



# IFN e-bulletin

February/March 2020

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 the 'Read more' link in the Sections and Contents lists below.

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## **E-BULLETIN SURVEY**

With this issue comes a special survey about the e-bulletin.

[https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/IFN\\_E-bulletin/](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/IFN_E-bulletin/)

We would be very grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete this. *Thank you!*

## **FAITH AND PUBLIC LIFE UPDATES**

### **Exiting the EU – the important role of faith communities**

On 31 January the UK left the European Union.

For Government information relating to EU Exit, see <https://www.gov.uk/transition>. A useful short overview of what will change at this time and what will stay the same can be found at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-51194363>.

An IFN briefing note, ‘Exiting the EU – the important role of faith communities at a time of transition’ highlights faith communities’ trusted role in signposting information and as providers of community support and their vital work to unite communities, promote good relations and tackle hatred. The note, originally published on 31 October, was developed by the IFN office in the light of discussion by IFN’s Faith Communities Forum (FCF) and subsequent correspondence with FCF members. The Department for Exiting the EU (now closed) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government were also consulted in the development of the note. It was recirculated and shared on social media on 31 January. It can be found on IFN’s website at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/leaving-the-eu-the-important-role-of-faith-communities-at-a-time-of-transition>.

As well as Government sources of information and support, there are a number of organisations and initiatives working to campaign for/and or support particular groups, such as <https://www.the3million.org.uk/> in relation to European citizens in the UK.

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## **Cabinet reshuffle**

On 14 February Prime Minister Boris Johnson carried out a Cabinet reshuffle. A full list of new Cabinet members can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/latest-updates-on-ministerial-appointments-13-february-2020>.

The Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP remains the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. The previous Minister for Faith, Viscount Younger of Leckie, has now been made a Government Whip. No announcement has yet been made on who will hold this portfolio.

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## **VE and VJ Day 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary Commemorations**

As noted in the August 2019 issue, IFN worked with the Royal British Legion (RBL) to arrange a roundtable last June for faith communities to explore understandings of Remembrance and to reflect on inclusion and Remembrance.

<https://www.facebook.com/ifnetuk/posts/2452842664766294>

This year is the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of both Victory in Europe Day (VE Day) and Victory in Japan Day (VJ Day) and the RBL will be “paying tribute to the men and women of the Second World War generation from Britain, the Commonwealth and Allied nations who came home and rebuilt our world at the end of WW2.” It will be celebrating “the peace that reunited them, and the democracy and freedoms they secured for us”.

<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/remembrance/what-were-remembering-this-year>

A special programme of events marking VE 75 will take place over the Early May Bank Holiday in London and has been designed to be of particular interest to all from the Second World War generation who served at home and overseas across the European theatre. More information on this and how to get involved is at

<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/remembrance/remembrance-events/ve-day-75>.

The UK’s VJ Day national event will take place at the National Memorial Arboretum on 15 August. The event will form part of a three-day public programme of events from 14 to 16 August, which will include a national service of Remembrance. More information on this and how to get involved is at <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/remembrance/remembrance-events/vj-day-75>.

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## Streatham and Hanau attacks

On 2 February two people were stabbed in a terrorist attack in Streatham, South London. The assailant, Sudesh Amman, was shot dead.

IFN's Co-Chairs put out the following message: "Our thoughts and prayers are with all affected by today's terrorist stabbing attack in Streatham, London. As past statements by IFN's Co-Chairs and Moderators have underlined, we must stand together to oppose terrorism and the ideologies that promote it."

Local communities came together for a peace vigil in Streatham the following week. They were joined by the local MP, Bell Ribeiro-Addy, and by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/feb/08/a-week-on-streatham-attack-marked-by-march-and-peace-vigil>

The Co-Chairs issued a similar message following the shootings in Hanau, Germany, on 19 February, which are believed to have been terrorist attacks carried out by a far right extremist.

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## Security at places of worship

On 27 January the Scottish Government announced funding of £500,000 to help places of worship in Scotland install security measures. Religious groups will be consulted in the coming months to help develop the scheme. The fund will be launched later this year. More information can be found at <https://www.gov.scot/news/fund-announced-for-security-measures-at-places-of-worship/>.

In September last year the Chancellor announced that the Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme in England and Wales would be doubled to £3.2 million for 2020-21. There is no further information yet available on this. Synagogues are covered separately by the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant.

On 8 January Gareth Thomas, MP for Harrow West, asked Home Secretary Rt Hon Priti Patel the following Written Question: "How much financial assistance she has made available to improve security for people attending (a) Hindu Temples, (b) Synagogues, (c) Churches, (d) Mosques, (e) Gurdwaras and (f) other places of worship in the 2019-20 financial year?" The answer, given on 16 January, can be found at <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-01-08/1266/>.

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## Hate crime and incidents

Extensive Antisemitic graffitiing was found in North London at the end of December <https://www.hamhigh.co.uk/news/crime-court/hampstead-antisemitic-graffiti-an-affront-to-our-borough-say-interfaith-forum-chairs-1-6444221> Antisemitic graffiti was also sprayed on a bank in London on the eve of Holocaust Memorial Day. Over the New Year, anti-Muslim slogans were reported on a building near North Brixton Islamic Cultural Centre in London. In Larne, Northern Ireland, a paint bomb attack on a Catholic church is being treated by police as a sectarian hate crime. <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/larne-church-targeted-in-sectarian-hate-crime-38961133.html>

The Community Security Trust reports that 2019 was the worst year on record, with a total of 1,805 incidents deemed Antisemitic. This is 7% higher than the 2018 total of 1,690 incidents and is the fourth successive year in which a new annual high has been recorded. For the second successive year, CST recorded over 100 incidents in every calendar month. <https://cst.org.uk/data/file/9/0/IncidentsReport2019.1580815723.pdf>

Social media also continues to be used to inflame anger about particular groups. For example, Tell Mama reports that “A viral and inflammatory falsehood about ‘Muslim-only housing’ in London exemplifies the need for Twitter to fix an enduring problem: removing content designed to deceive and pass as news”. <https://tellmamauk.org/how-far-right-fake-news-continues-to-go-viral-on-twitter/>

On 8 January a public consultation into Hate Crime in Northern Ireland was launched. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/northernirelandnews/2020/01/08/news/public-consultation-on-hate-crime-launched-as-eight-incident-a-day-reported-to-psni-1808297/> The consultation paper can be found at <https://www.hatecrimereviewni.org.uk/news/consultation-paper> and the closing date for submissions is 31 March.

On 21 January, Viscount Younger of Leckie, then Minister for Faith, replied to a Written Question from Lord Vinson asking the Government “what steps they are taking to ensure that criticism of any religion is not regarded as a hate crime”. The response can be seen at <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-questions-answers>. See also: <https://www.lawandreligionuk.com/2020/02/07/prosecuting-hate-speech-against-religion/>.

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## Tackling Antisemitism

On 28 January Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick announced £500,000 of new funding for a programme supporting universities in tackling Antisemitism on campus over 3 years. Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-funding-to-help-universities-tackle-antisemitism-announced-on-holocaust-memorial-day>.

Chelsea Football Club has an ongoing 'Say No To Antisemitism' campaign which was launched in January 2018. It has just announced that it will be partnering with The Jerusalem Post to host a conference at its stadium to further highlight the importance of tackling the rise of Antisemitism. <https://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Antisemitism/Chelsea-Football-Jerusalem-Post-partner-to-tackle-antisemitism-618059>

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## Countering Extremism

The Government's current Counter Extremism Strategy, published in 2015, comes to an end this year. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-extremism-strategy> The previous Home Secretary announced on 17 July last year that the Home Office would be working on developing a new strategy but that the timing and nature of this would need to be considered by the current Government. The timetable is not yet known.

The Home Office is currently considering the recommendations of a report published by the independent Commission for Countering-Extremism in October, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/challenging-hateful-extremism>.

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## Political parties and faith community concerns

There continue to be concerns among faith communities about allegations of faith-based discrimination, including Antisemitism and Islamophobia, in political parties. There have also been some concerns expressed by some about the Labour Party about positions seen as anti Hindu.

The EHRC is due to report in May on its Investigation into Antisemitism in the Labour Party. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/inquiries-and-investigations/investigation-labour-party> The Prime Minister announced in December that the Conservative Party would be holding "an independent inquiry into Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, every manner of prejudice and discrimination". <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/boris-johnson-apologises-for-hurt-and-offence-caused-by-islamophobia-in-conservative-party-a4298091.html>

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## **APPG on Safeguarding in Faith Settings**

On 28 January the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Safeguarding in Faith Settings published the report of its Inquiry into “the effectiveness of current definitions of ‘positions of trust’ in safeguarding young people within faith settings”. This was produced following a Call for Evidence in August 2019 which received evidence from a wide variety of individuals and organisations, including faith groups/denominations and communities, professional safeguarding agencies, law firms and academics and also oral evidence provided by a range of respondents at evidence sessions in Parliament in October.

The report calls on the Government to close the loophole in the law that allows adults in ‘positions of trust’ to legally engage in sexual activity with the young people they are working with. The full report can be found at <https://thirtyoneeight.org/get-help/resources/appg-report-pot/>.

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## **Faith communities and loneliness**

Faith communities play an important role in combatting loneliness. In January the Government published its Loneliness Annual Report. This includes case study material about work done by faith communities.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/loneliness-annual-report-the-first-year/loneliness-annual-report-january-2020--2>

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## **Faith communities and blood and organ donation**

Faith communities are continuing to support blood donation drives. For example, in December, Faiths Forum for London coordinated an inter faith blood donation drive at a mosque in Golders Green where Jews, Muslims and people of all faiths and none were invited to donate blood. <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/golders-green-mosque-welcomes-jews-and-muslims-for-interfaith-blood-drive-1.494802>

As noted in previous e-bulletins, under the new organ donation system in England everybody will be considered a potential organ donor unless they add their details to the NHS Organ Donor Register to say that they do not wish to donate their organs or are in one of the excluded groups. The new system is due to begin in Spring 2020, though the exact date has not yet been confirmed. People are free to register their decision before or after the change in the law. There has recently been some misinformation circulating online about the date for the system to begin. NHS Blood and Transport has created a webpage to address the misinformation <https://www.organdonation.nhs.uk/get-involved/news/fake-news/>.

Information about organ donation and the position of individual faith and belief systems is at <https://www.organdonation.nhs.uk/about-donation/organ-donation-and-my-beliefs/> and a selection of downloadable faith and belief-specific donor cards can be found at <https://www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/how-you-can-help/get-involved/download-digital-materials/faith-and-belief-donor-cards/>.

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## **Holocaust Memorial Day**

Holocaust Memorial Day took place on 27 January. Its theme was ‘Stand Together’. 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 survivors’ experience to inform their lives today. This year there were particular commemorations to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz. The approaching 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide was also remembered. The London event was broadcast in full by the BBC. For more information, visit [www.hmd.org.uk/](http://www.hmd.org.uk/).

The Interfaith Council for Wales/ Cyngor Rhyngffydd Rhyng-ffydd Cymru was involved in the National Service of Commemoration for Wales at Cardiff City Hall, Interfaith Scotland hosted the National Memorial for Scotland at the Scottish Parliament and the Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum was involved in the Holocaust commemoration event at Belfast City Hall.

During January IFN published a resource on its website about Annual Memorial Days and Weeks including Holocaust Memorial Day and Remembering Srebrenica. See [below](#).

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## **RE in Northern Ireland**

The Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum has been invited to sit on the Religious Studies Subject Advisory Board for GCSE and A Level, under the aegis of Northern Ireland’s Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment. It is also undertaking research into parental attitudes to RE in Northern Ireland among those from minority faith and belief backgrounds.

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

### **Meeting of Faith Communities Forum**

A meeting of IFN's Faith Communities Forum was held on 12 February. The two main items on the Agenda were Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education, with a presentation from an official from the Department for Education; and Speaking together peacefully to counter extremism and hate crime.

As well as IFN matters, the meeting discussed: the inter faith engagement and joint work of faith communities and other current issues of interest or concern to faith communities. As part of the latter session, they heard a short presentation from a staff member of Keep Britain Tidy about its Annual Spring Clean, and how faith communities can get involved.

The Forum also agreed a statement on 'Cooperation and positive coexistence: Faith communities in the UK'. This focuses on the commitment of faith communities to respectful and positive engagement. It can be found at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/cooperation-and-positive-coexistence-faith-communities-in-the-uk>.

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### **IFN Social Media Photography Competition**

On 24 February IFN will be launching a Social Media Photography Competition. It will have a local inter faith focus. For more, see [below](#).

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### **IFN UK-wide local inter faith practitioner day 24 March**

Among IFN's meetings are special days for people from local inter faith groups anywhere in the UK to come to share their experiences, discuss issues of common interest and concern and discuss practical aspects of developing successful inter faith programmes as well as the challenges. The next such day event will be held in Reading on 24 March.

For any queries, please contact Project Assistant Ruth Foster at [ruth.foster@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:ruth.foster@interfaith.org.uk).

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### **IFN local link meetings in Kent and the North West of England**

From time to time IFN also holds smaller meetings, such as regional or county-wide links. It will be holding a link meeting in Maidstone on 27 February for local inter faith bodies in Kent and in Preston on 5 March for local inter faith bodies in the North West of England.

For any queries, please contact Project Assistant Ruth Foster at [ruth.foster@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:ruth.foster@interfaith.org.uk).

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### **New online resources**

During January IFN published a resource on its website about Annual Memorial Days and Weeks including Holocaust Memorial Day and Remembering Srebrenica. This includes examples of events held by local inter faith organisations. It can be found at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/annual-memorial-days-and-weeks>.

In February, it published a resource about local inter faith organisations and environmental social action: <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/local-inter-faith-organisations-and-environmental-social-action>.

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### **The Act of Reflection and Commitment by Faith Communities of the UK – 20 years on**

January marked 20 years since faith communities of the UK came together in the Royal Gallery at the Houses of Parliament in the Shared Act of Reflection and Commitment, arranged by Government with assistance from IFN. As part of this, a short 'Act of Commitment' was developed by the faith communities with IFN which continues to be widely used today in contexts such as civic services and inter faith events. The idea for the event arose from the work of the 'Lambeth Group' (the Churches and Other Faiths Sub-group of the Millennium Coordinating Group of DCMS), which met at Lambeth Palace and on which IFN and a range of faiths and denominations were represented. The event was in part inspired by a suggestion from one of its members, Lord Singh of Wimbledon of the Network of Sikh Organisations. The 'Act of Commitment' can be found at <https://interfaith.org.uk/resources/act-of-commitment>.

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### **Inter Faith Network 'Come Together' Appeal**

The Inter Faith Network for the UK recently launched the 'Come Together Appeal'. [www.interfaith.org.uk/news/appeal](http://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/appeal) In these often divided times, it is vital for people to stand together against prejudice and hatred and to come together in respect, understanding and cooperation for the common good. The Inter Faith Network works in many different ways to support the development of greater inter faith understanding and cooperation and to enable people to come together.

On behalf of the Board of IFN, Co-Chairs Jatinder Singh Birdi and Bishop Jonathan Clark encourage all readers to consider a donation to support IFN's vital work. Every gift will be carefully used to make a real difference.

It is easy to donate by clicking on this link: <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/appeal>, by PayPal or by sending a cheque to: The Inter Faith Network for the UK, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH.

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## **INTER FAITH PROJECTS, PROGRAMMES AND DEVELOPMENTS**

### **Special feature – Faith communities and the environment**

COP26, the 2020 UN Climate Change Conference will take place in Glasgow from 9 to 19 November. Many faith and inter faith organisations are already gearing up to hold activities related to it. The conference is at the same time as Inter Faith Week and Scottish Interfaith Week.

A number of faith communities and faith-based organisations have ongoing programmes of work on environmental issues and a number of linked initiatives have been developed, such as: the Bhumi Project (<http://www.bhumiproject.org/>); Eco-Church (<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>); Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences (<http://www.ifees.org.uk/>); Eco-Sikh (<http://www.ecosikh.org/about/>); Eco-Synagogue (<https://ecosynagogue.org/about/>) and Operation Noah (<https://operationnoah.org/>). An Eco-Dharma working group has recently been set up (<https://www.nbo.org.uk/new-eco-dharma-network/>).

Examples of local inter faith activities can be found in IFN's latest online resource on 'Local inter faith organisations and environmental social action'. This includes case studies from Birmingham Council of Faiths, Devon Faith and Belief Forum, Harrow Interfaith and Redbridge faith Forum. <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/local-inter-faith-organisations-and-environmental-social-action>

Faiths4Change is an inter faith organisation working to connect the health and wellbeing of people and the environment across the North West through the use of arts, health and wellbeing activities. <https://www.faiths4change.org.uk/>

Faith for the Climate (FftC) is a network of over 150 faith-based organisations and individuals working on climate change. It exists to encourage, inspire and equip faith in their work on climate change. Its website lists many faith-based campaigns and resources that inter faith groups can use and encourage their members to engage in. FftC also distributes a monthly e-news bulletin to its members, which can be signed up to at <https://faithfortheclimate.org.uk/>.

The Climate Coalition links 140 organisations of many different kinds. Its vision is of a future where the UK no longer contribute to climate change. Every February it encourages people to get involved in conversations about climate change through its Show the Love campaign: <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/show-the-love> . This includes 'faith packs', faith-based resources created to enable greater grassroots faith participation in tackling climate change.

There are also international inter faith environmental initiatives such as the Interfaith Rainforest Initiative <https://www.interfaithrainforest.org>. Religions for Peace (RfP) has a Resource Guide on Climate Change for religious communities. <https://rfp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/RfP-Resource-Guide-on-Climate-Change.pdf> Religions for Peace UK has a particular interest in this topic and is providing some support to Faith for the Climate and encouraging faith community conversations.

Interfaith Scotland has a guidance booklet, developed with its Youth Committee, to help faith communities become more eco-friendly. <https://interfaithscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Our-Sacred-Earth-a-guide-for-becoming-more-eco-friendly-in-your-faith-community.pdf>

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### **Hindu Muslim dine together project**

Hindus and Muslims dined together recently as part of a scheme to encourage inter faith friendships in Leicester. The St Philip's Centre, whose work includes promoting inter faith harmony, has launched 'Come Dine Together' inspired by the Channel 4 series *Come Dine With Me*. People from different faiths of all ages will meet to share a meal, either in their homes or at a restaurant and get to know each other.

<https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/leicester-news/hindus-muslims-dine-together-part-3786625>

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### **Coventry Sacred Space Initiative**

On 22 January a summit was held in Coventry to begin development of a new Coventry Sacred Space Initiative (CSSI). It was organised by the Coventry Safety and Security working group with representatives of the local community and supported by the Council and included representatives from Coventry's diverse religious and cultural communities. They were joined by representatives of West Midlands Police, the Home Office, Council and other statutory bodies and agencies.

The new initiative will see communities working with partners to transform an area which is in-need of repair and regeneration, with many local people having few opportunities

and facing mental and physical health challenges. Organisers say that it is planned to include at least one place of worship from the different religions present in Coventry and to ensure the minority religious/cultural communities feel a sense of past or present ownership, appreciation and care and that visitors, guests and students gain a deeper understanding of different religions, belief systems including nature and the environment. <https://tiacommunity.com/coventry-sacred-space-initiative/>

Faith in Society is supporting the initiative and is writing a report on the Summit. <https://faithinsociety.org.uk/the-coventry-sacred-space-initiative/>.

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### **London Interfaith Fun Run**

In September the Faith and Belief Forum, in partnership with Maccabi GB and others, will be hosting London's first Interfaith Fun Run – *Running for a Connected London*.

As well as a 1k and a 5k Fun Run there will be an afternoon of performances, activities and games, a charity fair, a family fun zone and food. The event is about “having fun, challenging yourself and raising money for London’s amazing charities. Above all it is about spreading an uplifting and positive message about how great London’s diverse faiths, beliefs and cultures are and how we can work together for a better connected London.” For more information and to register an interest in taking part in any way, visit <https://faithbeliefforum.org/form/interfaith-fun-run-register-interest/>.

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### **Religions for Peace (UK) Interfaith Youth Network**

The Religions for Peace (UK) Interfaith Youth Network, launched in 2016, is looking to set up a Core Group to develop its vision and mission, to invite UK religious and inter-religious youth organisations to meet and discuss the way forward. For more information, updates and how to get involved, visit <https://www.facebook.com/rfp.ukiyn> and <https://www.rfpuk.org/about/uk-interfaith-youth-network/>.

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### **Building Bridges Pendle - People and the Community**

Building Bridges Pendle’s has begun a new project called ‘People and the Community’, through which it is to seek engagement with Syrian families.

<https://www.facebook.com/buildingbridgespendle/photos/a.273714356101901/1596146210525369/?type=3&theater>

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## **Brent Shelter of Sanctuary**

Brent Multi Faith Forum has co-ordinated the ‘Brent Shelter of Sanctuary’ which is a winter night shelter that offers bed space for up to 15 men experiencing homelessness in Brent. It is running for 12 weeks until the end of March 2020. They are looking for volunteers to help run the shelter, and also provide training. <https://brent.cityofsanctuary.org/partners-of-sanctuary/bmff>

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## **LGBT Interfaith Glasgow**

LGBT Interfaith Glasgow is a joint project between Glasgow LGBT+ Interfaith Network and Hidayah. It “aims to be a supportive environment to share experiences of being LGBT+ within different faith communities, and to explore how faith and LGBT+ identities can interact.” Its evening events are held on the first Wednesday of every month and are open to people from all faiths and none. For more information, visit <https://www.lgbthealth.org.uk/event/lgbt-interfaith-glasgow/2020-02-05/> or contact [development@interfaithglasgow.org](mailto:development@interfaithglasgow.org).

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## **Gwent Police Faith Community Forum**

The Interfaith Council for Wales/ Cyngor Rhyngffydd Cymru is working with Heddlu Gwent Police to form a Faith Community Forum for the force area. It will be exploring different forms of inter faith engagement that can be facilitated by the Heddlu/Police to help build and cement community cohesion.

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## **RESOURCES AND STUDY/TRAINING**

### **Media, Faith and Belonging report**

In January the Faith & Belief Forum and the Department of Psychosocial Studies at Birkbeck, University of London, published ‘Media, Faith and Belonging’ drawing on discussion at a 2018, roundtable involving local organisations, academics and policy experts. This is the third and final report in a series supported by a grant from Dangoor Education which looked at different aspects of belief and belonging. The report finds that “inaccurate, sensationalised and simplistic media coverage reinforces negative stereotypes of religious groups, increasing the potential for suspicion, fear and communal violence” and offers several recommendations to address these issues. It can be downloaded from <https://faithbeliefforum.org/report>. For more information, email [philip@faithbeliefforum.org](mailto:philip@faithbeliefforum.org) or telephone 0207 482 9535.

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## **Interfaith Scotland University Chaplaincy report**

Interfaith Scotland (IfS) has published the results of its research with university chaplains at the campuses of Glasgow, Strathclyde, Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt, Aberdeen, Dundee, Stirling, St Andrews and the University of the Highlands and Islands (Moray campus). The purpose of the research, carried out by IfS and Interfaith Glasgow, was “to ascertain how good interfaith relations are currently being promoted on university campuses and to identify best practice and future opportunities for ongoing collaboration”.

The document looks at the roles and aims of the chaplains and chaplaincy centres, what buildings and spaces they use, their paid chaplaincy teams and their honorary chaplains who are unpaid and represent many different faith communities; and ways that the centres link in with other university bodies and Equality and Diversity officers, local inter faith groups, faith communities and IfS. The report can be downloaded from <https://interfaithscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/INTERFAITH-UNIVERSITY-CHAPLAINCY-RESEARCH-PROJECT.pdf>.

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## **Supporting Faith and Belief Student Societies**

Theos has produced a guidance booklet, aimed at students’ unions, to advise them on how to support their faith and belief societies better. The guidance is available at <https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/research/2020/01/17/supporting-faith-and-belief-student-societies-a-guide-for-students-unions>. It draws on findings from Theos’ report (produced in partnership with the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations at Coventry University), [Faith and Belief on Campus: Division and Cohesion \(2019\)](#).

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## **Faith and Police Together toolkit**

Faith and Police Together is a collaboration of faith based organisations which actively work on Police Related Priorities in partnership with Police and Police and Crime Commissioners. It is part of the charity Redeeming Our Communities and is supported by the National Police Chiefs' Council and College of Policing. It has produced a Toolkit called a ‘Faith Communities Guide to Engaging with Police’. This can be downloaded from [https://www.faithandpolicetogether.org.uk/uploads/4/9/5/4/4954631/faith\\_communities\\_guide\\_to\\_engaging\\_with\\_police\\_30.01.20\\_.pdf](https://www.faithandpolicetogether.org.uk/uploads/4/9/5/4/4954631/faith_communities_guide_to_engaging_with_police_30.01.20_.pdf).

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## **Armistice Now portal**

Professor Brian Gates MBE has created a portal called Armistice Now, which focuses on the religious diversity of the troops in the First World War and in the Empire and the Commonwealth. It also explores the different views and debates within and between faiths about violence and non-violence. The portal can be found at <http://armisticenow.net/>.

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## **Faiths Forum for London Community Roots report**

The Faiths Forum for London has published a report on the Community Roots gardening project that it led between November 2018 and January 2020. This can be found at <http://faithsforum.com/community-roots-final-report-2018-2020/>.

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## **Faith and Belief Forum Interfaith Toolkit for London**

In January the Faith and Belief Forum launched a new Interfaith toolkit, 'Working Together for a More Connected London: a Toolkit of Interfaith Skills'. For more information, contact Jessica Hazrati at [jessica@faithbeliefforum.org](mailto:jessica@faithbeliefforum.org).

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## **Interfaith Milton Keynes DVD**

Interfaith Milton Keynes (IFMK) has produced a DVD containing a short, edited film from a Multifaith Service that it held in November. <https://www.interfaithmk.org.uk/projects>

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## **IFN inter faith resource for primary schools**

As noted in the December e-bulletin, in the course of Inter Faith Week the Inter Faith Network launched a new primary school resource designed to help increase pupils' understanding of, and skills for, inter faith encounter, dialogue and action. It focuses on learning about real examples of inter faith engagement, including in their areas.

The resource is for Upper Key Stage 2 pupils. It consists of a teachers' introduction and four units, which are: 1a Religious Diversity in the UK and the Importance of Inter Faith Activity, 1b Introducing Inter Faith Activity, 2 Let's Talk – Inter Faith Dialogue, 3 Making a Difference in the Community: Inter Faith Social Action, and 4 Team Spirit – Inter Faith Sport.

The resource can be found at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/learning-about-inter-faith-activity-a-primary-resource>.

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### **Cumberland Lodge webinar on Interfaith Harmony**

Cumberland Lodge is holding a series of monthly webinars. The most recent webinar on 'Dialogue and Debate: Enabling Interfaith Harmony' can be found at <https://www.cumberlandlodge.ac.uk/read-watch-listen/dialogue-debate-enabling-interfaith-harmony>.

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

### **IFN Social Media Photography Competition**

On 24 February IFN will be launching a Social Media Photography Competition on different aspects of local inter faith activity: local inter faith dialogue; local inter faith social action; and local inter faith youth activity (including on campus). Details of how to enter and terms and conditions will be available on IFN's website at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/competition>.

Entries will be via Facebook or Instagram. For guidance on how to set up an Instagram account or a Facebook page visit <https://help.instagram.com/155940534568753> or <https://www.facebook.com/help/135275340210354>.

Follow IFN on Instagram @IFNetUK or Facebook for announcements and details about the competition.

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### **Honours Nominations**

A number of people received Honours in this year's New Year's Honours list for services to inter faith work or community cohesion.

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is keen to recognise individuals who have contributed to building integrated communities and notes that nominees can come from all levels; being in a junior role is not a barrier to a nomination.

All nominations must be made on an official citation form and nominees should not be informed that they have been nominated. MHCLG is running workshops on Honours citations during March. Places can be booked at

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/honours-workshop-new-year-2021-tickets-90296117117>.

Citation forms, as well as further information, can be obtained by emailing [integration@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:integration@communities.gsi.gov.uk).

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## **JOBS, INTERNSHIPS AND VOLUNTEERING**

IFN's website lists job and internship opportunities with a significant inter faith dimension with IFN member organisations at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/involved/vacancies/jobs>.

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

The Inter Faith Network for the UK is seeking volunteers to help with various projects in the IFN office. For further information and an application form, contact [ifnet@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:ifnet@interfaith.org.uk).

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### **Council of Christians and Jews – Internship**

The Council of Christian and Jews is seeking a part-time assistant to CCJ Programmes. This is a paid internship between 10 to 14 hours per week. Applications will be considered on a rolling basis. For more information, visit [http://www.ccj.org.uk/contact\\_ccj/recruitment](http://www.ccj.org.uk/contact_ccj/recruitment).

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### **St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace – various**

St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace is advertising a number of positions, paid and voluntary. For more information, visit <https://stethelburgas.org/get-involved/vacancies-and-volunteering/>.

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### **Women's Interfaith Network – Interns and Volunteers**

Women's Interfaith Network is looking for volunteers, including interns to work alongside them in a number of varied roles including event organisation, meeting local groups and research and development. If you are interested in an internship at win, email Tara Corry at [tara@wominet.org.uk](mailto:tara@wominet.org.uk). For more information visit <https://wominet.org.uk/get-involved/>.

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## **Cornwall Faith Forum – Volunteers**

Cornwall Faith Forum is seeking volunteers in the areas of Education, Fundraising and its Refugee Community Link Project. For more information, contact Rita Stephen on 07775 937485 or visit <https://dorkemmyn.org.uk/get-involved/>.

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## **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Near Neighbours small grants programme**

The Near Neighbours small grants programme is funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and administered by the Church Urban Fund. It is currently offering small grants of between £250 and £5,000 as seed funding for local groups and organisations working in a number of areas of England to bring together neighbours, and to develop relationships across diverse faiths and ethnicities to improve their communities. To be eligible, projects should meet the following criteria: bringing people together, working locally, working sustainably, committing to diversity, and improving the community.

For information on the eligible areas and to be updated when the next round of funding opens, visit <https://www.near-neighbours.org.uk/small-grants>.

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### **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 next round opens on 18 March and closes on 3 June. For more information, visit <https://fcccommunitiesfoundation.org.uk/funds/fcc-community-action-fund>.

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### **Windrush Compensation Scheme**

The Windrush Compensation Scheme is open to those who settled in the UK from a Commonwealth country before 1973, and in certain circumstances their children and grandchildren. Claim forms can be downloaded and guidance on completing the application can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/windrush-compensation-scheme>. Claimants can also request a form to be sent by post by calling the helpline on

0800 678 1925 or via email [WindrushCompensationScheme@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:WindrushCompensationScheme@homeoffice.gov.uk) where they can also request a call back if they are overseas.

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### **Faith in Community Scotland**

Faith in Community Scotland is an anti-poverty charity founded in 2005. They support individuals and faith groups in Scotland's poorest neighbourhoods to achieve the difference that they are capable of. They do this through training, resources and funding which helps to build people's skill and to increase their confidence. It has a small grants programme which has distributed over £1 million over the past ten years to urban and rural faith groups tackling poverty. For more information about eligibility and how to apply for a grant, including the next application deadline date, email [andrew@faithincommunity.scot](mailto:andrew@faithincommunity.scot).

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### **Veolia Environmental Trust community funding**

The Veolia Environmental Trust is now accepting applications for projects that will start between 23 June and 22 September. Not-for-profit organisations can apply for funding for environmental or community-based projects that are located within five miles of an operating Veolia site in England. The closing date for Stage 1 Application Forms is 5 March. For more information, visit <https://www.veoliatrust.org/funding/>.

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### **Funding websites**

Funding Central <http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk>, supported by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, is a free website for charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises in England. It provides access to thousands of funding and finance opportunities, together with tools and resources to develop sustainable income strategies. Similar websites for funding in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland can be found at Funding Scotland - <http://www.fundingscotland.com/> - Wales Council for Voluntary Action - <http://www.wcva.org.uk/funding/search> - and Grant Tracker for Northern Ireland - <https://www.grant-tracker.org/>.

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### **Website and Facebook grants**

The Transform Foundation offers funding to charities to help with new website builds. Grants of £18,000 are available. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. For further information and to apply, visit <https://www.transformfoundation.org.uk/funded-website-programme>.

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## 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 in March and April can be found at <http://www.thefsi.org/services/training>.

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## SPECIAL WEEKS/DAYS

**Sewa Day** will now be taking place 4 times a year – Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. The first Sewa Day this year will be held on Saturday 29 February. These are days of faith-based social action led by the Hindu community. <http://www.sewaday.org/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/sewaday/>

**Sadaqa Day** will take place on Sunday 22 March. It is an annual day of faith-based social action led by the Muslim community. [mysadaqaday.org](http://mysadaqaday.org)

**The Big Lunch** will be held on Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 June. Across the years millions of people from different faith backgrounds have joined together to take part through street parties, BBQs, iftars and picnics.  
<https://www.edenprojectcommunities.com/thebiglunchhomepage>

**Refugee Week** will take place from 15 to 21 June. Refugee Week is a nationwide programme of arts, cultural and educational events that celebrate the contribution of refugees to the UK, and encourages a better understanding between communities.  
<https://refugeeweek.org.uk/>

**VisitMyMosque Day** will take place on Sunday 21 June. It is a national campaign facilitated by the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) that encourages mosques across the UK to hold an open day to welcome in their neighbours from all faiths and none.  
[www.visitmymosque.org](http://www.visitmymosque.org)

**The Great Get Together**, inspired by the late Jo Cox MP, is taking place from Friday 19 to Sunday 21 June. <https://www.greatgettogether.org/>

**Srebrenica Memorial Day** takes place on Saturday 11 July. This year's theme is 'Every Action Matters'. <http://www.srebrenica.org.uk/> It is organised by Remembering Srebrenica. It has recently launched some new resources for marking of the week by faith communities: <http://www.srebrenica.org.uk/resources/faith-resources/>

**National Hate Crime Awareness Week** takes place from Saturday 10 October to Saturday 17 October. <https://nationalhcaw.uk/>

**One World Week** will take place from Sunday 18 to Sunday 25 October. [www.oneworldweek.org](http://www.oneworldweek.org)

**Inter Faith Week** will take place from Sunday 8 to Sunday 15 November. [www.interfaithweek.org](http://www.interfaithweek.org)

**Scottish Interfaith Week** will take place from Sunday 8 to Sunday 15 November. Scottish Interfaith Week is led by Interfaith Scotland. [www.scottishinterfaithweek.org](http://www.scottishinterfaithweek.org)

**Mitzvah Day** will take place on Sunday 15 November. It is an annual day of faith-based social action led by the Jewish community where people give their time to make a difference to the community around them. Many events and projects held for the day have an inter faith focus. [www.mitzvahday.org.uk/](http://www.mitzvahday.org.uk/)

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## DIARY DATES

This section includes a sample of some of the events taking place around the UK during February and March. Only one event per organisation is included. We also include information on diary dates between e-bulletins on the IFN website at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/involved/events>.

**The Council of Christians and Jews** is holding an Interfaith Refugee Training Workshop on Thursday 20 February. Refugee expert Emily Bowerman will be speaking on what faith communities can do to support refugees today. The event will be held from 10.00am to 12.30pm at Westminster Abbey. Supervised kosher refreshments are included. For more information, email [esther.sills@ccj.org.uk](mailto:esther.sills@ccj.org.uk).

**Bristol Multi Faith Forum** is holding this year's Bristol Diverse Open Doors Day on Sunday 23 February. This year, 12 places of worship will open their doors and 6 of these will be formed as a designated 'Faith Trail', each representing a different faith. The day runs from 10am to 4:30pm. The faith trail can be undertaken in specially provided buses. For further information, visit <http://bristolmultifaithforum.org.uk/diverse-doors/> or email [support@bristolmultifaithforum.org.uk](mailto:support@bristolmultifaithforum.org.uk).

The **Inter Faith Theological Advisory Group** within Churches Together in Britain and Ireland is holding a residential conference in Glasgow from Tuesday 3 March to Thursday 5 March. The title of the conference is 'Towards a Christian Theological Understanding of Inter-Ritual Participation: Challenges, Risks and Opportunities'. Keynote Speakers include Dr Rose Drew, CEO of Interfaith Glasgow and former Lecturer in Buddhism and Interfaith

Studies at Glasgow University, The Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave, Bishop of Lichfield and Professor Marianne Moyaert, Professor in the Faculty of Religion, Theology, Beliefs and Practices at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. For further information, and to book, visit <https://ctbi.org.uk/crossing-boundaries-of-faith-conference-3-5-march-2020/>.

**The East of England Faiths Agency** is holding a course on Monday 24 February, Monday 9 March and Monday 23 March on 'Religious Literacy: Contemporary Beliefs and Ethical Issues'. This will be led by David Sharp. The aim of the course is to develop a deeper understanding of the religious traditions which are present in this diverse society and become better equipped at being able to build meaningful relationships within it. It will run from 2pm to 4pm at The Multi Faith Centre, 47 St Helen's Street, Ipswich, IP4 2JL. For more information, visit <http://www.eefa.net/>.

**Hertfordshire County Council** is hosting an Interfaith Conference entitled 'Stronger Together' on Tuesday 3 March. It is being held from 10am to 4pm (registration from 09.30am) at Focolare Centre for Unity, 69 Parkway, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL8 6JG. For more information, contact Charulata Joshi at [charulata.joshi@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:charulata.joshi@hertfordshire.gov.uk).

**Guildford and Godalming Interfaith Forum** will be holding an event addressing the Climate Emergency – Extinction Rebellion on Tuesday 3 March. For more information, contact Bernard Jones at [Bernard.jones10@btinternet.com](mailto:Bernard.jones10@btinternet.com) or Carolyn Neogi at [carolynneogi@aol.com](mailto:carolynneogi@aol.com) or on 01483 415 773.

**Cornwall Faith Forum** is holding a tree planting event on Saturday 7 March. This year one of the trees will be donated by the Hindu Community and will sit alongside trees previously donated by other faith communities. The event will begin at 2pm and be held at the Dor Kemmyan Peace Field, Penmount, Truro TR4 9AA. Refreshments will be served. For more information contact Rita Stephen at [dorkemmyan.rita@btinternet.com](mailto:dorkemmyan.rita@btinternet.com) or on 07775 937485.

The **Edinburgh Coexistence Initiative**, in collaboration with the **Edinburgh Inter Faith Association** and **Interfaith Scotland**, is holding its inaugural conference on Sunday 15 March. The theme is 'Conflict and Peacebuilding in the world today: an Interfaith Perspective'. The conference will be held from 2.30pm to 6pm and will take place at The Chaplaincy, University of Edinburgh, Chaplaincy Centre, 1 Bristo Pl, Edinburgh EH8 9A. For further information and to book, visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/conflict-peacebuilding-inaugural-coexistence-conference-tickets-95236642361>.

**Interfaith Scotland** is hosting its next women's event on Monday 16 March. This will be a workshop on the theme of 'Women and Leadership' with Professor Susan Madsen. It is being held from 10.30am to 1.00pm at Interfaith Scotland's office in Glasgow. For more information, and to register, email [admin@interfaithscotland.org](mailto:admin@interfaithscotland.org).

**Windsor & Maidenhead Community Forum** will be holding its next Women's Group Meeting on Monday 16 March. The speaker, Father Liam will be talking about his work with a Women's Prison. The event will take place from 7.30pm-9.00pm at St Edmund Campion Church 40A Altwood Rd, Maidenhead, SL6 4PY. For more information, visit <http://www.wamcf.org/next-wamcf-womens-meeting-monday-16th-march/>.

**Hull and East Riding Interfaith** will be holding an event on Tuesday 17 March entitled 'Welcoming the Stranger.' The event will begin between 4.30pm and 5.00pm and take place at Hull Guildhall. For more information, email Martin A Pliener at [mapliener@pliener.karoo.co.uk](mailto:mapliener@pliener.karoo.co.uk).

**Ipswich Faith and Community Forum** is holding its next lecture on Wednesday 18 March. Dr Ed Kessler MBE will be speaking on 'The Changing Landscape of Religion and Belief: Standing at the Crossroads'. The lecture will be held at 6pm at the Waterfront building, University of Suffolk, Ipswich, IP4 1QJ. For more information, visit [www.ipswichfaithandcommunityforum.org.uk/images/PDF\\_Files/University\\_of\\_Suffolk\\_2020\\_Faith\\_Lecture\\_Text-1.pdf](http://www.ipswichfaithandcommunityforum.org.uk/images/PDF_Files/University_of_Suffolk_2020_Faith_Lecture_Text-1.pdf).

**The Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum** is planning an event for the end of March looking at responding to prejudice against faith/belief minority groups in Northern Ireland and further afield. For details of the event check the Forum's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ni.interfaith/>.

**Churches Together in Wales** will be holding the Gethin Abraham-Williams Lecture/ Eglwysi Ynghyd yng Nghymru Darlith Gethin Abraham-Williams on Thursday 2 April. The lecture will be given by Edgardo Colón-Emeric of The Archbishop Romero Trust on 'Archbishop Oscar Romero 40 Years On: Inspirational Ecumenism'. All are welcome. It will be held at 6pm at Saint Joseph's Cathedral, Convent Street, Swansea. For further information and to attend, email [post@cytun.cymru](mailto:post@cytun.cymru).

#### **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: [www.interfaithwales.org.uk](http://www.interfaithwales.org.uk)

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.

## E-BULLETIN SURVEY

With this issue comes a special survey about the e-bulletin.

[https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/IFN\\_E-bulletin/](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/IFN_E-bulletin/)

We would be very grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete this. *Thank you!*

## Submissions for next issue

If you have items about projects or future events which you would like considered for inclusion in the February e-bulletin please email these to [ifnet@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:ifnet@interfaith.org.uk) by **24 March** 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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