



# Faiths engage

Monthly Newsletter—Issue 24—August 2021

**Welcome** to the latest edition of *Faiths engage*.

The summer is often a useful time to look back and look ahead, a time to pause and reflect before plunging into the activity of the autumn. As I look back over the past eighteen months, there have been some real gains, but also some equally real losses in our work of helping people of all faiths and no faith learn how to live well together.

It's a truism to note that March 2020 brought some sudden rapid shifts in behaviour; people rose to the occasion, engaging in what the Institute for Congregational Trauma and Growth call the heroic phase. Over the next year or more, everyone bumped down to the bottom of the disillusionment phase; for many people who live in Leicester, the depths were probably when we were the only place in local lockdown, unable to take advantage of the "Leicester fortnight" and get away for a summer holiday in advance of much of the rest of the country.

We're now somewhere in the rebuilding and restoration phase. As you can see from the diagram, this phase has as many drops down as it has climbs up, but the overall trajectory is positive, shifting us towards the wiser living phase, where we reflect on

what has been both good and bad about our experiences and put those lessons into practice.

There is, for example, a great advantage in using video-conferencing technology for some of our work. It has allowed us to hear live and first-hand from people all around the world. It will allow us to run a six-session series for Christian ministers and leaders in the autumn on understanding the Hebrew Bible from a Jewish perspective. It has meant that delivering a one-hour lunchtime session for Lincolnshire Methodist District on the Prophets in Islam and Christianity didn't take up the whole day. It ensured the CARE course continued to run and so forth.

But at the same time, these online interactions tend to be more transactional, and business focused, with less time and space for the general conversation and exploration, not to mention sharing food together, which are all vital components of our work. There is a real need for more investment in building relationships of trust and cooperation between and within different communities. I hope to spend some time in August having conversations with many different people to hear their experiences of the pandemic so far and their thoughts on what we can and should be doing to enable us to all learn how to live well together. Do get in touch if you would like to talk further.

In this issue you can read about the next round of Near Neighbours grants, the visit from the Independent Reviewer of Prevent and some of our other recent activities.

With every good wish,

Revd Dr Tom Wilson, Director, St Philip's Centre  
admin@stphilipscentre.co.uk





# Church-facing Work



## Prophets in Islam and Christianity

Imran Sulaman and Shaimaa Elbaz, joined James to lead a session on the Prophet Adam in Islam and Christianity for people from across the Lincolnshire Methodist District. This led to a wide ranging conversation from various understandings of Adam and Eve to the role of women within Islam and Christianity. The group seemed to appreciate it and asked a lot of interesting questions and we look forward to delivering similar events in the future.

## Interfaith Week

Looking ahead to Interfaith Week (14<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> November) James still has some spaces for work with churches to provide input in this important week do contact him on [courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk) or 07707 640885 if you would like to arrange something for your church.



# Near Neighbours

## Near Neighbours Small Grants are now open:

Could up to £3,000 help YOU to bring people together from different faiths and backgrounds?

### KEY CRITERIA FOR PROJECTS :

#### BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

The project should bring together people of two or more different faiths and/or ethnicities, to build friendships and develop relationships of trust.

#### WORKING LOCALLY

We want to see people who are living very locally (i.e. in the same street, estate or neighbourhood) come together.

#### WORKING SUSTAINABLY

We want to see long term and natural relationships grow, that will last beyond the period of funding.

#### IMPROVING THE COMMUNITY

We want to see people working to make their communities a better place to live.

#### COMMITTING TO DIVERSITY

Projects should involve diverse people, from more than one faith group and/or ethnicity, in the planning and implementation.

For more information about grants please go to our website: <https://www.near-neighbours.org.uk/small-grants>

### IMPORTANT THINGS TO NOTE:

- You will need to contact me, Beth Henwood, to talk through the project before I can give you the link to apply online;
- It will be on a first come first served basis, so although we do not have a deadline, once our funds are gone, they're gone!
- Near Neighbours will aim to make a decision within two weeks of submitted grants.

If you are interested in applying or finding out more, book onto a workshop and/or email me:

[nn2@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:nn2@stphilipscentre.co.uk).

My working hours are Monday-Tuesday 9-5 and Friday 9-12:45.

Please see the flyers about *workshops*:



### SMALL GRANTS WORKSHOPS

Date	Time	Location
2/8/21	6pm-8pm	Online
3/8/21	2:30pm-5pm	St Philips Church, Evington Rd LE2 1HN
10/8/21	10am-12:30pm	St Philips Church, Evington Rd LE2 1HN

### FEEDBACK WORKSHOPS

Date	Time	Location
9/8/21	2pm-4:30pm	St Philips Church, Evington Rd LE2 1HN
13/8/21	10am-12:30pm	St Philips Church, Evington Rd LE2 1HN

Bring your drafted application for feedback

## Prevent Work

The Independent Review of Prevent is currently reviewing the government's strategy for supporting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and making recommendations for a future approach. This month we were pleased to host an in-person visit from the Independent Reviewer, William Shawcross and his team.

The visit provided us with an opportunity to showcase our unique local Prevent delivery model. Leicester is the only part of the UK where Prevent delivery is led by a voluntary sector charity organisation. The St Philip's Centre approach to Prevent is to empower local communities to develop resilience to extremism and have the strength to challenge all forms of extremism when it does arise. The local authority and the police, as well as other statutory organisations, continue to work together in partnership with St. Philip's and the Prevent Coordinator to keep communities safe.

The Independent Review Team visit began with a partnership meeting at City Hall to discuss local threat/risk and our local governance structures. We then held a community focus group at St. Philip's Church where critical friends and local stakeholders could directly share their thoughts, concerns and ideas with the Reviewer. This proved to be an extremely valuable conversation.

The afternoon was taken up with a project showcase at St. Philip's Church Hall where many of this year's funded Prevent projects took the opportunity to explain their great work to the Review Team. Project representatives focused on how they embrace creativity and innovation whilst directly responding to local threats and risks in Leicester.

Overall, it was an enjoyable and inspiring day, not least because it was Prevent's first significant in-person event since lockdown restrictions eased and it was nice to catch up with so many friends and colleagues.

The Independent Review will ultimately submit their report and recommendations to the government in the Autumn, with a government response expected before 31<sup>st</sup> December.



## Funding Support

St. Philip's Centre is grateful for the funding it receives from the following and from many individual supporters, Friends, Associates and Member Churches

Allchurches Trust  
Anglican Diocese of Leicester  
The Baptist Union  
Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham  
The Dunhill Medical Trust  
Home Office  
Leicester College

Leicestershire & Rutland Masonic  
Charity Association (LRMCA)  
Leicester City Council  
Leicestershire Police  
Masonic Charitable Foundation  
Methodist Connexion  
N C Bellefontaine Trust

Near Neighbours—(MHCLG)  
New Normal Fund (DCMS)  
Northampton District of the Methodist Church  
Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner  
Open Society Foundations  
P & C Hickinbotham Charitable Trust



**faiths engage** is the newsletter of St Philip's Centre Ltd

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