



# IFN e-bulletin

December 2021

Welcome to the e-bulletin of the Inter Faith Network for the UK [www.interfaith.org.uk](http://www.interfaith.org.uk). It is published every two months and it highlights primarily new developments, projects and future events. You can read by scrolling through or you can go directly to an individual section or item by clicking on links in the list below.

## **A message from the Co-Chairs**

### **Faith and public life updates**

- [COVID-19 and faith communities](#)
- [UK Government Minister with responsibility for faith engagement](#)
- [Refugees and asylum seekers](#)
- [Sir David Amess MP](#)
- [Faith communities, climate change and the environment](#)
- [The Queen's Green Canopy](#)
- [Hate Crime](#)
- [Social Media, prejudice and hatred](#)
- [Consultation on proposals to reform the Human Rights Act](#)
- [Assisted Dying Bill](#)
- [BBC religious programming](#)

### **Inter Faith Network for the UK News**

- [Inter Faith Week](#)
- [IFN Faith Communities Forum](#)
- [New IFN Co-Chair](#)
- [IFN e-bulletin](#)

### **Inter faith projects and developments**

- [CCJ Inclusion and Diversity Programme](#)
- [Local inter faith anniversaries](#)
- [Near Neighbours network](#)
- [Reaching out to our neighbours](#)
- [New Telford and Wrekin inter faith community hub](#)
- [Northampton Police Interfaith Association](#)

### **Resources and study/training**

- [IFN Videos for assemblies and collective worship](#)
- [Faith communities and COVID-19: Learning from the journey](#)
- [Inter Faith Buddies](#)
- [Faiths Working Together toolkit](#)

- [Measures of Success toolkit](#)
- [Visit My Mosque resource for RE Teachers](#)
- [Climate resources and guides](#)
- [New Religion and Belief Policy Network](#)
- [Wales Faith & Citizenship conference report](#)
- [Guidance on recruiting Black and Asian charity trustees](#)
- [IFN 'digital surgery' slots for local inter faith organisations](#)
- [Sharing Perspectives inter faith study tour](#)

#### **Calls for information, competitions and nominations**

- [Women's local inter faith initiatives](#)
- [IFN Local Inter Faith Guide](#)
- [Bereavement – A call for information](#)
- [Survey on media representation](#)
- [Barnet Faith & Belief Awards](#)

#### **Jobs, internships and volunteering**

- [Inter Faith Network for the UK](#)
- [Board of Deputies – Interfaith Projects Assistant](#)

#### **Funding opportunities**

- [Funding websites](#)
- [COVID-19 related funding](#)
- [Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme](#)
- [FCC Community Action Fund](#)
- [Subsidised fundraising workshops](#)

#### **Special Weeks/Days**

- [Dates for Special Weeks and Days taking place throughout the year](#)

#### **Diary Dates**

- [Information on some of the inter faith events taking place around the UK](#)

## **A message from the Co-Chairs of the Inter Faith Network for the UK**

The Inter Faith Network works in many different ways to support the development of greater inter faith understanding and cooperation.

Across this year IFN has worked with faith communities, inter faith bodies, Government and many others to help support and strengthen response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. IFN has also continued, despite the pressures of the pandemic, to provide information, resources and advice to help many different kinds of organisations from faith organisations to schools and workplaces to build religious literacy and work for good relations into their ongoing work. Through the Inter Faith Week programme (on which IFN leads) thousands of people, young and old and of many backgrounds have directly encountered IFN's messages of the vital importance of inter faith awareness and solidarity.

As 2021 draws to a close, we encourage you to consider a donation to support IFN's vital work.

You can make a donation at [www.interfaith.org.uk/donate](http://www.interfaith.org.uk/donate), by PayPal Donate with [PayPal Giving Fund](#) or by sending a cheque to: the Inter Faith Network for the UK, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH.

Thank you very much for your support.

Best wishes,  
Bishop Jonathan Clark and Narendra Waghela, IFN Co-Chairs

[Back to the top](#)

## **FAITH AND PUBLIC LIFE UPDATES**

### **COVID-19 and faith communities**

October and November saw return to more regular patterns of in person meetings and events on the part of faith communities. In the Midlands, for example, thousands of Sikhs joined worldwide celebrations to mark the 552nd birthday Guru Nanak [Thousands of Sikhs turn up for annual religious event despite snow | ITV News Central](#) and in London, hundreds attended the Church of England's Synod. In Scotland, many from different faith groups came together to advocate together on behalf of climate change ahead of and at COP26 (although the main vigil for the latter was held outdoors).

The subsequent emergence in late November and rapid spread of the Omicron variant of the virus, and continued spread of the Delta variant, have led the UK Government and governments in the devolved nations to reintroduce some measures to reduce the spread of the virus. Places of worship remain open in all UK nations. However, face masks must now be worn in them all.

There has been a strong push to increase the numbers of people receiving boosters and also to encourage take up on the first and second vaccinations. UK Communities Minister Kemi Badenoch MP hosted a special webinar for faith leaders on 17 December with inputs from key NHS practitioners. On 19 December, the UK Government announced an additional £22.5 million in funding and an army of vaccine ambassadors have been deployed to encourage vaccine uptake in the run up to Christmas and the new year. Pop up clinics in places of worship will be among the kinds of activity supported.

Faith communities have been continuing to play an active part in the vaccine roll out. For example the Hindu Council UK and South Asian Health Alliance with input from the NHS and others held an online vaccine awareness event [https://twitter.com/hindu\\_counciluk/status/1463450539585413121](https://twitter.com/hindu_counciluk/status/1463450539585413121). Programmes such as Community Champions are also assisting. Faith leaders in some areas, such as Watford, have been issuing renewed calls for people to come forward for vaccination. <https://www.facebook.com/WatfordInterfaithAssociation/posts/4905345706155307> The Watford message includes within it the following wording which is central to many such calls at this time: *“Leaders from across all the major faiths in Watford are asking people of every faith and denomination to come forward and support this huge national effort. Vaccines are our best defence against Omicron – we therefore urge faith communities, and everyone, to book yourselves in today and join the national fight against this virus. If you have yet to get your first or second dose it is never too late, as the vaccines will reduce your risk of hospitalisation and death. So please play your part and encourage others in your community to be vaccinated with the booster.”*

Organisations such as FaithAction and Strengthening Faith Institutions are also playing a role.

The use of places of worship for clinics and pop-ups is affording unusual and welcome opportunities for inter faith learning and engagement. For example in the present week a local doctor from Bristol tweets about her vaccination at the Bristol Hindu temple <https://twitter.com/DrLizJenkinson/status/1470754571773485064> and an Infantry Officer about his visit to the local mosques for a booster, saying “ Unexpected 'cultural' day out as the eldest was intrigued with the beautifully decorative interior, and mosque staff happily chatted away with her”. [https://twitter.com/Viking\\_Dave85/status/1473016935591911441](https://twitter.com/Viking_Dave85/status/1473016935591911441)

UK Government information on COVID-19 is at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do>.

The NHS guidance can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>.

Advice is available on the following websites in the devolved nations:

<https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus>

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

<https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus>

Guidance for the use of places of worship can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship/>

<https://gov.wales/alert-level-0-guidance-employers-businesses-and-organisations>

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-places-worship>

Within each of the nations, different faith communities are also working to provide their own guidance based on the official guidance and looking at particular practical dimensions of that. See, for example, <https://www.cytun.co.uk/hafan/en/covid-19-briefing-paper/> from CYTUN/Churches Together in Wales.

[Back to the top](#)

## **UK Government Minister with responsibility for faith engagement**

Kemi Badenoch MP has been given, as part of her Ministerial brief at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in the UK Government, responsibility for faith engagement as part of integrated communities. She is also Minister for Equalities.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/people/kemi-badenoch>

[Back to the top](#)

## **Refugees and asylum seekers**

On 11 October, IFN's Faith Communities Forum issued the statement at:

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/a-call-for-safe-humane-and-dignified-treatment-of-refugees-and-those-seeking-asylum> It includes a specific concern about a recently adopted 'push back' of boats policy within the framework of a wider statement concluding with a call for

"Drawing on the common values at the heart of our different and distinct faith traditions we call for safe, humane and dignified treatment of refugees and those seeking asylum."

## *Nationality and Borders Bill*

The Nationality and Borders Bill passed its third reading in the House of Commons on 8 December. It next moves to its second reading in the House of Lords on 5 January.  
[House of Lords: Nationality and Borders Bill \[HL\] \(parliament.uk\)](#)

The three objectives of the Bill are described by the Government as:

1. To make the system fairer and more effective so that we can better protect and support those in genuine need of asylum.
2. To deter illegal entry into the UK breaking the business model of criminal trafficking networks and saving lives.
3. To remove from the UK those with no right to be here.

[Nationality and Borders Bill: factsheet - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

There have been concerns raised about aspects of the Bill, including by faith communities, particularly in relation to criminalisation of arriving without permission and also about a provision which would give the Government to the right, in certain circumstances, to remove a UK citizen's citizenship without informing them.

[Back to the top](#)

## **Sir David Amess MP**

On 15 October, Sir David Amess, MP for Southend West, was killed in an attack during a constituency surgery he was holding at Belfairs Methodist Church in Leigh-on-Sea. The suspect was detained under the Terrorist Act.

Many tributes were offered to Sir David, including from faith communities in his constituency, such as local mosques, with whom he had had very positive relations. On 18 October a statement was issued on behalf of the Board and the Moderators of the Faith Communities Forum of IFN. This can be found at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/statement-following-the-killing-of-sir-david-amess-mp>. It includes within it the following:

*“Like the murder five years ago of Jo Cox MP, the knife attack on Steven Timms MP, and the attack on Nigel Jones MP in which local councillor Andrew Pennington, who had come to his aid, was killed, this latest murderous stabbing throws into sharp relief the vulnerability of those who serve as our elected representatives.*

*Causes and motives differ. In some cases, attackers seek to justify their acts through perverse distortions of religious teachings, such as in the case of Islamist extremists (despite the repeated rejection of their views by members of the community in question), or of political doctrine, in the case of far right extremists.*

*We must stand firm against hatred and division and in support of safe, free and open engagement of people in a democratic society.”*

[Back to the top](#)

## **Faith communities, climate change and the environment**

COP26 (the United Nations climate talks, also known as the Conference of Parties or COP), took place in Glasgow from 31 October to 12 November. The COP saw the culmination of a long period of preparation and activity by faith community organisations, as well as individuals motivated by their faith. This included advocacy initiatives, including ‘pilgrimages’, such as that of the Young Christian Climate Network and ‘Camino to COP’.

The inter faith charity Faith for the Climate played a linking/encouraging role in relation to COP26, with support from the Environmental Issues Network of CTBI and active involvement from Aid NGOs such as Christian Aid, CAFOD, Tear Fund and Islamic Relief; and engagement from faith-based initiatives such as the Bhumi Project, Bahu Trust, Eco Synagogue, Eco Church, Eco Sikh and Hindu Climate Action. A Glasgow Multi-Faith Declaration was signed by a number of leaders of different faiths from across the UK <https://interfaithscotland.org/glasgow-multi-faith-declaration-for-cop26> and an open letter was delivered to Downing Street by a number of faith leaders <https://cafod.org.uk/News/Campaigning-news/COP26-faith-Number-10-hand-in>.

A number of other faith-based and inter faith bodies ran active campaigns in the time leading up to COP26, such as Muslim Charities Forum and the Wirral-based charity Faiths4Change. Joint statements were issued by a number of faith bodies, for example by bishops from the Church of Wales <https://www.churchinwales.org.uk/en/news-and-events/bishops-call-for-bold-action-on-climate-crisis/>; Muslim organisations from across the UK and Ireland <https://www.ifees.org.uk/cop26statement/>; and Druids <https://theorderoftheoak.wordpress.com/2021/08/30/open-letter-to-cop26-leaders/>.

At COP26, a range of faith-based and inter faith activities took place and Scottish Interfaith Week was moved forward to coincide with COP26, running from 31 October to 7 November on the theme of ‘Together for Our Planet’. On 31 October, Interfaith Scotland and Interfaith Glasgow, with the Scottish Religious Leaders Forum, led a prayer and meditation vigil at George Square in Glasgow, the official livestream of which can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q9wDI36mJms>.

On 2 November, representatives of faith movements from around the world gathered at St George’s Tron Church to present their demands for climate justice. Faith events were also organised to mark the Global Day of Action for Climate Justice on 6 November, including ‘faith and belief blocs’ at marches in London and Glasgow.

Faith groups also led workshops and held vigils and community events. Several faith-based organisations also ran exhibition stands in the Green Zone of COP26 and there were many other vigils, dialogue opportunities, workshops and volunteering opportunities. For example, Soka Gakkai International UK, with the Centre for Applied Buddhism, led a ‘Sowing Seeds of Hope’ event, which ran throughout COP26 from 1 to 7 November as part of the Climate Fringe in Glasgow, with talks and activities themed on climate justice and the launch of a ‘Seeds of Hope and Action’ exhibition with Earth Charter International. Some activities took place within the Blue Zone, however there was no formal space for faith groups at the summit.

Many activities for Inter Faith Week in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, which ran from 14 to 21 November, were also centred on faith responses to climate change <https://www.interfaithweek.org/events/calendar/environment-climate-event>.

Building on the momentum created by COP26, faith and inter faith/multi faith groups have begun to build campaigns, and to make plans and commitments.

The Climate Coalition, which includes a number of faith organisations, has created an ‘Email Your MP’ campaign and the ‘The Proof is in the Pudding’ campaign, encouraging people to make sure that the UK government fulfils the promises made at COP26. The details of these campaigns, including information on how to get involved, can be found at <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/take-action>.

A number of communities have produced new resources linked to COP26 (see [below](#)).

A number of UK faith organisations have signed up to be participants in the ‘Faith Plans’ programme of FaithInvest which was launched in October to coincide with COP26. This will involve developing plans for practical faith-based environmental action. <https://www.faithplans.org/>

The details provided in this bulletin are not exhaustive, and faith and inter faith responses continue to develop. Details of major Christian faith events and latest responses to COP26, and sources of background information and links to some of the organisations which reported from the conference, can be found in this Churches Together in Britain and Ireland report <https://ctbi.org.uk/un-climate-change-conference-cop26/>.

[Back to the top](#)

## **The Queen’s Green Canopy**

The June issue of IFN’s e-bulletin noted that faith leaders had come together in a video to share what trees mean to them and their faiths and to encourage everyone to plant a tree for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee next year. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/queen-katherine-grainger-justin-welby-prince-of-wales-people-b935675.html>



If you are a faith group or an inter faith organisation, why not get involved and plant a tree or trees? Tree planting is under way from now until March and will then start again in October 2022, through to the end of the Jubilee year (reflecting the time when trees are best planted).

The Woodland Trust is a partner of the QGC. Across 2021 and 2022 they have over three million saplings in tree packs, available on a first come first served basis. Information on how to apply for the free saplings is available through the Woodland Trust website <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/>. In Northern Ireland, free tree packs are available through the QGC partner The Conservation Volunteers. <https://queensgreencanopy.org/get-involved/communities-and-groups/>.

[Back to the top](#)

## Hate crime

In October, the UK Government published the 2020-21 hate crime figures for England and Wales. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2020-to-2021/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2020-to-2021> The report notes that religious hate crimes fell by 18 per cent (to 5,627 offences), down from 6,856 in the previous year; this was the second successive fall in religious hate crimes since a peak of 7,202 offences in year ending March 2019.

Scotland's report on the same period had been published earlier in the year. <https://www.copfs.gov.uk/media-site-news-from-copfs/1957-hate-crime-in-scotland-2020-21> That reported 573 charges with a religious aggravation reported in 2020-21, 14% fewer than in 2019-20. Northern Ireland data for the same period, together with a subsequent quarterly update can be seen at [Hate Motivation Statistics \(psni.police.uk\)](https://www.psnipolice.uk/hate-motivation-statistics).

On 7 December the Law Commission published the Final Report of its review of hate crime laws in England and Wales. The full report, and a summary of the report and its recommendations, are available for download at <https://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/hate-crime/>.

During the time since the last issue, there have been a number of high profile hate incidents. These have included antisemitic incidents, for example targeting Jews on a bus on Oxford street at the start of Chanukkah. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/jewish-teens-oxford-street-hanukkah-bus-harassment-london-b969433.html> Among recently reported hate incidents targeting Muslims was one about two teenage girls being assaulted by four unknown women who tried to remove the girls' traditional Muslim dress and hijab. [Muslim girls assaulted by group of women who tried to yank their hijabs off \(tellmamauk.org\)](https://www.tellmamauk.org/muslim-girls-assaulted-by-group-of-women-who-tried-to-yank-their-hijabs-off) Islamophobia

Awareness month in November saw a number of events looking at hate incidents (as well as prejudice) linked to Muslim identity.

It is not just the Jewish and Muslim communities where religiously related incidents have been reported. For example, the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) has launched an investigation after an officer was accused, in a complaint against the West Midlands Police, of forcibly removing the religious head covering of a Sikh man while he was in custody. [Police apology amid claim Sikh headwear was forcibly removed - BBC News](#)

Information on reporting hate crimes can be found below.

[Back to the top](#)

#### **REPORT HATE CRIME AND WORK TOGETHER TO HELP TACKLE IT**

Report hate incidents online through True Vision or via 3rd parties eg Community Security Trust (CST), Tell Mama UK and Stop Hate UK; at a police station; or by ringing the police on 101 (non-emergency) or 999.

<https://gov.uk/report-hate-crime>

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us/report-hate-crime-and-third-party-reporting/>

<https://reporhate.victimsupport.org.uk/hate-crime/>

<https://www.psni.police.uk/crime/hate-crime/reporting-a-hate-crime/>

See also *Looking after one another: the safety and security of our faith communities* (IFN and partners) which contains practical pointers for working together to counter hate crime.

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/looking-after-one-another-the-safety-and-security-of-our-faith-communities-2017>

[Back to the top](#)

#### **Social Media, prejudice and hatred**

##### *Recent publications*

In December, the Community Security Trust published a Woolf Institute study with CST and Antisemitism Policy Trust which speaks of 495,000 antisemitic tweets being shared in the UK each year, with around 100 to 1,350 such tweets shared every day.

<https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/antisemitism-online> In November the

Community Security Trust published a report on antisemitic discourse:

<https://cst.org.uk/research/cst-publications>.

On 30 November, the Muslim Council of Britain's Centre for Media Monitoring published [British Media's Coverage of Muslims & Islam \(2018-2020\)](#). The report analysed 48,000+ online articles and 5,500+ broadcast clips. It describes 60% of online media articles and 47% of television clips as associating Muslims and/or Islam with negative aspects or behaviour.

### *Online Safety Bill*

The Online Safety Bill (formerly the Online Harms Bill), to establish a new regulatory framework to tackle harmful content online, is due to be put to Parliament for approval in 2022. Information on the work of the Joint Committee that has been appointed to consider the draft Bill can be found at <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/534/draft-online-safety-bill-joint-committee/publications/>.

[Back to the top](#)

## **Consultation on proposals to reform the Human Rights Act**

On 14 December, the report of the Independent Human Rights Act Review Panel was published. This can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/independent-human-rights-act-review> Government's response, also published on 14 December, sets out its proposals to revise the Human Rights Act 1998 and replace it with a 'Bill of Rights'. Government's proposals are accompanied by a public consultation which will run until 8 March. Both can be found at <https://consult.justice.gov.uk/human-rights/human-rights-act-reform/>.

Government's proposals are extensive, and would affect a significant amount of the Act, if implemented, including changes to the principle of proportionality which would alter the ways that domestic judges balance qualified and limited rights from the European Convention on Human Rights (to which the UK is still a party).

[Back to the top](#)

## **Assisted Dying Bill**

The Assisted Dying Bill seeks to enable adults who are terminally ill to be provided at their request with specified assistance to end their own life. Members of the Lords debated the main principles and purpose of the Assisted Dying Bill during its Second Reading on 22 October. <https://www.parliament.uk/business/news/2021/october-2021/lords-debates-assisted-dying-bill-at-second-reading/>

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Chief Rabbi and the Archbishop of Westminster issued a joint press release opposing the Bill. <https://www.churchofengland.org/media-and-news/press-releases/faith-leaders-warn-risk-vulnerable-posed-assisted-dying-bill> Dignity in Dying, which supports the Bill, is supported by a number of faith leaders, including

Reform Rabbi Jonathan Romain, the former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Carey, and former Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

The Religion Media Centre has put together some information on views within different faith traditions at <https://religionmediacentre.org.uk/factsheets/factsheet-assisted-suicide/>.

[Back to the top](#)

## **BBC religious programming**

The BBC has announced that Aleem Maqbool has been appointed as the BBC's new Religion Editor. He will take up the role in Spring 2022.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/2021/bbc-news-aleem-maqbool-religion-editor/>

In November the BBC held a webinar showcasing faith programming across the BBC's networks in 2021 and previewing highlights for Christmas and the new year. Highlights covered from 2021 included the addition of a new 'Faith and Hope' area on the BBC iPlayer, as well as programmes such as the 'Being' series reflecting on how family milestones are marked by different faiths, 'My First Festivals', featuring children celebrating festivals such as Rosh Hashanah and 'My Diwali Stories', which showed how Hindus, Jains and Sikhs celebrate Diwali in different ways. New RE materials are set to be released on BBC Bitesize and BBC Asian Network is due to release new content for Vaisakhi and for Ramadan including a 6 part series covering Ramadan's meaning for individuals.

[Back to the top](#)

## **INTER FAITH NETWORK FOR THE UK NEWS**

### **Inter Faith Week**

*Inter Faith Week 2021*

This year Inter Faith Week [www.interfaithweek.org](http://www.interfaithweek.org) took place from Sunday 14 to Sunday 21 November. Across the Week, over 740 activities are known to have taken place, and details of further events continue to come in. Many thousands of people of different backgrounds and all ages took part, with millions more encountering its positive messages through social media. The 2020 Week was almost entirely online due to the impact of COVID-19. Inter Faith Week 2021 saw many activities once again taking place in person, with others online or 'hybrid'.

Bishop Jonathan Clark and Narendra Waghela, Co-Chairs of the Inter Faith Network for the UK, which leads on the Week, said:

*"This has been a fantastic Week. It has been inspiring to see such a wide range of activities, including local places of worship open days, faith leader meetings and inter*

*faith events, an amazing range of school activities and events held by local authorities, sports organisations, chaplaincies, cultural institutions such as museums and libraries, universities and colleges, police and fire services, the Armed Forces, the NHS, hospices, media, voluntary groups, businesses, and many others.*

*[It] has been a Week which has encouraged and sparked conversations, projects and partnerships which will further strengthen good inter faith relations and social cooperation for the common good between those of different faiths and beliefs.”*

Read more about the week at <https://www.interfaithweek.org/news/press-release-IFW-2021-thousands-take-part>. A full list of activities can be seen at [www.interfaithweek.org/list](http://www.interfaithweek.org/list).

If you held an activity for the Week, congratulations and thank you for making the week such a success! Please do take 10 minutes to give feedback through the Inter Faith Week survey at <https://www.interfaithweek.org/events/about/give-your-feedback>.

Next year's Inter Faith Week will run **from 13-20 November**. Why not start planning now for an activity – it's never too early! You will find lots of activity ideas in the resources section of the Inter Faith Week website. [www.interfaith.org.uk](http://www.interfaith.org.uk)

#### *Scottish Inter Faith Week*

Scottish Interfaith Week is led by Interfaith Scotland and was this year brought forward to the earlier time of Sunday 31 October – Sunday 7 November to coincide with COP26. <https://scottishinterfaithweek.org/> Its theme this year was Together for our Planet.

[Back to the top](#)

#### **IFN Faith Communities Forum**

The Inter Faith Network for the UK Faith Communities Forum (FCF) brings together national faith community bodies in IFN membership for regular discussion of issues of common concern. <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/about/faith-communities-forum>

The FCF met on 5 October. On the Agenda were: COVID-19 and faith communities; Faith communities and response to refugees and asylum seekers, IICSA report on 'Child Protection in Religious Organisations and Settings'; Inter faith engagement of faith communities – including joint working on climate issues in the run up to COP26 - and issues of current interest and concern; Inter Faith Week; and a number of IFN matters. It also met on 29 November when Agenda Items included: COVID-19 and faith communities; Levelling Up; Inter Faith Week; Inter faith engagement of faith communities and issues of current interest; and a number of IFN matters including an Evaluation Project and IFN's new Co-Chair from the National Faith Community Representative Bodies.

[Back to the top](#)

## New IFN Co-Chair

It was announced on 10 December by the Board of the Inter Faith Network for the UK that from 1 January the Revd Canon Hilary Barber will be taking up the role of Co-Chair, following the standing down of the Rt Revd Jonathan Clark at the end of the year, ahead of the latter's retirement as Bishop of Croydon. At its December meeting, the Board offered its warm thanks to Bishop Clark for his work with IFN across the last two years and its good wishes for his future.

Canon Barber will be Co-Chair from IFN's National Faith Community Representative Bodies category of membership. He joins Narendra Waghela, who is Co-Chair from IFN's local inter faith organisation and other categories membership. Canon Barber will also become *ex officio* a Co-Moderator of the IFN Faith Communities Forum.

Canon Barber said: *"The work of the Inter Faith Network of the UK is of enormous importance. I am delighted to have been appointed. I will do everything I can, with God's help, to enable the Inter Faith Network to thrive and flourish so that it can continue to be a vital resource for the development of inter faith cooperation and understanding in the UK."*

Canon Barber is the Vicar of Halifax Minster in Calderdale, West Yorkshire. Prior to that, he worked in the Diocese of Manchester. He is involved in both national and local inter faith engagement. He has a particular interest in the area of faith and the public square and practical cooperation of faiths for the benefit of local communities and society and in tackling division within society.

[Back to the top](#)

## IFN E-bulletin

Thank you to those who have completed the survey about IFN's e-bulletin. We shall be drawing on responses in our development of the e-bulletin early next year.

We apologise that there was no October issue and have included in the present issue some material that would have been included in that. The next issue is due to be published in February. If you have items about inter faith projects or future events which you would like considered for inclusion in the next e-bulletin please email these to [ifnet@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:ifnet@interfaith.org.uk) by **24 January** with 'e-bulletin' in the subject line.

[Back to the top](#)

## **INTER FAITH PROJECTS AND DEVELOPMENTS**

### **CCJ Inclusion and Diversity programme**

At the end of October the Council of Christians and Jews launched its new Inclusion and Diversity Programme. CCJ was established to fight ‘religious and racial prejudice’, especially antisemitism, and to ‘promote religious and racial harmony’. The project is intended to help CCJ work towards these founding goals in three ways: establishing a small twinning scheme between synagogues and Black majority congregations in at least three cities in the UK; organising one national event at the end of the project; and establishing a project oversight group. To learn more, email Theo Shaw at [theophilia.shaw@ccj.org.uk](mailto:theophilia.shaw@ccj.org.uk).

[Back to the top](#)

### **Local inter faith anniversaries**

This year South London Inter Faith group celebrates 40 years since its founding. The highlight of the celebrations was an event on 28 November in Streatham. As a part of the anniversary events SLIFG will also be planting trees in Tooting, Merton and Streatham, revamping its website and making its archives and resources more accessible. For more information, email [chair@southlondoninterfaith.org.uk](mailto:chair@southlondoninterfaith.org.uk).

This year marks the Birmingham Faith Leaders' Group's 20th Anniversary, having been formed in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. The occasion was marked by the Group's Annual Peace Service in September, in the presence of the Deputy Lieutenant of the West Midlands and the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, which was followed by a reception at Singers Hill Synagogue. The culmination of the event was the premiere of a new specially commissioned film about the Group and its 20 years. The film can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0fv1s40PEI&t=976s>.

Other local bodies recently marking anniversaries include Swindon Interfaith. It reached its 30<sup>th</sup> year in 2020. Due to Covid restrictions, it could not hold a proper celebration last year, so decided to host it in 2021 instead. The event was an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on its successes over the last 30 years as well as looking forward to the future.

[Back to the top](#)

### **Near Neighbours Network**

As noted in the August issue, the Near Neighbours Network is a new opportunity for individuals and organisations to connect with other likeminded people and groups beyond the 11 Near Neighbours areas in England. Near Neighbours notes: “We remain committed to creating strong and cohesive communities at local level, but we also want to create a wider national network where all the groups and individuals involved with Near

Neighbours can share good practice and expertise and build new partnerships. The Network will also enable our hubs and partners to offer knowledge and training, online events, and downloadable resources, to a wider audience.” For more information, and to sign up, visit <https://www.near-neighbours.org.uk/network-joining-page>.

[Back to the top](#)

## Reaching out to our neighbours

### *Luton Gurdwara Soup Kitchen*

There are many projects which regularly offer a helping hand to others or assist when needed. For example, a weekly soup kitchen was launched during Inter Faith Week by Luton Gurdwara. <https://twitter.com/PamtengoRadio/status/1462503298582429707>

### *Sewa*

Many groups step up their collections at times such as Christmas and other festivals or hold specially focused drives for food and gifts. In this video clip, Nicola Richards MP for West Bromwich East talks about helping Sewa Day wrap presents and why she would be joining them again shortly to do so.

<https://twitter.com/Nicola4WBE/status/1471114412941783048>

### *Interfaith Glasgow Weekend Club*

Glasgow is home to more asylum seekers than anywhere else in the UK. Often newcomers arrive with little or no money, poor English, and suffering the effects of trauma. Many individuals and families find themselves extremely isolated, especially at the weekends when refugee services tend not to operate. Glasgow Interfaith’s Weekend Club tackles this isolation and aids integration by working with a team of volunteers from diverse faith and belief communities to organise free monthly events for newcomers, usually in collaboration with other organisations and often hosted in partnership with faith communities. This Christmas it has raised donations to be able to give over 100 ‘New Scots’ children and young people in Glasgow wrapped presents. These were delivered by volunteers. <https://twitter.com/InterfaithGlasg/status/1471059961128046600>

### **Winter Shelters**

A number of winter shelters, such as OneRoof Leicester, which normally operate with the assistance of faith communities, are closed due to Covid impacts.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/dec/14/call-for-action-to-prevent-deaths-as-uk-homeless-shelters-shut-their-doors>

A new scheme and fund for England, to protect and vaccinate rough sleepers, was announced on 20 December by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/push-to-protect-and-vaccinate-rough-sleepers-with-28-million-government-funding-boost>

[Back to the top](#)



## **New Telford and Wrekin Inter Faith Community Hub**

Telford and Wrekin Interfaith Council has opened an Interfaith Community Hub on the main high street in Wellington, Shropshire. The new base will be used to provide emergency food parcels and to give the homeless hot meals. An inter faith youth club will be able to meet there. There will be a prayer and reflection room

<https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/local-hubs/telford/wellington/2021/10/12/interfaith-council-opens-new-community-base-in-wellington/>

[Back to the top](#)

## **Northamptonshire Police Interfaith Association**

Northamptonshire Police has recently launched a new inter faith association, bringing together people of different faiths among officers and staff as well as members of the community. <https://www.northants.police.uk/news/northants/news/news/2021/october-21/northamptonshire-police-launches-first-interfaith-association/>

Information about dialogues in the workplace can be found at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/dialogues-in-the-workplace>.

[Back to the top](#)

## **RESOURCES AND STUDY/TRAINING**

*Resources*

### **IFN Videos for assemblies and collective worship**

During Inter Faith Week, IFN launched a number of videos that can be used in schools' assemblies and as part of collective worship.

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/school-assemblies-collective-worship>.

The videos focus on real people who are engaged in inter faith activity, some of whom do not profess a faith. Some of the videos feature young people and others more mature adults. Each video is between 3 to 5 minutes long and has been developed to promote reflection on two themes: Friendship and Social action. These videos were created for Inter Faith Week but can be used at any time of the year to enable pupils to reflect on what it means to be a friend and what it means to do good in one's community.

[Back to the top](#)

## Faith Communities and COVID-19: Learning from the Journey

Earlier this year, IFN's National Meeting took as its theme 'Faith Communities and Covid-19: Learning from the Journey'. The report on the day is at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/faith-communities-and-covid-19-learning-from-the-journey-report-on-ifn-national-meeting-2021>.

The meeting explored a wide range of issues. These included how places of worship had coped with periods of closure and with social distancing; health care chaplaincy and the handling of funerals and bereavement; and responding to loneliness and domestic abuse during the pandemic. It heard from faith communities with high BAME membership responding to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on them and about initiatives to address vaccine hesitancy. The gathering also considered how digital communication has been being used for inter faith dialogue and cooperation and the future possibilities of that; how faith communities, local authorities and other statutory agencies have been working in partnership; how schools have adapted during the pandemic and a new IFN teacher resource to help 11-14 year olds learn about inter faith activity, with examples from inter faith responses to the pandemic; the financial impact of the pandemic on faith community organisations; how the pandemic experience is being captured through research; and the practicalities of standing in solidarity and issuing statements.

[Back to the top](#)

## Inter Faith Buddies

Inter Faith Buddies is a scheme designed by IFN to bring individuals together to engage in dialogue.

- The scheme involves two people of different faiths or beliefs: keeping in touch on a weekly basis for 6 weeks;
- choosing or developing questions on which to share their thoughts and experiences; and
- if they wish, sharing at an in-person or online event, in an agreed way, some reflections on what they have gained from the experience.

It is an opportunity for sharing and learning, on a one-to-one basis across a limited period of time, about what is important to us, in the context of our wider community. The process may, of course, lead to longer term conversations and new forms of practical co-operation.

*Interested in taking up the idea within your organisation?*

If you are an organisation interested in taking up the Inter Faith Buddies idea, visit <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/inter-faith-buddies> for more information and practical pointers.

[Back to the top](#)

## Faiths Working Together toolkit

Near Neighbours, which has recently celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, has updated the Faiths Working Together toolkit produced in partnership with the Inter Faith Network for the UK. The toolkit includes practical pointers for making contact and for planning and publicising initiatives, as well as advice on key principles to consider, such as the importance of looking for shared values and experiences while working well with difference. It can be downloaded at [Faiths Working Together toolkit](#).

[Back to the top](#)

## Measures of Success toolkit

During Inter Faith Week the Woolf Institute launched a practical toolkit designed to help inter faith organisations measure their impact at a grassroots level. This is part of a two-year research project entitled *Measures of Success: Evaluating the Impact of Interfaith Dialogue*. The toolkit can be downloaded at <https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/toolkit>. To accompany the toolkit, the Woolf Institute is making available a set of resources for inter faith groups to measure impact. This includes a consent form template, baseline and end-line survey templates and a database template.

[Back to the top](#)

## Visit My Mosque resource for RE Teachers

A new resource to support Religious Education Teachers in organising school visits to places of worship such as mosques has been launched by the Muslim Council of Britain, supported by Culham St Gabriel's Trust. The resources are part of the #VisitMyMosque campaign and can be downloaded at [www.visitmymosque.org/for-re-teachers](http://www.visitmymosque.org/for-re-teachers).

They include: Teachers Introduction; Guide to Organising a School Visit to a Mosque and Template Activity Sheets; List of Mosques Offering School Tours; Bespoke '360 degree virtual mosque tours' for a diverse range of 6 mosques in the UK, plus Teacher's Guide; and Recorded video tours of a diverse range of further 6 mosques in the UK, plus Teacher's Guide. For further information, ideas or suggestions, email [visitmymosque@mcb.org.uk](mailto:visitmymosque@mcb.org.uk).

[Back to the top](#)

## Climate resources and guides

Some faith groups and faith-based organisations have launched climate resources and guides. This includes the Muslim Council for Britain's guide to eco-mosques <https://mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/MCB-Eco-Booklet-12.11.21.pdf>, Hindu Forum of Britain's guidance for Diwali and places of worship, as well as the launch of the

Hindu Environmental Task Force <http://www.hfb.org.uk/training-on-environmental-management-plan.html>, and Quakers' guide to 'Taking Action for Climate Justice' <https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/taking-action-for-climate-justice-2021>.

[Back to the top](#)

### **New Religion and Belief Policy Network**

In December Goldsmiths, University of London, launched a new Religion and Belief Policy Network, a research-based initiative led by Goldsmiths, with support from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Goldsmiths has worked closely with policy leaders in health, social care, education and community work to coproduce resources to support better policy making in relation to religion and belief. The Network website contains resources, audio, details of online events and a database searchable by keywords, sectors and settings. Further information is available at <https://religionandbeliefpolicynetwork.org/>.

[Back to the top](#)

### **Wales Faith & Citizenship conference report**

The Onyx Foundation in Wales has recently published, 'Faith & Citizenship', a record of its 2019 inter faith conference 'From our Shared Values to our Shared Citizenship'. To receive a pdf copy, email [info@onyxlinkfoundation.org](mailto:info@onyxlinkfoundation.org).

[Back to the top](#)

### **Guidance on recruiting Black and Asian charity trustees**

Action for Trustee Racial Diversity has published 'From Here to Diversity', guidance specifically designed to support boards with recruiting Black and Asian charity trustees. The guide is intended to be helpful to organisations looking to implement the 2020 iteration of the Charity Governance Code (<https://www.charitygovernancecode.org/en/front-page>) which includes an enhanced diversity principle. The guide, which has been supported by the Co-op Foundation, explores: overcoming the barriers to a more racially diverse board; reaching and engaging diverse networks; best practice in Black and Asian trustee recruitment; and inclusion and succession. The guide can be downloaded at <https://atrd.group/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/From-Here-to-Diversity-A-Practical-Guide-on-How-to-Recruit-Black-and-Asian-Charity-Trustees.pdf>. Hard copies can be purchased through the Directory of Social Change.

[Back to the top](#)

*Study/Training*

### **IFN ‘Digital surgery’ slots for local inter faith organisations**

IFN is continuing to make available free half hour digital ‘surgery’ slots for local inter faith organisations to have a conversation about their group’s use of digital communications and how they might strengthen this. Any local inter faith group interested in booking a slot can email IFN’s Project Director, Ashley Beck, at [ashley.beck@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:ashley.beck@interfaith.org.uk).

[Back to the top](#)

### **Sharing Perspectives inter faith study tour**

Sharing Perspectives is an inter faith study tour, supported by the Woolf Institute and the Christian Muslim Forum. Jews, Christians and Muslims live, journey and study together as an inter faith community hosted by St George’s College, Jerusalem. Over nine days, from 21 February – 1 March 2022, the group will encounter the land and its people in the past and present, exploring historical, geographical, religious and political complexities. Participants will visit sites sacred to each tradition, learn from one another, and explore each other’s holy scriptures. For more information, visit

<https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/whats-on/news/sharing-perspectives-an-interfaith-study-tour>.

[Back to the top](#)

## **CALLS FOR INFORMATION, COMPETITIONS, AND NOMINATIONS**

*Calls for Information*

### **Women’s Local Inter Faith Initiatives – A call for information**

As part of IFN’s work to support and encourage local inter faith engagement, IFN is carrying out a short, practically focused, research project on women’s local inter faith initiatives. Linked to this, it held a special by invitation round table during Inter Faith Week. This was chaired by IFN’s Executive Director, with opening words from the Co-Chairs, an introduction to the research project from its Project Officer, reports on contributors’ work, wide ranging discussion and closing reflections from Patricia Stoa of Nottingham Inter Faith Council. Contributors included both participants from a range of local women’s inter faith initiatives and from national women’s inter faith bodies with local groups: Women’s Interfaith Network and Nisa Nashim.

During October and November it contacted local inter faith organisations to gather information and reflections.

If you have any information about this topic that you think would be helpful, Project Officer Kirsty Healey would be very pleased to hear from you by 20 January.

[Kirsty.healey@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:Kirsty.healey@interfaith.org.uk).

[Back to the top](#)

### **IFN Local Inter Faith Guide**

The IFN office is working on a new edition of *The Local Inter Faith Guide*. This is a guide for those starting or developing the work of local inter faith bodies. The new edition will respond to the changing environment for local inter faith activity – including the changes brought by increased digital communication, particularly since the time of the pandemic. What remains the same, however, is the key role of the guide in sharing information and good practice on all sorts of topics, from running successful programmes and working in partnership with bodies such as local authorities, to naming a new local inter faith organisation, creating a logo, working out governance matters, women’s local inter faith initiatives and involving young people.

The guide will include a range of information and signposts for further learning and development in support of local inter faith organisations. It will also, again, include real examples from local inter faith organisations – that is an important way both to celebrate the work of organisations and also to provide ‘doable’ examples from which other organisations can learn.

If your local inter faith organisation in the last four years (2018-21) has:

- held an activity or run a project that your think was worthwhile and successful and might be of interest to other LIFOs;
- tackled effectively a particular issue such as governance change, fundraising, or getting more young people involved; and/or
- worked closely with statutory agencies such as the local authority or the police, eg on Covid response or tackling hate crime

Kirsty would be very pleased to hear from you by 14 January. Please send your contribution (up to 250 words) to [kirsty.healey@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:kirsty.healey@interfaith.org.uk).

Data which you provide may be drawn upon by IFN for use in development of the third edition of its Local Inter Faith Guide. Data may also be used for the wider purposes of IFN's work of promoting good inter faith relations in the UK. Answers you have given may be quoted, and may be attributed to your organisation, except where you ask that it not be so. Any contact details which you provide will not be passed to third parties without your permission.

[Back to the top](#)

## **Bereavement – A call for information**

Millions of people across the UK faced bereavement in 2020, with hundreds of thousands more bereaved than in previous years as a result of Covid-19. Across England and Wales, 614,000 people died during 2020 and 2021, leaving an estimated three million people facing bereavement. This is 75,000 more deaths than the average across the previous five years – with an estimated additional 375,000 left bereaved.

(<https://bereavementcommission.org.uk/about-us/>) As well as more people facing bereavement, the pandemic has had a profound impact on how those affected have experienced their loss.

Many people have been unable to see family and friends and have had limited access to formal support after their loved one died. Feeling alone in their grief due to lockdown or having to shield or self-isolate had had a devastating impact. The lack of face-to-face contact from primary care and community-based services, and bereavement support services, has been difficult.

Working in partnership with a number of UK charities, and with researchers leading an academic study on the issue, a UK Commission on Bereavement through and beyond Covid-19 has been established to explore these issues and make recommendations to better support bereaved people.

To help inform its ongoing work, the Commission would like to hear from individuals affected by bereavement, or professionals or organisations working to support people suffering from bereavement. The findings from this call for evidence will be fed into the Commission's report, due early next year, which they hope will include recommendations across government.

The Commission is particularly requesting evidence from faith groups. If you have experiences or reflections you would like to share, visit <https://bereavementcommission.org.uk/taking-part/> to find out more.

[Back to the top](#)

## **Survey on media representation**

REFLECT is a UK not-for-profit influencer talent management agency specialising in the management of diverse and inclusive influencers. It is currently working on a 'white paper' on the representation of minority and diverse groups in the media and is seeking views through a survey, which can be found at <https://www.research.net/r/55WJ9QH>.

[Back to the top](#)

## *Nominations*

### **Barnet Faith & Belief Awards**

Barnet Multi Faith Forum with the Faith & Belief Forum is establishing the first Barnet Faith & Belief Awards. These will celebrate outstanding contributions of faith and belief groups, through social action or community engagement, that have a positive impact on Barnet and improves the lives of residents and communities in Barnet. The closing date for nominations is 10 January. For more information, and to submit a nomination, visit <http://barnetmultifaithforum.org/barnet-faith-belief-awards-2022/>.

[Back to the top](#)

## **JOBS, INTERNSHIPS AND VOLUNTEERING**

### **Inter Faith Network for the UK**

#### *Honorary Treasurer*

IFN invites expressions of interest in the post of Honorary Treasurer. The work of IFN is overseen by a board of Trustees. All IFN Trustees hold their posts on a voluntary basis. The gift of Trustees' time and skill is vital to the wellbeing of the organisation's work and is greatly valued. Among the Trustees are 2 Co-Chairs and 1 Honorary Treasurer. For the role description and expression of interest form, contact [ifnet@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:ifnet@interfaith.org.uk).

#### *Volunteers*

The Inter Faith Network for the UK currently has an opportunity for online volunteers with good desk research and writing skills who would like to offer 4-8 hours a week to help on different aspects of IFN's work to promote inter faith understanding and cooperation in the UK. To express an interest in volunteering, please complete the application form at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/involved/vacancies/volunteering>.

[Back to the top](#)

### **Board of Deputies – Interfaith Projects Assistant**

The Board of Deputies of British Jews is seeking to recruit an Interfaith Projects Assistant. This is a part time role, which will be responsible for encouraging and supporting local inter faith meetings, visits to places of worship, and other events/activities aimed at relationship-building between Jewish communities and different faith and belief groups at the local levels. The post holder will also assist with the Board of Deputies' inter faith work on inter faith relations at the national level. The closing date is 4 January. For further information, visit <https://www.bod.org.uk/careers/>.

[Back to the top](#)



## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### Funding websites

My Funding Central is a database of grant funding and social investment sources. This service is available to organisations with an annual income below £1m and is free for organisations under £30k. <https://www.myfundingcentral.co.uk/> Similar websites for funding in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland can be found at Funding Scotland - <https://funding.scot/>, Wales Council for Voluntary Action - <http://www.wcva.cymru./funding> and Grant Tracker for Northern Ireland - <https://www.grant-tracker.org/>.

[Back to the top](#)

### COVID-19 related funding

The Charities Aid Foundation has collated a list of organisations which are supporting charities and voluntary groups at this time. <https://www.cafonline.org/covid-19-support/help-for-charities#tab1>

[Back to the top](#)

### Listed Places of Worship grant scheme

The Listed Places of Worship (LPW) Grant Scheme gives grants that cover the VAT incurred in making repairs to listed buildings in use as places of worship. The scheme covers repairs to the fabric of the building, along with associated professional fees, plus repairs to turret clocks, pews, bells and pipe organs. The Grant Scheme is run by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and administered by Topmark. <http://www.lpwscheme.org.uk/>

[Back to the top](#)

### FCC Community Action Fund

The FCC Communities Foundation is offering grants between £2,000 and £100,000 for projects which involve the provision, maintenance or improvement of public amenities including community spaces in places of worship, which are registered charities. Projects must be based within 10 miles of an eligible FCC Environment waste facility. The current round closes on 2 March. <https://fcccommunitiesfoundation.org.uk/funds/fcc-community-action-fund>

[Back to the top](#)

## Subsidised fundraising workshops

The Foundation for Social Improvement offers subsidised training programmes for small charities across the UK. The courses cover a wide range of subjects from event planning to leadership. Many of the courses focus on fundraising and sustainability skills in particular. Further information and dates for upcoming courses, now being held online, can be found at <http://www.thefsi.org/services/training>.

[Back to the top](#)

## SPECIAL WEEKS/DAYS

**The Great Winter Get Together** will be from 17 to 30 January. This is a project of the Jo Cox Foundation. <https://www.greatgettogether.org/>

**Holocaust Memorial Day** takes place on 27 January. Its theme in 2022 is ‘One Day’. Holocaust Memorial Day is the day for everyone to remember the millions of people murdered in the Holocaust, under Nazi Persecution, and in the genocides which followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur. It honours the survivors of these regimes and challenges everyone to use the lessons of their experience to inform their lives today. [www.hmd.org.uk/](http://www.hmd.org.uk/)

**World Interfaith Harmony Week** takes place from 1 to 7 February. It is a UN recognised Week which was proposed to the UN General Assembly by HM King Abdullah of Jordan. The first UN World Interfaith Harmony Week took place in February 2011. <http://worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com>

**Sewa Day** is a day of faith-based social action led by the Hindu community. It normally takes place on 4 dates across the year. Due to COVID there are currently no fixed days; rather, ‘every day is Sewa day’ and volunteers are helping people continually as they are able. <https://sewaday.org/>

### SUPPORT THE INTER FAITH NETWORK’S WORK TO INCREASE INTER FAITH UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION

The Inter Faith Network for the UK works for inter faith understanding and cooperation in the UK. Please help us grow this vital work by making a donation at: <https://interfaith.org.uk/donate> (including Paypal option). Donations can also be made by sending a cheque payable to ‘The Inter Faith Network’ to: The Inter Faith Network for the UK, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH.

Donations are used with care to make a real difference.

**Thank you!**

## **MAKE A GIFT TO SUPPORT THE INTER FAITH NETWORK'S WORK IN REMEMBRANCE OF A FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND OR THROUGH A LEGACY**

If you would like to make a gift in memory of a loved one, please get in touch by emailing [remember@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:remember@interfaith.org.uk) or call us on 0207 730 0410.

By leaving a gift in your will to the Inter Faith Network for the UK, you can leave a living inheritance to help deepen and strengthen inter faith understanding and cooperation in this country – for now and for the future. If you are thinking about making a will, the best thing to do is to get in touch with a professional will writer, such as a solicitor or advocate; they can help to ensure it is legally correct and that your wishes are met. If you have already made a will, you can still make an addition or amendment in the form of a codicil. If you would like to pledge a gift, please provide our name and address, along with our registered charity number 1068934.

Please get in touch with us if you have any queries.

You can call us on 0207 730 0410 or contact us at [remember@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:remember@interfaith.org.uk).

Remember a Charity has produced a helpful resource called 'Making a Will - your complete guide'. This can be found at <https://www.rememberacharity.org.uk/making-a-will/>.

[Back to the top](#)

## **DIARY DATES**

A few examples of forthcoming events are listed below. Those listed are all virtual, except where noted. Events are also listed on the IFN website at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/involved/events>.

**Leeds Concord Interfaith Fellowship** is holding an event on Tuesday 11 January on 'Attitudes Towards Wealth in Christianity and Hinduism'. This will be presented by John Summerwill and Sam Ghosh. The event begins at 7.30pm. For more information, email [chair@concord-leeds.org.uk](mailto:chair@concord-leeds.org.uk).

**York Interfaith Group** is holding its next meeting on Tuesday 11 January. Dee Boyle and others will be speaking about how their personal faith has developed or changed over the course of their lives so far. The meeting begins at 7.30pm. For more information, email [yorkinterfaithgroup@gmail.com](mailto:yorkinterfaithgroup@gmail.com).

**Woking Action for Peace, Churches Together in Woking, Surrey Faith Links, Woking Environment Action, Woking People of Faith, Woking Soroptimists and Woking Quakers** are holding the next Woking Debate on Saturday 15 January. The topic is 'What is gender? Does it need to affect how we relate to each other?'. The event will take place

from 11am to 12.30pm at Christ Church, Jubilee Square, Woking GU21 6YG. For more information, visit [www.wokingdebates.com](http://www.wokingdebates.com).

**Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum** is holding its next event on Wednesday 9 February. The topic will be ‘My Judaism, differences among Jews’ and the meeting will be held at the North West Surrey Synagogue, 7.00pm (refreshments) for 7.30pm start. For more information, contact Kawther Hashmi at [KawtherH@smef.org.uk](mailto:KawtherH@smef.org.uk).

The **St Ethelburga’s Centre for Reconciliation and Peace** is holding a 4-day retreat at its Centre in London from Thursday 10 to Sunday 13 February. This will “combine a fearless look at the reality of climate migration, with lessons being learnt from innovative projects engaging migrant communities. Using reflective practices and group work we will explore the bridges between individual and community resilience.” For more information, and to book, visit [https://stethelburgas.org/event/home-an-immersive-retreat-exploring-climate-change-migration-and-community-resilience/?mc\\_cid=2e6b2c400b&mc\\_eid=91aaa813ea](https://stethelburgas.org/event/home-an-immersive-retreat-exploring-climate-change-migration-and-community-resilience/?mc_cid=2e6b2c400b&mc_eid=91aaa813ea).

#### **More information on events and projects in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales:**

Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum: [www.niinterfaithforum.org](http://www.niinterfaithforum.org)

Interfaith Scotland: [www.interfaithscotland.org](http://www.interfaithscotland.org)

Inter-faith Council for Wales: <https://www.interfaithcouncilwales.cymru/>

IFN also carries news and information at [www.twitter.com/IFNetUK](https://www.twitter.com/IFNetUK) [www.facebook.com/IFNetUK](https://www.facebook.com/IFNetUK) and, about Inter Faith Week, at <https://twitter.com/IFweek> and [www.facebook.com/IFWeek](https://www.facebook.com/IFWeek).

You can sign up to IFN mailings at any time by using the form on IFN’s website at: [www.interfaith.org.uk/news/gdpr](http://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/gdpr) or let us know that you would like to unsubscribe by using the links at the bottom of the cover email.

#### **Submissions for next issue**

If you have items about inter faith projects or future events which you would like considered for inclusion in the next e-bulletin please email these to [ifnet@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:ifnet@interfaith.org.uk) **by 24 January** with ‘e-bulletin’ in the subject line. Submissions may be edited for length or style.

*Disclaimer: Information in this e-bulletin has been sourced and compiled with care. IFN does not take responsibility for accuracy of information supplied by external organisations and inclusion of items within this e-bulletin does not imply endorsement or validation by IFN of the events, publications or the bodies which have produced these.*

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