

The Place of Faith in British Education

SEEFF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

3 September - 10.00 am-4.00 pm

Registration from 9.30 am

Stripe Building, University of Winchester, SO22 4NR

Keynote Speaker Alan Brine

(former RE lead, OFSTED)



followed by a brief **AGM**

Cost (including a vegetarian lunch) - £20.00 (concessions available)

Co-sponsored by The University of Winchester and NASACRE

More details - elizabeth.jenkerson@btopenworld.com or seeffchair@gmail.com

GREETINGS TO YOU ALL for Passover, Easter, Mahavir Jayanti, Hanuman Jayanti, Buddhist New Year and Sikh New Year!

I write this as a Christian, so I am nearing the end of Lent and preparing for Easter and the joys of Eastertide. Other faiths too are celebrating and remembering at this turn of the year when new life is seen in the natural world. Remembrance is important in all faiths - remembering all God has done for us; how people of different faiths have stood together to protect and preserve others who were not of their faith, but who were seen as fellow human beings, remembering those who have died and what they have contributed to our faith traditions; and the terrible things we have done in the name of religion or as nations. 2015 is the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and the 100th anniversary of the Ancient Churches of the East being almost eradicated from their original homeland in ancient Mesopotamia. But we are still being shocked by deeds of violence and hatred being perpetrated, especially in the Middle East: we need to pray for those who are oppressed and also for their persecutors. Each day we need to pray for the **peace of the world**, for **peace in our own country**, for **peace in our own city or town**, for **peace in our own hearts**.

On 7 May we will have the General Election when we are given the chance to vote and determine the nature of our government for the next five years. As people of faith, the advice that is offered to us is: **'Listen, Think, Pray, Vote'**. Some local interfaith groups have already held Hustings, and it is hoped that many more will do so before 7 May. Leaders of faith traditions have offered their members points for consideration, fifty-seven page documents, or a series of points of principle. But each of them indicates that as people of faith we ought to participate in the democratic process of our society. **You must register to vote by 20 April** – do so online www.gov.uk/register-to-vote or ring your local authority office.

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With the publication of the serious Case Review Report on the sexual exploitation of children in Oxford we saw the result of failure to live lives in accordance with the tenets of our faiths and the law. An open letter was signed by thirty-two faith and community leaders from the city, clearly stating that the sexual exploitation of children is condemned by all people of faith and contrary to all our teachings, and also pledging to support the civic and public authorities in their efforts to stamp out this evil. Each of our communities can assist in this; first, by *realising* that sexual exploitation of children can happen in *any* community; none of us is too holy, too other-worldly to not need to be alert to this evil; and second by educating ourselves and our congregations in how to recognise signs of abuse, and by having policies in place that can cope with any disclosure. (If your congregation does not yet have its Safeguarding Policy, contact your local social services department, or ask SEEFF to give you some guidance.) But above all we must strive for good relationships with the public services so that they can help us as we help them.

I wish you all the joys of Easter and of the Feasts being kept by our various communities, and growth in peace and contentment.

Bede Gerrard seeffchair@gmail.com

REPORTS OF EVENTS FROM AROUND THE SOUTH EAST

RELIGIONS FOR PEACE - 28 February, Friends House, Euston

The meeting was for UK faith communities and about progressing towards a world free of nuclear weapons. With the forthcoming election the London venue was appropriate, because of the question of Trident. About forty people from various religions were present, and also two nuclear disarmament specialists.

The meeting was opened by Jehangir Sarosh (Gen. Sec., European Council of Religious Leaders; Exec. Dir., Religions for Peace), stating that this was all about human dignity.

Speakers from faith communities followed: *Steve Hucklesby* (Policy Adviser, Joint Public Issues Team, Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Churches working together for peace and justice. Steve reminded us of the public awareness that prevailed at the time of 'The Church and the Bomb', but now things are different; nobody threatens us. Yet In 2009 Rowan Williams said the bomb was against human dignity. He said that as faiths together we could have impact.

Suzanne Pritchards (Mission and Advocacy Cluster of Soka Gakkai International), described how SGI-UK had been founded by a Japanese priest. She said the real enemy we had to face was the way of thinking that justifies nuclear weapons.

(At intervals between speakers, Rebecca Sharkey (UK Coordinator, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons), provided short film clips to illustrate the serious nature of nuclear weapons.)

Dr Gunnar Stålsett (Bishop Emeritus of Oslo, Church of Norway; Moderator of the European Council of Religious Leaders, recalled large anti-nuclear weapon events in the eighties. Big protest marches may have ceased but he emphasised the pressing need for dialogue. The task was to fill the gap between International law and humanitarian law. He referred to 'Neighbour as myself', 'Love of God' and 'Love of oneself' and saw the general direction of faiths and denominations as a confluence of the sanctity of human life and protection of the environment.

Rebecca Johnson, (Executive Director of the Institute for Disarmament and Diplomacy), pointed to the inevitability of nuclear accident, and praised the initiative of over 150 States now working to by-pass the entrenchment of the 'nuclear club' by creating a Nuclear Ban Treaty with no veto. She said 40 countries had already signed up and we could add our names to the 'Pax Pledge'.

Rebecca Sharkey recommended the help the ICAN Resource Guide could provide.

In the afternoon, groups worked on what they would like to see happening and what individuals could contribute. Results were shared and commitments were made, before Stephen Herman and Tania Porqueddu of Religions for Peace summed up the day.

A NUCLEAR-FREE FUTURE

Our world faces many challenges including oppressive poverty, climate change, violent extremism and emerging national rivalry. Addressing these challenges requires strong relationships across nations, founded on mutual co-operation, trust and shared prosperity. Security policies based on the threat of the use of nuclear weapons are immoral and ultimately self-defeating.

We must move beyond the division of our world into nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states and ensure that all states make good their commitment to negotiations on the universal, legally verifiable and enforceable elimination of nuclear weapons. We call on all nuclear weapon states to join in this endeavour. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference begins next month, and we urge nuclear weapons states, and the international community, to develop a robust plan of action that will rid the world of nuclear weapons.

26 inter faith signatories, include *Maulana Shahid Raza, Founder Trustee, British Muslim Forum; The Most Revd Malcolm McMahon, Archbishop of Liverpool; Bharti Taylor, Executive Director, Hindu Forum of Europe; Lord Indarjit Singh of Wimbledon, Director, Network of Sikh Organisations, Ven. B Seelawmala, Head Priest, London Buddhist Vihara.*

A CONVERSATION ABOUT EXTREMISM



Around fifty people gathered in Christ Church Woking's 'Beacon Cafe' to consider the topical question 'Religious Extremism: virtue or vice?'. Three speakers, Philip Goldenberg (Jewish), Peter Harwood (Christian) and Kauser Akhtar (Muslim) explored the theme from different faith perspectives, offering a range of interesting and helpful ideas and comment.

The Cafe setting lent itself to fruitful discussion over refreshments and a number of interesting questions from the audience were presented to the panel in a Question and Answer session.

Woking People of Faith is committed to facilitating understanding across faith and cultural boundaries - particularly in the current climate where frenzied reporting of shocking violence (claimed to be carried out in the name of different religions) generates fear and growing prejudice against whole racial and/or faith groups. Woking People of Faith works hard to provide a forum where local people of different faiths and cultures can talk, listen and learn about one another. Such conversation dispels ignorance and challenges prejudice and fear - thus better enabling a diverse community to live constructively together.

WOKING'S MUSLIM BURIAL GROUND, MOSQUE, AND THE INDIAN ARMY: ONLINE RESOURCE

The new online resource can be found on the Exploring Surrey's Past (ESP) website under the theme 'Military and War' at www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/themes/subjects/military/india-woking/
Featured in the resource are:

- Digitised panels of the 'The Great War: From India to Woking' display (courtesy of the Shah Jahan Mosque, Horsell Preservation Society and Woking BC)
- Additional information researched from our collections and elsewhere about Muslim soldiers, the role of the Shah Jahan Mosque, and support in Woking during the First World War
- Indian Army Facts
- Two Muslim soldier case studies (Mahrup Shah and Alaf Khan)
- A pdf 'Guide to Tracing sources for the Indian Army' which covers the First and Second World Wars, and sources held at SHC and elsewhere. This guide isn't finite and can be added to as new information is discovered / published.

AN INVITATION: TOWARDS REINFORCED RELATIONSHIPS AND PEACE!

Anyone in your group who has a special concern about the subject of nuclear weapons and human dignity and would like to be in touch to learn about developments, please contact by emailing Steve Hucklesby. hucklesbys@methodistchurch.org.uk

TWELFTH NATIONAL PEACE SYMPOSIUM - RELIGION, FREEDOM AND PEACE

On 14 March, the *World Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalifa*, His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad delivered the keynote address at the Twelfth National Peace Symposium hosted by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community UK.

The event was held at the *Baitul Futuh Mosque* in London with an audience of more than 1,000 people, with more than 600 non-Ahmadi guests including Government Ministers, Ambassadors, Members of both Houses of Parliament, and various other dignitaries and guests. A special guest this year was Professor Heiner Bielefeldt, the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief.



His Holiness spoke of the increased threat of radicalisation, warning of the potential danger it posed to the world; rather than religion, the root cause of today's mounting conflicts in both the Muslim and non-Muslim world was an **“unquenchable thirst for power, influence and resources”**.

He categorically condemned terrorist groups such as *ISIS*, *Boko Haram* and *Al-Shabaab* as acting completely against the teachings of Islam, and quoted verses of the Holy Quran that refuted all forms of extremism.

During the event, His Holiness presented Mrs Sindhutai Sapkal, renowned as a 'mother of orphans' with the *Ahmadiyya Muslim Prize for the Advancement of Peace* in recognition of her outstanding efforts to personally alleviate the suffering of more than 1,400 orphaned children, providing them with food, shelter and education.

Mrs Sindhutai Sapkal, spoke of how she overcame childhood poverty in India, and said that such experiences had motivated her future humanitarian efforts. She said: “The difficulties I faced when I was young have enabled me to do something good with my life, and so I hope to be remembered as a person who helped those who were in need.”

Both before and after the proceedings, His Holiness met personally with various dignitaries and guests and also met with members of the western and Asian media.

Full report
www.loveforallhatedfornone.org/muslim-leader-says-justice-and-honesty-required-to-prevent-outbreak-of-third-world-war/



NOTES FROM HINDU FORUM

With the UK General Election drawing ever closer and the lack of political engagement within our community a major issue, what better time than now to get involved and learn more about the political process, at the same time as meeting new people and building your network!

Following discussions with the Hon Shailesh Vara MP, CHN is excited to bring you the chance to get involved in grass-roots political work (such as campaigning and canvassing), supporting the campaign more generally, meeting those already on the political path and also learning more about how the process works and how one can get involved and engage actively in British society.

Regardless of the party that you choose to vote for or support, we at CHN would encourage you to take an active role in the political process and we hope to bring you similar opportunities with other political parties in due course. www.cityhindusnetwork.org.uk/events/hustings-in-the-city/

CCJ FAREWELL AND WELCOME TO TRUSTEES



Trustees and members of staff gathered for a farewell lunch, to express thanks and appreciation on behalf of CCJ to the Rt Revd Nigel McCulloch KCVO for his longstanding commitment to CCJ in the role of Chairman.

The lunch was hosted by trustee Michael Hockney at the Athenaeum Club on Pall Mall on Tuesday 17th March.

The bishop was presented with an Ashkenazi Haggadah along with a picture of Westminster Abbey (painted specially by artist and CCJ member Paul Winner). Bishop

Nigel completed his term as Chairman on 31 January 2015 and was succeeded by the Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave.

OXFORD EAST AND OXFORD WEST AND ABINGDON CONSTITUENCIES HUSTINGS - 16 March, Wesley Memorial Hall, Oxford

When our Oxford Council of Faiths originally organised the Hustings we wondered quite how many people would turn up, and in the event rather rainy weather did not encourage an evening out. All eight of the candidates already declared for the two constituencies had said they would come to the Hustings, together with the Conservative leader of the County Council (representing both the absent Oxford West MP and the Oxford East Conservative candidate). The eight included two from the Socialist Party of Great Britain, and one each from the UKIP, Green, LibDem, NHA party, and Labour candidates together with the Oxford East Labour MP. In the audience were two people who would register their candidacy next day (officially the first registration day): one from the Monster Raving Loony 'Tea' Party and an Independent.

The candidates arrived to just a sprinkling of people in the hall, but it then steadily filled until people were sitting on the floor and standing in the corridor. They came from the Jewish congregation, the mosques, Baha'is, Unitarians, Christian Scientists, Quakers, Anglicans, Catholics, Methodists, Orthodox, and many other Christians, people of all faiths and none.



Before the Hustings actually began, an official from the City Council urged us to register to vote (it was still not too late!), and left contact details cards for doing this. Each party's representative or candidate determined their speaking order by picking a letter from a box. Each of the panel spoke for four-five minutes; outlining their party's proposals for government, saying a little about why they had put themselves forward, and the two 'yet to declare' candidates gave similar presentations of their policy platforms.

There was a great deal of agreement about what needs to be done, and about which actions are of value for our society. Where the panel differed was how the aims were to be achieved, perhaps through taxing and spending, or carrying on, with further austerity to balance outgoings with income. All were eager to say that their party held the same values as does OxCoF, of tolerance and the respect for difference, of help to the less fortunate.

After a short break came question time. Prepared questions which had been placed in a box by those attending the Hustings were introduced by the Chair, Mrs Penny Faust. They covered a wide range of topics: the health service and further privatisation; transparency in public life; the disclosure of vested interest; the lack of affordable housing, the treatment of homeless people and those busking on our streets, the lowering of our carbon footprint and the conservation of energy through better insulation of homes.

They were dealt with by each candidate, occasionally to a gasp of astonishment at a reply, one 'heckler' even asking if one of the candidates had actually meant what he said (and not *accidentally* used a double negative!). All the exchanges were good-natured, even where there was obvious disagreement at what had been said.

After two and a half hours (do people really only now have an average concentration span of under five minutes?) there were still questions not put to the speakers, but the hall needed to be cleared and tidied at the end of our rental time, and so, after thanks from the Chair to all who had come to the Hustings, it was time to leave, reflecting on what we had heard and those who had spoken in the evening. Were we decided about which of them we should vote for? A great deal might happen before Election Day on 7 May!



HISTORIC ENGLAND AND THE MAINTAINENCE OF FAITH BUILDINGS

From 1 April, for part of its work *English Heritage* will have a new name: *Historic England*. This will emphasise the separation of the control and management of the properties held in trust by English Heritage, and the work in the assisting of individuals and organisations to maintain buildings that are listed as significant in design, historic significance, architectural merit, or are culturally significant. It is this latter part of the work that will now be under the *Historic England* banner.

Historically EH has been associated almost solely with the upkeep of historic Anglican churches and the opening to the public of historical ruins. It is now becoming an organisation that reflects the diversity of

society. All faith buildings that fulfil the necessary criteria are now able to receive grants for their upkeep. There is also important work to do in advising faith communities about ways of protecting their buildings.

With a greater variety of faith traditions now occupying listed buildings, the communities become aware that they can be helped preserve the heritage of British culture. For most financial help the building needs to have applied for and obtained Grade I or II* listed status. You can apply online for it to be given 'listed' status. The criteria are fairly strict, but do not just depend on the age of your building. Was yours the first building in the UK to be a place of worship for your tradition, was it purpose-built or by a significant architect or designer, is its interior of particular significance? All these and other criteria are taken into consideration for giving it 'listed' status.

Be careful when deciding whether you apply to have your building given listed status! While it can open up channels of funding, it can restrict some of the alterations you can make. If, in the future, you would like to demolish and rebuild on your site, it might prove impossible if your building is listed.

Perhaps you do not wish to have your building listed, but just to raise the profile of your faith community and its place of worship in your local area. There are some fairly simple ways of doing this: if your building is off a main road, or hidden somewhere out-of-the way, see if a street sign directing people to it could be provided: contact your local Highways Department. There will be an initial cost, but once it is in place there will be only small (or even no) maintenance costs. If your town participates in the September *Open Buildings* initiative, ask to have your faith building included. If you are interested in taking part in the annual *Ride and Stride* event, ask if your place of worship could be included in their list - it is a real opportunity to welcome people to your building. You need to be prepared to have it open to visitors for a whole day - they will often be interested in 'added extras' you can offer – information boards about your faith, a display of photographs, or simple refreshments (walking and cycling can be thirsty work on a hot day!).

Visit www.historicengland.org.uk/ and learn more, and how you can benefit from the work to champion England's heritage. Remember that you and your faith group are part of that heritage and *Historic England's* assistance is open to you.

Here are links to other things mentioned:

- Ride and Stride - annual day of visiting churches and chapels of all denominations, welcoming visitors but also fund raising www.nationalchurchestrust.org/how-we-help/ridestride
- Heritage Open Days – annual day of visiting all sorts of heritage sites, including places of worship of all faith groups www.heritageopendays.org.uk/
- Signage from local authorities so people can find places of worship - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-brown-tourist-signs-on-roads-the-highways-agency-manage>
- Religious Education Council Sacred Space, Learning outside the classroom - <http://religionseducationcouncil.org.uk/educators/projects/learning-outside-the-classroom>
- Arts and Humanities Research Council Connected Communities projects www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Research-funding/Connected-Communities/Pages/Connected-Communities.aspx
- Help from Historic England to develop plans for your place of worship through describing step by step your intentions for it. www.statementsofsignificance.org.uk/

2015 INTERFAITH CALENDAR AND INFORMATION

APRIL

NB Most Faith celebrations begin at sunset on the evening of the date given in the calendar

- 2 April MAUNDY THURSDAY** *Christian* Commemoration, often associated with the ritual washing of people's feet, of the first Lord's Supper when Jesus blessed bread and wine and commanded His disciples to remember Him whenever they did this
- 3 April GOOD FRIDAY** *Christian* Remembrance of the crucifixion of Jesus, and related events
MAHAVIR JAYANTI *Jain* Festival honouring Lord Mahavira on the founder's birthday. Shrines are visited. Teachings are reviewed and reflected upon
- 4-11 April PESACH (PASSOVER)** *Jewish* Celebration of the deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt. The story of the Exodus is recounted, and the ongoing struggle of all peoples for freedom from internal and external tyranny is celebrated. A special meal is a central feature (begins at sunset on 3 April) (see p.9)
- 4 April THEREVADIN NEW YEAR** *Buddhist*
HANUMAN JAYANTI *Hindu* Celebration of Hanuman who was an embodiment of Lord Rama. Devotion and selfless work are encouraged

- LAZARUS SATURDAY** *Orthodox Christian* Celebration of the resurrection of Lazarus by Jesus, celebrated on the eve of Palm Sunday; revealing Jesus as 'the resurrection and life' of all mankind
- 5 April EASTER** *Christian* Remembrance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead after His crucifixion on Good Friday (Orthodox Christians keep the Feast after Jews keep Passover.)
- PALM SUNDAY** *Orthodox Christian*
- 10 April HOLY FRIDAY** *Orthodox Christian*
- 12 April PASCCHA (EASTER)** *Orthodox Christian* Remembrance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead after His crucifixion on Holy Friday
- 14 April BAISAKHI - NEW YEAR** *Sikh* Greetings that wish good life in coming days are exchanged. The day commemorates the founding of the Khalsa, a distinctive Sikh brotherhood
- 15 April LORD'S EVENING MEAL** *Jehovah's Witness* Jesus celebrated the Passover with his apostles, dismissed Judas Iscariot, and then instituted the Lord's Evening Meal. Like the Jewish Passover this is an annual celebration
- 16 April YOM HASHOAH / THE CATASTROPHE** *Jewish* Day established to remember the six million Jews killed by the Nazis in 1933-45. Observed by many non-Jews as well. The Day was introduced in 1953, one of only four official Days added to the Jewish calendar in 2,000 years – it is that important. The Jewish community's day for internal reflection, the opportunity to educate its own children to unite in passing on the torch of remembrance, to honour the victims of the Shoah and to recognise the achievements of its survivors and refugees who have given so much to society (begins at sunset on 15 April)
- 21 April FIRST DAY OF RIDVAN** *Baha'i* Commemoration of the 12-day period in 1863 when Baha'u'llah declared that he was God's messenger for this age. Work is to be suspended on days 1, 9, and 12 of the festival (begins at sunset on 20 April)
- 23 April ST GEORGE'S DAY** *Christian* Commemoration of the Martyr George in Asia Minor. Devotion to him was brought to England by returning Crusaders; he became the saint protector of England
- 24 April YOM HA'ATZMAUT** *Jewish* Israel's national day, commemorates the Declaration of Independence in 1948. Celebrated on the 5th day of the month Iyar (Hebrew calendar), or a preceding or following day (depends on the day of the week). Yom Ha'atzmaut is preceded by Yom Hazikaron, the Israeli Fallen Soldiers and Victims of Terrorism Remembrance Day
- 29 April NINTH DAY OF RIDVAN** *Baha'i* (begins at sunset on 28 April)

MAY

- 1 May BELTANE – SAMHAIN** *Wicca/Pagan* Celebration of the conjoining of the goddess with the energy of the god in the sacred marriage which is the basis of all creation (begins at sunset on 30 April)
- 2 May TWELFTH DAY OF RIDVAN** *Baha'i* Celebration of the arrival of Baha'u'llah at a sacred garden (begins at sundown on 1 May)
- 4 May VISAKHA PUJA - BUDDHA DAY** *Buddhist* Marking of the birth, enlightenment and death (attainment of Nirvana) of Lord Buddha
- 7 May LAG B'OMER** *Jewish* Observation of the counting of the day - the link - between Pesach and Shavout
- 14 May ASCENSION DAY** *Christian* Recognition of the departure of Jesus from earth after the Resurrection. It is one of the earliest observed celebrations in Christian calendar. It is observed with worship including prayers and music
- 13 May LAILAT AL MIRAJ** *Islam* Observance of Mohammed's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and his ascension to heaven (begins at sunset on 12 May)
- 21 May ASCENSION DAY** *Orthodox Christian* Recognition of the departure of Jesus from earth after the Resurrection. It is one of the earliest observed celebrations in Christian calendar. It is observed with worship
- DECLARATION OF THE BAB** *Baha'i* Recognition of the declaration in 1844 by Ali Muhammed that he is the anticipated "Coming One" of all religions. Work is suspended (begins at sunset on 20 May)
- 24-25 May SHAVUOT** *Jewish* Celebration of Moses' descent from Mt Sinai with the ten commandments. Plants and flowers are used in decorations (begins at sundown on 23 May)
- 24 May PENTECOST** *Christian* Observation, fifty days after Easter, of the day when the God the Holy Spirit came to the disciples in the forms of tongues of fire and rushing wind
- 29 May ASCENSION OF BAHA'U'LLAH** *Baha'i* Celebration of the rising of the spirit of Abdu'l-Baha to the heavenly dwelling (begins at sundown on 28 May)

- 31 May PENTECOST** *Orthodox Christian* Observation, fifty days after Easter, of the day when the God the Holy Spirit came to the disciples in the forms of tongues of fire and rushing wind
- TRINITY SUNDAY** *Western Christian* The Sunday on which the belief in one God in three persons but undivided is celebrated

JUNE

- 1 June LAILAT AL BARA'AH** *Islam* Night of Forgiveness. A night of prayer to Allah for forgiveness of the dead. Preparation for Ramadan through intense prayer (begins at sunset on 31 May)
- 16 June GURU ARJAN DEV MARTYRDOM** *Sikh* Time of remembering those who have suffered for the faith. Observed by reading the Guru Granth Sahib
- 18 June RAMADAN BEGINS** *Islam* Ninth month on Islamic calendar, devoted to the commemoration of Muhammad's reception of the divine revelation recorded in the Qur'an. The event begins when authorities in Saudi Arabia sight the new moon of the 9th month. It is the holiest period of the Islamic Year. There is strict fasting from sunrise to sunset (begins at sunset on 17 June)
- 21 June SUMMER SOLSTICE – LITHA** *Wicca/Pagan* Time when the earth is most inclined away from the sun. (begins at sundown on 20 June)
- 29 June SAINTS PETER AND PAUL** *Christian* Day honouring the two most active of the Apostles in the spread of the Christian Church. For Orthodox Christians the 'Peter and Paul' fast, begun on the Monday following the second Sunday after Pentecost, ends today.

JULY

- 2 July ASALHA PUJA DAY** *Buddhist* Observance of the day when Gautama Buddha made his first public proclamation to five ascetics at Deer Park, Benares. He taught the middle way, the noble eight-fold path and the four noble truths (*see explanation foot of page*)
- 9 July MARTYRDOM OF THE BAB** *Baha'i* Ali Mohammed was executed in 1850 by Persian political and religious powers. Observed by abstaining from commerce and work (begins at sunset on 8 July)
- 13 July ULAMBANA (OBON)** *Japanese Buddhist* festival to honour deceased ancestors. Involves lighting of bonfires, traditional meals, paper lanterns, folk dances
- LAILAT AL KADR** *Islam* Night of Destiny. First revelation of Qur'an to Prophet Mohammed. Observed during the last ten days of Ramadan. Prayers to Allah for a good destiny (begins at sunset on 12 July)
- 18-21 July EID AL FITR** *Islam* 3 day feast marking the close of Ramadan. It is a festival of thanksgiving to Allah for enjoying the month of Ramadan. It involves wearing finest clothing, saying prayers, and fostering understanding with other religions (begins at sunset on 17 July)
- 23 July EMPEROR HAILE SELASSI BIRTHDAY** *Rastafari* celebration honouring their founder
- 24 July PIONEER DAY** *Mormon* Observation of arrival of first settlers at Great Salt Lake, USA, on 24 July, 1847
- 26 July TISH'A B'AV** *Jewish* Day of fasting in remembrance of the destructions of the Temple in 586 b.c.e. and 70 c.e (begins at sunset on 25 July)

THE FOUNDATION BELIEFS OF BUDDHISM

The Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path

These were taught by the Buddha (a word which means the Enlightened One) about 2500 years ago.

They are essentially the same through every sect and tradition of Buddhism.

1. All life knows suffering Nobody gets what they want out of life.
2. The cause of suffering is ignorance and clinging Wanting it is the problem.
3. There is a way to end suffering By learning not to want it.
4. This is the way to end suffering - The Eightfold Path.
 1. Right Understanding Learning the nature of reality and the truth about life.
 2. Right Aspiration Making the commitment to living in such a way that our suffering can end.
 3. Right Effort Just Do It. No Excuses.
 4. Right Speech Speaking the truth in a helpful and compassionate way.
 5. Right Conduct Living a life consistent with our values.
 6. Right Livelihood Earning a living in a way that doesn't hurt others.
 7. Right Mindfulness Recognizing the value of the moment; living where we are.
 8. Right Concentration Expanding our consciousness through meditation.

FOR A REFLECTION ON PESACH (PASSOVER)

[www.ccj.org.uk/Articles/434759/The Council of/News/Pesach Reflection.aspx](http://www.ccj.org.uk/Articles/434759/The_Council_of/News/Pesach_Reflection.aspx)

COMING EVENTS

Hampshire Interfaith Network

UNDERSTANDING DIALOGUE - FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

Thursday 9 April, 10.30 am-4.00 pm, University of Winchester

Alongside some short talks introducing seminal ideas from David Bohm, Hans Georg Gadamer, Martin Buber, William Isaacs and others, our main emphasis will be on working together as a group to experiment with practical ways of thinking together.

This workshop is part of the University of Winchester MA Reconciliation programme but is open to anyone. It is likely to be relevant to anyone with an interest in communication, social sciences, inter-personal psychology or inter-religious encounter. It does not require any specific academic background.

Workshop fee £20. **Led by** Simon Keyes, Fellow in Reconciliation, St Ethelburga's; Visiting Professor, University of Winchester

More information / to book a place 07973 446846; angharad@stethelburgas.org

FAITH AND PEACE EVENTS

"I TOO, REMEMBER DUST" - PEACE-BUILDING, POLITICS & THE ARTS

University of Winchester - 7, 8 September

This conference will be exploring the themes of peace building, politics and the arts in the former Yugoslavia and other national and international contexts. This will include the issues of the continuing struggle against Islamophobia, Anti-Semitism and other forms of communal and sectarian violence and discrimination based on hate of the 'other'; especially post-Paris (Je Suis Charlie).

Speakers include David Edgar, Reverend Donald Reeves, Professor June Boyce-Tillman, Adnan Jacabar, Dr Alan Grattan, Professor Peter Billingham and Dr Mark Owen.

More information / to contribute a paper, contact: Peter.Billingham@winchester.ac.uk; 01962-826394

"UNMADE FILM" URIEL ORLOW

3 March-25 April, John Hansard Gallery, University of Southampton
Highfield, Southampton SO17 1BJ

Unmade Film is an ambitious body of work by Uriel Orlow shown for the first time in its entirety in the UK. The work takes the form of an impossible film, fragmented into its constituent parts. An expansive collection of audio-visual works that point to the structure of a film but never fully become one, *Unmade Film* takes as its starting point the emblematic yet wholly invisible Palestinian village of Deir Yassin on the out skirts of Jerusalem. The multi-part work evolved out of long-term research and collaboration with actors, musicians, pupils and psychologists in East Jerusalem and Ramallah. Orlow probes the entangled history and spatial layering of the Holocaust and the Nakba and addresses conflicting narratives with comparing them.

More information 023 8059 2158; info@hansardgallery.org.uk

Hastings and District Interfaith Forum - Many Faiths One Community

AN OVERVIEW OF DRUIDRY

DRUIDRY: A BRIDGE-BUILDER IN INTER-FAITH WORK

Tuesday 14 April, 6.30-9.00pm

St Martha's Church Hall, Birkdale, Little Common TN39 3SL

Speaker Philip Carr-Gomm - In 1988 Philip was asked to lead The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids and combines this role in the Order with writing, and giving talks and workshops. He has a degree in psychology from University College London, and trained in psychotherapy for adults and play therapy for children. He founded the Lewes Montessori School. Philip believes we have entered an era in which we can move beyond attachments to labels, drawing instead upon the Perennial Tradition, being inspired by the wisdom in all spiritual paths and teachings – following the Way of the Universal Mystic.



**An overview of Druidry - 20,000 years of history Questions and Answers
 Druidry: a bridge-builder in Interfaith Work**

SOUTH HAMPSHIRE REFORM JEWISH COMMUNITY SEDER

**Sunday 5 April, 6.00 pm for 6.30 pm, The Portsmouth Room, Portsmouth Guildhall,
 Guildhall Square, Portsmouth PO1 2AB**

This traditional festival involves participants in a 3 course meal during which the story of the exodus from Egypt is told Incorporating songs and traditional symbolic foods.

Cost £18.50. Places for non-SHRJC members are limited, so booking is essential!

Contact rrgoodman3@gmail.com

GUILDFORD AND GODALMING INTERFAITH FORUM

ARE WE WHAT WE EAT?

Tuesday 14 April, 7.30 pm, St Joseph's Church Hall, Guildford GU1 4AZ

How does what we eat affect the world we live in?

This will be considered from an environmental, ethical and spiritual perspective

Speakers will include Joyce D' Silva, ambassador for "Compassion in World Farming" and speakers from different religious traditions.

All are Welcome

More information Bernard Jones for bernard.jones10@btinternet.com

THE LIVING STONES OF THE HOLY LAND TRUST

2015 Annual Michael Prior Memorial Lecture - *POLITICS AND RELIGION*

SEEKING A SUSTAINABLE PEACE FOR PALESTINE - Zoughbi Zoughbi

Thursday 16 April, 6.00-7.30pm, Heythrop College

University of London, Kensington Square, London W8 5HN

The lecture will be held in the Marie Eugenie Room where refreshments will be served.

Zoughbi Zoughbi is Director of the Palestinian Conflict Resolution Centre, Wi'am, Bethlehem. *Wi'am* in Arabic means 'cordial relationships' and developing relationships is the essence of the Centre's mission. The Centre helps to resolve disputes within the Palestinian community using the traditional Arab form of mediation, known as *sulha*, as well as Western models of conflict resolution.

WOKING PEOPLE OF FAITH

Wednesday 13 May, 7.00-9.00pm

St Paul's Church Community Hall, Oriental Road GU22 7BD

A simple cooked meal will be served. There is No Cost

This event forms part of our AGM which will appoint a new management committee.

As food will be served, booking is essential. Book a place by **Wednesday 6 May!**

Pippa_coordinator@wpof.org.uk / [Zafar \(secretary@wpof.org.uk\)](mailto:Zafar_(secretary@wpof.org.uk))

OXFORD COUNCIL OF FAITHS

ANNUAL FRIENDSHIP WALK OF FAITHS - Thursday 11 June

Leaves Richmond Road Jewish Centre, 6.15 pm; Arrives The Central Mosque by 8.00 pm



The 2014 Walk pauses in Radcliffe Square for prayers and light refreshment at the halfway point.

Report of the 2014 Walk oxcof.c1303782.myzen.co.uk/?page_id=109

CACOPHONY OR CONVERSATION? THE BIBLE AND INTER FAITH DIALOGUE

23-25 June, High Leigh Conference Centre, Hertfordshire

www.cct.org.uk/high-leigh/introduction

This Conference aims to open up a rich conversation about the Bible in the context of religious pluralism.

The Keynote Speaker confirmed is Professor Hugh Pyper,
Professor of Biblical Interpretation, University of Sheffield

Book your place at this insightful event. **Cost** £250.00 resident / £150 day visitor
Spaces are limited. **More information** www.ctbi.org.uk

PRUDENTIAL RIDELONDON-SURREY 100 - 2 August

We are pleased to say **charitable** 'gold bonds' places are available for the
Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100, taking place this August.

Distance 100 miles. **Registration Fee** £50. **Fundraising Target** £500

This would be a great challenge to take on, as the first year in 2014, it was sold out! Refugee Council, will provide support along the way for your journey and be present on the day to cheer you on. Celebrating the legacy for cycling created by

the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100 starts in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, and follow a 100-mile route on closed roads through the capital and into Surrey's stunning countryside. With leg-testing climbs and a route recently made famous by the world's best cyclists, it will be a truly spectacular event for all involved. The route of the Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100 is perfect for both club and recreational cyclists. Slower cyclists can enjoy a challenging ride while faster riders will relish the opportunity to pit themselves against the country's top amateurs.



More information maxine.mcminn@refugeecouncil.org.uk

Book your place <http://noreply.refugeecouncil.org.uk/l6P-39Y64-3ZUPNW-1J3J99-1/c.aspx>

GUILDFORD & GODALMING INTERFAITH FORUM

INTERFAITH EVENT

Sunday 1 November, 3.00 pm, St Nicolas Parish Room.

More information Bernard Jones for bernard.jones10@btinternet.com

NEXT ISSUE - MID-JULY 2015

Events or reports you would like included – please send them to me before 16 June.

Short explanations of a festival – I am happy to be sent these.

For reasons of space or balance articles may be edited. If you would like to see an edited version of what you send, before it is published, please let me know.

Bede Gerrard seeffchair@gmail.com

RISE IN HATE CRIME

In September 2012, the Home Office published its figures for hate crime for the first time. They indicated that around 44,000 incidents of hate crime were reported to the police in 2011-12 and that 82% of incidents were race related. The Government acknowledged that hate crime was hugely underreported and that the actual number of hate crime incidents was likely to be much higher.

In December 2013, the Government also brought into force a new Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, setting out the information and services that victims of crime will receive from criminal justice agencies in England and Wales and committing to an enhanced level of service for victims of the most serious crime, including victims of hate crime and persistently targeted, vulnerable or intimidated victims.

With the CPS publishing three key documents in 2014; *Hate Crime Strategy* (May 2014); *Hate Crime Delivery Plan* (October 2014); and in October 2014, concerned by the lack of progress made in prosecuting disability hate crime, *Disability Hate Crime – CPS Action Plan* this offers an invaluable opportunity for local authorities, police, legal professionals, equality and third sector practitioners and other key stakeholders to examine how to build on the developments of the past two years and identify the next steps to tackle hate crime in all its forms, in every local community.

We need to

- Examine how to prevent hate crime by challenging harmful attitudes and behaviour in sport, media and amongst the public
- Consider how to build cohesive communities, addressing tension and promoting shared identities
- Assess how to increase reporting rates by raising confidence in the criminal justice system and providing better support for victims
- Explore how to improve operational responses and target policing in order to prevent repeat victimisation
- Discuss how to deliver a joined-up approach across the criminal justice system to ensure effective sentencing