

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND FAITHS FORUM

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER Issue 11, October 2016



GREETINGS TO YOU ALL!

For many faith communities this autumn season brings the beginning of a new year, and for those in the education world it is the start of the academic year. New beginnings for all of us: a time to take stock, and a time to ask ourselves the questions we try to avoid for the rest of the year. How have I got on with my neighbour? Where have I missed the mark in my family life, religious life or business life? The harvest of all our dealings has come to fruition and we see its fruits.

SEEFF too has given an account of itself and looked at possible actions for the future; we have held our annual conference (see report from Hugh Boulter, p. 2) including its AGM. It is the time of year when there seems to be a natural pause for thought. The clocks go back an hour as the nights lengthen and the weather becomes colder and wetter. But we have begun planning for the year ahead. At next week's UK Interfaith Network a topic for discussion at its AGM is the way in which local groups can be more appealing to people of all ages, especially the young, and November sees National Inter-Faith Week.

All too often we spend so much time and effort on maintaining our own faith commitment that we have neither the time or energy to devote to interfaith relationships. Often within the 'rule books' of a particular faith tradition there are admonitions not to associate with people from different faiths. But in Britain, in today's open society, we cannot think it right that we separate ourselves from our fellow human beings; rather we should consider that while we remain firm in our own faith we need to grow in love and friendship with those who belong to other faith communities.

Keynote talks by Rev Joel Edwards and Baron Bourne at the IFN meeting in Peterborough looked at identity, and at the increase in hate crime after the vote to leave the EU. Joel put forward ten principles for entering into dialogue with other people.

1. Accepting we all belong to a common humanity
2. Acceptance of the place of the transcendent in our lives as people of faith
3. Remembering that we are all stake holders in what happens in our community
4. Recognise that difference is inherent in human nature
5. Affirmation of the value of the individual each of us has value
6. We need to have care for and nurture the least amongst us
7. There is a need for visionary leadership – let us all dream dreams
8. We need to engage the intellect as well as the emotions
9. Determination is needed with a belief in the value of dialogue
10. No human invention is permanent – the only unchangeable is God but our comprehension of Him can change through experience.

These thoughts were offered as an incentive to be open to each other. Often it is the case that it is when we feel most secure that we feel able to exclude others. Perhaps we should simply stop and ask ourselves whether we are prepared to be adventurous, whether we are prepared to take what might seem the risky step of engaging in dialogue, of leaving ourselves vulnerable to others' own needs for the very same things. Surely, it seems to me, that we, like them - just as they, like us - are called to live in positive harmony with each other, not just mutual (or even reluctant) tolerance. But what do you think?

Bede Gerrard

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LIVING WITH DIFFERENCE COMMUNITY, DIVERSITY AND THE COMMON GOOD

Arising from the publication of the Butler-Sloss Report, on 1 September Christ Church, Oxford hosted a conference on *Religion and Belief in British Public Life*. The conference was organised by the South East England Faiths Forum and supported by the Oxford Diocesan Committee for Inter-faith Relations.

The two lead speakers were the Dean of Christ Church, Very Revd Dr Martyn Percy, and Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra, a member of the Muslim Council of Great Britain and a Leicester imam. Respondents included Rabbi Norman Solomon, a member of the Butler-Sloss commission, Mrs Fakhra Rehman who spoke of her inter-faith work in Kirklees, and Mr Jeremy Rodell of the British Humanist Association.

All the speakers referred to the changing religious scene within Britain with the arrival of significant numbers of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs over recent decades, and the seeming decline in Christian observance reflected most markedly in the increasing numbers of the 'nons', i.e. those who claim to have no religious affiliation at all (50% of the whole in England who might previously identified themselves as 'C of E'). In his opening address, Martyn Percy outlined a number of social trends in British society which affected all communities. He mentioned consumerism, an emphasis on the right to choose, and a questioning attitude. He felt that we were also a more caring and tolerant society especially in relation to diversity. The combination of these factors led to what he called 'moralistic deism' and 'almost religious.' This raised challenges for religious communities where people felt that they could choose where they worshipped and did not have to agree with everything they were told by the religious leaders. In encouragement he suggested that in all different religious traditions we should be 'the salt of the earth' in the sense of being fertilisers in society; that we should be the light of the world' throwing light on the dark places of society in relation to justice, peace and reconciliation; and that we should be the yeast put into the dough to make it rise. A small number of activists can make an important difference.

Shaykh Mogra spoke as a Muslim who felt himself to be deeply English and saw the religious diversity in our country as an enriching process. He has a vision of a society at ease with itself in which all groups want to contribute to the general flourishing. In order to achieve this we need to enter into dialogue and develop 'religious literacy.' He and his wife speak Gujarati to their children but *they* always reply in English. He quotes the Qur'an where it says: 'None can be a believer if your neighbour is not free from harm of hand or tongue.' There is no place in Islam for so-called 'honour killings' or 'forced marriages.' Such practices are cultural and not religious, and are abhorrent. He himself is a member of a group called 'Imams against domestic violence'. He points out the power of the tongue to hurt the heart and, whilst accepting the ideal of free speech, the discourse of derision has been encouraged by the recent referendum debates and the social media leading to an increase in hate crime in this country. We need to take care of what we say. In relation to Britishness, he mentioned that the Muslim Council of Great Britain supports the Church of England as being the established church with Bishops in the House of Lords and the Queen as head of the Church of England.

In subsequent discussions and the comments of the respondents three related themes emerged: religious literacy, the need for dialogue and the responsibility of the media and politicians. There was general agreement that both students and older people needed to be aware of the teachings, practices and sensitivities of other religions. But religious literacy is more than just this. We need to create situations (safe spaces) where people can explain their understanding of their own faith or none and where they can be listened to with respect. This is particularly important in schools and colleges. Fakhra Rehman gave examples of her work in Kirklees and also explained how she gained acceptance by a male-dominated mosque. For Jeremy Rodell as a humanist the ability for people to explain their lack of faith is also important whilst also respecting those who do have beliefs.

This programme of engagement will also need resources and the support of politicians and the media who one hopes can also become part of the educative process.

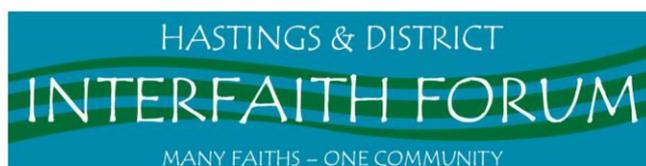
Hugh Boulter

EVENTS IN AND AROUND THE SOUTH EAST
COMBATTING ANTISEMITISM AND ISLAMOPHOBIA
AT LEEDS MAKKAH MOSQUE

On Thursday 29 September CCJ hosted a seminar on combating Antisemitism and Islamophobia in conjunction with 'Near Neighbours' and the local CCJ branch in Leeds, and hosted by the Leeds Makkah Mosque. The event brought together a panel of local communal leaders to discuss their thoughts about Antisemitism and Islamophobia and how we can bring faith communities together to tackle these issues.

Like our previous event, held at Manchester Jewish museum in December 2015, the night was an incredible success. Approximately 100 people came to participate in the event, the majority from Leeds or the surrounding areas and a few from further afield. Members of various local faith communities were in attendance including Christians, Jews and Muslims from different ethnic backgrounds. We are delighted that our Jewish, Muslim and Christian communities can come together to discuss the imperative issues that impact our communities today.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS



The Annual General Meeting for 2015

Sunday 20 November, 3.00-5.30pm, Sussex Coast College

Hastings Youth Awards 2016 – celebrating Youth and Culture

WOKING DEBATES 2016

The Woking Debates are organised by: Woking Action for Peace, Churches Together in Woking, Friends of the Earth, Woking LA21, Woking Quakers, Surrey Faith Links, Transition Towns and Woking People of Faith.

Details Keith Scott, 01483-824 980; keithsc_2000@yahoo.com; www.wokingdebates.com

WOKING PEOPLE OF FAITH PROGRAMME FOR 2016

15-22 November National Interfaith Week of mixed WPoF of events

December (date TBC), A 'conversation with...'

Details Garry Shore, coordinator@wpof.org.uk; www.wpof.org.uk

SIR SIGMUND STERNBERG KCSG - IN MEMORIAM

On 18 October Sir Sigmund Sternberg, patron of the International Council of Christians and Jews and co-founder of the Three Faiths Forum, one of the ICCJ's members in the United Kingdom, passed away at the age of ninety-five

Numerous obituaries published this week have described the many activities in which Sir Sigmund participated and the leadership positions he held in the Jewish community in Great Britain and worldwide. His contributions to the field of interreligious relations and philanthropy have been deservedly praised. Here I would like to share some personal memories of the many contacts with "Sigi", as his friends knew him.

Sigmund Sternberg was born in Budapest and barely escaped the abomination of the Shoah by emigrating to London in 1939. There he became a successful businessman. But alerted by the experiences of his younger years in Hungary, he started to use the fortune he amassed in business to improve the relations between Jews and Christians. In the late 1970s he became involved with the International Council of Christians and Jews, most probably through the good services of his faithful interfaith companion, Ruth Weyl of blessed memory, who was fully involved in the work of the ICCJ.

In 1979 Sigi became Chairman of the Executive Committee of the ICCJ and his beneficence was instrumental in giving the organization fiscal stability. On the other hand, his leadership role in the ICCJ sometimes assisted him in his diplomatic and political activities on behalf of the Jewish community. In 1998 Sigi became the ICCJ's official patron, and from then on he financially supported many of the ICCJ's projects and initiatives, thereby enabling them to succeed in the work of Christian-Jewish understanding to which he was so intensely dedicated.

At the Annual Meeting in 1998 when he was appointed Patron, it was also decided to admit the London-based Three Faiths Forum as an ICCJ member which was founded in 1997 by Sir Sigmund, Dr Marcus Braybrooke, an Anglican and Dr Zaki Badawi, a Muslim. The visionary Sir Sigmund had strongly insisted on opening the horizon of Jewish-Christian Dialogue to trilateral encounters and was significantly involved when the ICCJ decided to establish its trilateral branch, the International Abrahamic Forum. It was Sigi's conviction that both encounters – Jewish-Christian relations and Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations – deserve the same relevance in our societies nowadays.

During the London meeting of the ICCJ Executive Board, early in the spring of 2013, we visited Sigi at his home. His beloved Lady Hazel, who would predecease him in 2014, also was present. The then ICCJ President Dr Debbie Weissman gave him on behalf of all of us a gift as a token of our gratitude for his lifelong commitment to interreligious dialogue. I think of Sigi often when I see on my bookshelf Emma Klein's biography, *The Knight with Many Hats*. On the title page it reads: 'With gratitude for your friendship and support' - Sir Sigmund Sternberg.

May his name be for a blessing. May the perpetual light shine upon him.

Dick Pruiksmas; ICCJ Advisor

In the large congregation at Sir Sigmund's funeral were those who reflected his inter faith work, including Rabbi David Rosen, who travelled from Jerusalem.

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

This compendium of concise and handy resources provides insight into the interfaith movement and its treasure chest of wisdom and learning opportunities. This collection explores the goals, types and stages of dialogue and touches on issues such as interfaith etiquette, listening, peace-building, hospitality, respectful presence and dialogue-versus-debate. These principles and guidelines are useful for those who are new to interfaith as well as for veterans of interfaith work.

If, for example, you are scheduled to give a talk or workshop on interfaith, you will want to consult these resources. There are lots of useful handouts here for a workshop. To download these resources free of charge, click here: www.scarboromissions.ca/interfaith-dialogue/principles-and-guidelines-for-interfaith-dialogue

Please consider forwarding this announcement to colleagues and friends and posting it on websites and social media.

ADVICE FROM THE CHARITY COMMISSION

Changes for those who raise funds from the public

Recently, [updated guidance on fundraising](#) has been issued. This is a must-read for any charities which raise funds from the public, and makes clear that Trustees have ultimately responsibility for their charity's fundraising. It sets out six key principles to help Trustees comply with their legal duties when overseeing their charity's fundraising. We've signposted other information on the legal rules about fundraising, and have created a useful [checklist](#) that you can use to evaluate how your charity is doing. Alongside this new guidance, the new independent regulator of charitable fundraising launched on 7 July and will begin registering charities in the autumn. Support for the Fundraising Regulator will be vital to address public concern about these issues. We would encourage all charities to sign up for communications from the organisation via [its website](#). Further information about how to register will be provided by the Fundraising Regulator soon.

Updated terrorism alert email

Last year, the NTFIU and the commission released an alert about the duties of Trustees, and others involved with charities, under Section 19 of the Terrorism Act 2000. Please note that there is now a new email address to report concerns of a Section 19 offence being committed: S19Alerts@met.pnn.police.uk. Trustees must also ensure that any suspicions or beliefs are reported to us under the Serious Incident Reporting framework.

Are your contact details up-to-date?

Please take a moment to log in to our online portal and check that we have the correct contact details for your charity's named contacts, including an up-to-date email address, so that we can quickly contact you when needed.

Want to keep up with all our news, guidance and events? Make sure you're following us on Twitter @ChtyCommission, LinkedIn, and sign-up to our blog.

CHARITY COMMISSION GUIDANCE ON PROTECTING CHARITIES FROM HARM

The recent period has seen the introduction of legislation and guidance relating to prevention of violent extremism and counter extremism and there are implications for charities.

Many charities further their charitable aims by arranging meetings involving invited speakers and by distributing literature and other educational materials. Charities, by the nature of their work and the issues they deal with, will raise issues which some people find emotive or which may be controversial. In most cases, this causes no problems.

However, terrorists and those who encourage terrorism have been known to use charities to make their views known. The Charity Commission has guidance on how Trustees, staff and volunteers can protect their charity from abuse by those encouraging extremism, terrorism or illegal activity.

This can be found in Chapter 5 of the Commission's *Compliance Toolkit*, entitled 'Protecting Charities from abuse for extremist purposes and managing the risks at events and in activities' which is online at www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-charities-from-abuse-for-extremist-purposes.

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COMMERCIAL AND CHARITY ACCOUNTING

A free eBook to help you understand the differences between commercial and charity accounting

Charity Trustees and fundraising: a new practical guide

Every charity fundraises in a different way. Our sector is hugely diverse with different sizes of charities, different causes, and different ideas and approaches. But every charity is ultimately run by a board of volunteers – our Trustees - and if you're raising voluntary income it's essential that you're doing it in the right way. Richard Taylor unveils a new Paxton handbook on the subject.

[http://paxtoncharities.us9.list-](http://paxtoncharities.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f07f21547c517cc08ceda544b&id=0d4707e6c1&e=27bc9d39e8)

[manage.com/track/click?u=f07f21547c517cc08ceda544b&id=0d4707e6c1&e=27bc9d39e8](http://paxtoncharities.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f07f21547c517cc08ceda544b&id=0d4707e6c1&e=27bc9d39e8)

'NEAR NEIGHBOURS' GRANTS PROGRAMME

The 'Near Neighbours' programme offers small grants of between £250 and £5,000, as seed-funding for local groups and organisations working to bring together neighbours, and to develop relationships across diverse faiths and ethnicities to improve their communities.

As part of the criteria, projects should:

- Bring together peoples of two or more different faiths and / or ethnicities, to build friendships and develop relationships of trust.
- Work locally. We want to see people who are living very locally (ie in the same street, estate or neighbourhood) come together.
- Work sustainably. We want to see long-term and natural relationships grow, that will last beyond the period of funding.
- Work to improve the community. We want to see people working to make their communities a better place to live.

- Involve diverse people in planning and implementation. People from more than one faith group and / or ethnicity are involved in planning and implementing the proposal.

The full criteria / information on areas in which grants are available / information on how to apply www.cuf.org.uk/near-neighbours-grants. **General enquiries** near.neighbours@cuf.org.uk.

2016 INTERFAITH CALENDAR AND INFORMATION

For some Orthodox Christians dates are observed on the Julian calendar which is currently 13 days later than Gregorian/civil calendar – the feast dependent upon Easter are kept by all Orthodox Christians on the same days. Some faith traditions begin the day at sunset so festivals begin a day earlier than the date might suggest. Dates that depend on a lunar calendar will change from year to year on the civil calendar. Within the same faith tradition a local date may be observed for some celebrations. The Islamic calendar means that dates advance approximately ten days each civil year.

NOVEMBER

- 1st ALL SAINTS DAY** *Christian* Honours saints, known and unknown. In general, saints are persons with reputation for unusual lives of holiness and devotion to God or who were martyred for their faith
- SAMHAIN / BELTANE** *Wicca / Pagan* Wicca Celebrates the conjoining of the goddess with the energy of the god in the sacred marriage which is the basis of all creation
- 2nd ALL SOULS DAY** *Western Christian* Remembers the dead. Also a day to pray for them (not all western Christians do this) - people's prayers are seen as helping to prepare the dead for the vision of God in heaven
- 14th BIRTHDAY OF GURU NANAK DEV SAHIB** *Sikh* Honours the birthday of Sikhism's founder
- 15th NATIVITY FAST BEGINS** *Orthodox Christian* Begins a time of prayer and fasting in preparation for Christmas. Ends 24 December
- 20th CHRIST THE KING** *Christian* Celebrates the pre-eminence of Jesus over all earthly authorities
- 24th MARTYRDOM OF GURU TEGH BAHDUR** *Sikh*
- 27th ADVENT BEGINS** *Western Christian* Starts the western Christian year and the preparation (until 24 December) for the celebration of Christmas.
- 30th ST ANDREW'S DAY** *Christian* Remembers the first Apostle called by Jesus. He is considered as the patron of Scotland, Romania and other countries

DECEMBER 2016

- 6th ST NICHOLAS' DAY** *Christian* Remembers the saintly bishop of Myra in Lycia, considered patron of children, sailors and the destitute.
- 8th BODHI DAY (ROHATSU)** *Buddhism* Celebrates the time when Prince Gautama took his place under the Bodhi tree, vowing to remain there until he attained supreme enlightenment.
- IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY** *Catholic Christian* Celebrates the sinless conception of Jesus' mother, Mary
- 12th MAWLID AN NABE** *Islam* Commemorates the birthday of Prophet Muhammad, founder of Islam, in about 570 CE The prophet's teachings are read and religious meetings are held. (Not universally observed - Shia and Sunni Muslims keep this on different days)
- 14th MAWLID AN NABI** *Islam* See above
- 21st SOLSTICE / YULE** *Wicca/Pagan* Day of the winter solstice (northern hemisphere)
- 24th CHRISTMAS EVE** *Christian* Prepares for the incarnation of God in Jesus
- 25th CHRISTMAS / FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST** *Christian* Celebrates the birth of Jesus to his mother Mary (*Orthodox Christians* who use the Julian Calendar keep 25 December on 7 January)
- 25th -January 1st HANUKKAH** *Jewish* Festival of Lights. Commemorates the Maccabean recapture and rededication of the Jerusalem Temple in 165-164 BCE. Special readings and psalms focus on liberty and freedom. The eight-candle Menorah is lit - over 8 days, leading from one candle to a total of eight by 1 January
- 26th ZARATHOSHT DISO (Death of Prophet Zarathushtra)** *Zoroastrian*
- ST STEPHEN'S DAY** *Christian* Commemorates the first Christian martyr. For some this is a day to exchange gifts
- 28th HOLY INNOCENTS** *Christian* Remembers the slaying by King Herod of all the children in Bethlehem
- 30th HOLY FAMILY** *Catholic Christian* (first Sunday after Christmas) Recalls the Holy Family of Jesus, his mother Mary, and her husband Joseph

JANUARY 2017

- 1st MARY, MOTHER OF GOD** - *Catholic Christian* Celebrates the motherhood of Mary recalling the special nature of the conception of her son. (*Orthodox Christians* keep this feast on the day after Christmas)
- FEAST DAY OF ST BASIL** - *Orthodox Christian* Celebrates of the life of one of the great teachers of Christianity; it is often a day when gifts are exchanged and resolutions made for the civil year
- CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS** - *Orthodox Christian* Remembrance of the keeping of the Jewish law by Jesus parents when he was circumcised on the eighth day
- GANTAN-SAI (New Year)** - *Shinto*
- 5th 'TWELFTH NIGHT'** *Orthodox Christian* Fast day closing the fast-free period of Christmas with and vigil services before the Feast of the Theophany.
- BIRTHDAY OF GURU GOBINDH SINGH** - *Sikh*
- 6th EPIPHANY** – *Christian* Recall of the manifestation of Christ to the gentiles by the adoration of the new-born Jesus by the Magi
- FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY (THEOPHANY)** *Orthodox Christian* Celebrates the baptism of Jesus by John in the river Jordan. (*Orthodox Christians* who use the Julian Calendar keep 6 January on the 19th)
- FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST** *Armenian Orthodox Christian* The Armenian Orthodox Church keeps a single Feast celebrating the Incarnation of Christ; it combines other Churches' celebration of Christmas Day and the Epiphany
- 7th FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST** *Orthodox Christian* (some) See 25 December
- 8th BAPTISM OF THE LORD JESUS** *Western Christian* (The Sunday following the Epiphany) Celebrates the Baptism of Christ
- 12th -15th MAHAYANA NEW YEAR** *Buddhist*
- 13th MAGHI** *Sikh* Commemorates a battle in which forty Sikhs died for Guru Gobindh Singh
- 19th -25th WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY** *Christian*
- 19th TIMKAT** *Ethiopian Orthodox Christian* the Celebration of the Baptism of Christ by John in the Jordan [this is 6 January on the Julian calendar]
- FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY / THEOPHANY** *Orthodox Christian* (some) see 6 January
- 28th CHINESE NEW YEAR** *Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist*

FEBRUARY

- 1st VASANT PANCHAMI** *Hindu* Celebrates Saraswati, goddess of learning
- 2nd CANDLEMAS / PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE** *Christian* Celebrates the presentation in the temple of the child Jesus to the aged Simeon. New beginnings are recognized and candles are lit. It is the closure of the Christmas period
- IMBOLC - LUGHNASSAH** *Wicca / Pagan* Wicca reflection on the power of the gods from which physical and spiritual harvest will come
- 3rd SETSEBUN SAI (BEGINNING OF SPRING)** *Shinto* Celebrates the change of seasons with the coming of spring with shouts of 'Devils out, Good Fortune in'. Bean-throwing protects against demons
- 4th TRIODION BEGINS** *Orthodox Christians* begin to use the *Triodion*, the book used in Lent which contains the texts of the services used until Easter
- 11th TU BISHVAT** *Jewish* Celebrates the coming of spring by preparation of foods native to Israel. It is also known as 'New Year for Trees' - a method for determining the age of trees for tithing purposes
- 15th NIRVANA DAY** *Buddhist / Jain / Sikh* A regional observance of the death of the Buddha
- 19th MEATFARE SUNDAY** *Orthodox Christian* The Sunday when the last meals using meat are eaten until the breaking of the Lenten Fast on Easter Sunday
- 25th MAHA SHAVARATRI** *Hindu* A Hindu festival in honour of Lord Shiva and his marriage to Goddess Parvati. Ceremonies involving prayers and hymns take place, mostly at night
- 26th CHEESE FARE SUNDAY** *Orthodox Christian* The Sunday when the last meals using dairy produce are eaten until the breaking of the Lenten Fast on Easter Sunday
- 26th -MARCH 1st** *Baha'i* An intercalary period at which a number of days are added to maintain agreement with the solar year
- 27th LENT BEGINS** *Orthodox Christian* A period of preparation for Easter during which extra prayer and actions of self-denial or of particular good deeds are undertaken
- 28th SHROVE TUESDAY** *Western Christian* The day before Lent begins

MARCH

- 1st ASH WEDNESDAY** *Western Christian* Lent begins: a period of preparation for Easter during which extra prayer and actions of self-denial or of particular good deeds are undertaken. Some Christians have a cross made from ashes put on their foreheads as a sign of repentance

INTER FAITH WEEK - Sunday 13 November - Sunday 20 November

www.interfaithweek.org; facebook.com/IFWeek; [@IFWeek](https://twitter.com/IFWeek)

Inter Faith Week

Highlights the good work done by local faith, inter faith and faith-based groups and organisations

Draws new people into inter faith learning and cooperation

Enables greater interaction between people of different backgrounds

Helps develop integrated and neighbourly communities

Celebrates diversity and commonality **Opens** new possibilities for partnership

It builds good relationships and working partnerships between people of different faiths and beliefs and is part of the year-round work of many people and organisations across the UK.

Having a special Week provides a focal point,

helping to open inter faith activity up to a wider audience so that more and more people are made aware of the importance of this vital work and are able to participate in it.

The three aims of the Week Strengthening good inter faith relations at all levels

Increasing awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society

Increasing understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs

Inter Faith Week is for everyone

An opportunity to Strengthen good inter faith relations at all levels

Increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society

Increase understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs

Reflect, Debate, Cooperate, Learn, Question, Respect, Appreciate, Make, Friends, Celebrate!

Some ways of marking the Week

Faith trails and open door days – opportunities to visit places of worship

Highlighting an inter faith project or programme of your organisation

Launching a new inter faith project or resource; A social media inter faith awareness campaign

Joint social action – like a community litter-pick or charity fundraising; Inter faith sports events

Dialogues, debates and talks; Quizzes, poster and photography competitions

Hands-on learning activities and exhibitions; Whole school and classroom activities

Exchange visits between members of different places of worship

A young people's inter faith forum event; Arts and cultural events

Faith and food events – however you do it, everyone likes to eat!

Join with the many faith, belief and inter faith bodies, community and voluntary organisations, local authorities, Police and emergency services, SACREs, schools, colleges, universities, chaplaincies, businesses and others who will be taking part this year.

This year, why not

consider a hands-on social action project – from tree planting to volunteering together in another way that helps the local community? Or hold a discussion about living well together as people of different faiths and beliefs and how we contribute to our shared society?

IDEAS, RESOURCES, EVENT INFORMATION REGISTER YOUR EVENT, PUT IT ON THE MAP

www.interfaithweek.org

Inter Faith Week is a programme of The Inter Faith Network for the UK Reg. Ch. No. 1068934
2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH interfaithweek@interfaith.org.uk

The work of IFN is supported by faith communities, trusts, other donors and Government

NEXT ISSUE of the SEEFF Newsletter – MID-February 2017

Events or reports you would like included – please send them to me **before 29 January**.

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**](mailto:seeffchair@gmail.com)