority and Female Preaching  
**Chair:** Dr. Asmaa Benbaba
- Ahmad Mustafa and Asmaa Benbaba, “Female Preachers in Egypt and Morocco: Styles, Themes, and Content”
  - Binyamin Lawal, “Alternative Space: Visibility of Muslim Female Preachers on University Campuses”
  - Safina Garba Isa, “Gender, Religion, and Authority: Historicising the Muslim Female Preaching Voice in Northern Nigeria”
- 12:30-13:30      Lunch Break
- 13:30-15:30      **Panel 2:** Ethics, Moral Formation, and Gendered Religious Instruction  
**Chair:** Reham Salamah
- Abdulkarim Auwal, “Culture, Religion, and Marriage in Northern Nigeria: A Case Study of Maryam Lemu’s Insights”
  - Rahina Muazu, “Female Muslim Preachers and the Moral Formation of Women: A Comparative Study of Nigeria and the United States”
  - Aisha Salis Abdullahi, “Islamic Work Ethics among Muslim Women Workers in Jos South”
- 16:00-18:00      **Panel 3:** Women as Producers of Islamic Knowledge: Theology, Tafsir, and Law  
**Chair:** Dr. Rahina Muazu
- Sadiya Sabiu Lalo, “Women’s Voices in the Minbar: Theological Contributions of Muslim Female Preachers in Contemporary Africa”
  - Muhammad Abubakar Yakasai, “Mariya Maitafsiri: The Intellectual Emergence of a Female Scholar in Kano’s Islamic Tradition”
  - Maryam Sharrieff, “Khadimatul Qur’an: Sheikha Mariama Niasse as a 21st-Century West African Mujaddida and Transnational Islamic Authority”





**Detailed Conference Program**  
**Day 2: May 19, 2026**  
**Central Daylight Time in the US (CDT)**

Day 2: Tuesday, May 19, 2026 (CDT)

- 10:20-12:30      **Panel 4:** Digital Islam and the Transformation of Female Religious Authority  
**Chair:** Professor James Yeku
- Murtala Ibrahim, “Algorithmic Domestic Piety: Gendered Seclusion and the Rise of Female Digital Islamic Preachers in Northern Nigeria”
  - Moruff Mudasiru, “‘Who Speaks for Islam?’ Muslim Female Preachers, New Media Worlds, and the Politics of Knowledge in Contemporary Southwest Nigeria”
  - Hassan Ndzovu, “From Madrassa to Microphone: Muslim Women and the Making of Religious Authority in Kenya”
  - Ahmad Mustafa: “Between Institutional Authority and Digital Charisma: Media Performance and Female Religious Preaching in Contemporary Egypt”
- 12:30-13:30      Lunch Break
- 14:10-16:10      **Panel 5:** Institutional Authority and Female Religious Leadership: Al-Azhar and Beyond  
**Chair:** Professor Jacqueline Brinton
- Zeinab Fahmy and Fahmy Abdelkawy, “Women’s Participation in Official Fatwa: Egypt’s Dar al-Ifta as a Case Study of Institutional Religious Authority”
  - Reham Salamah, “Becoming a Female Faith Actor: Women’s Leadership and Religious Authority at Al-Azhar”
  - Osaama Raslan, (Title)
- 16:10-18:00      **Panel 6:** Community, Voice, and Social Transformation  
**Chair:** Professor Jacqueline Brinton
- Hana Abbasian, “Digital Sisterhood: Intersectional Identity, Ethics, and Community Building in Muslim African Women’s Podcasts”
  - Ricka Mammah, “Community Power and Equitable Justice: Religious and Community Leaders Addressing Intimate Partner Violence”



# Women's Voices Conference Contributors and Partners

This event is made possible thanks to the support of our sponsors at the University of Kansas:

KU Department of Religious Studies <https://religiousstudies.ku.edu/>

KU Department of African and African-American Studies <https://afs.ku.edu/>

KU Kansas African Studies Center <https://kasc.ku.edu/>

KU Watson Library <https://lib.ku.edu/locations/watson>

