

For the First Time Ever, Washington's National Cathedral Will Hold Friday Muslim Prayer Service

The National Cathedral in Washington will be hosting a Muslim prayer service for the first time on Friday.

The event has been planned by the Rev. Gina Campbell, the cathedral's director of liturgy, and South African Ambassador to the United States Ebrahim Rasool, who is a Muslim.

A statement by Rasool called the service "a dramatic moment in the world and in Muslim-Christian relations."

Rizwan Jaka, a spokesman for the ADAMS mosque in Sterling, Virginia, hopes the prayer service will set a precedent.

"We want the world to see the Christian community is partnering with us and is supporting our religious freedom in the same way we are calling for religious freedom for all minorities in Muslim countries," Jaka said. "Let this be a lesson to the world."

The Episcopal cathedral has hosted Muslims at various interfaith services in the past. But planners say this is the first time the cathedral has invited Muslims to lead their own prayer service there, which they're calling a "powerful symbolic gesture."