



# Faiths engage

Monthly Newsletter—Issue 42—February 2023

## Welcome to the latest edition of Faiths Engage

2023 has started well for us at the Centre, with a wide range of activities, talks and sessions taking place. It is particularly pleasing to see so much engagement with children and young people, whether through RISE, police expo, visits to places of worship in Leicester, visits to schools by faith practitioners, our linking work and the intergenerational linking work – and the list goes on. There are so many chances for children and young people to learn how to live well together. There's also plenty of opportunities for adults, and I hope to see you at one of our programmes soon.

With every good wish  
Revd Dr Tom Wilson  
Director, St Philip's Centre

## Corporate & Schools' Work

January started with two **Cops, Communities, Consent Exhibitions** at Leicester College—one at Abbey Park Campus and one at Freeman's Park Campus.

Our **RISE leadership programme** for young people continued with a session on Managing Money at Gateway College on 25th January.

The **C.A.R.E. (Confidently Addressing Radicalisation & Extremism) Course** took place on 26th January with a very engaged group of participants from Leicester College, Leicester City Council and Hinckley & Bosworth Council. Two more sessions of the course are planned, on 16th February and 9th March with some free places available for those who work in the City of Leicester. Please get in touch if you would like to attend one of the courses.



Finally for January, the first session of **Religion & Belief Training for Police Recruits** took place at the Leicester Jamatkhana—hopefully the first of many sessions this year.



### Schools' Work

This year looks as though it will be very busy. Already in January we have facilitated programmes for seven schools. We received a lovely email from Church Hill CE Junior School:  
*"The children gain such a great experience in having a practicing Muslim speak about Islam as they are living their faith out daily. We felt it would be great for the children to be given knowledge prior to teaching the unit of work in R.E. this year so that they could be reminded of key facts shared in the workshop during lessons and be able to 'hang' their ideas and experiences on what they heard. The children were engaged with the topic and the second group especially had lots of questions and we have discovered many interesting questions being asked during our weekly lessons. Of course, the excitement of trying on topi hats and hijab at the end were memorable events for the children too!*  
*Many thanks for sorting this event - all the children in year five attended and will have benefitted hugely from the event."*



# News Round-up

## Jewels of Sikh Wisdom

Over five consecutive Monday evenings, Harinder Singh has been sharing insights from his recent book, "Jewels of Sikh Wisdom." We've had some fascinating discussions and are looking forward to his final two, on 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> February. We're meeting 7-8:30pm at the Centre. Do join us if you can.



## Oral History Project

We're grateful to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for their grant, which will enable us to run a small oral history project, recording the memories of migrants to Leicester. If you'd like to know more, please do get in touch with Tom, [director@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:director@stphilipscentre.co.uk)



## Holocaust Memorial Day

We were pleased to welcome Rob Thompson, PHD candidate in the department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at University College London. He spoke about his PHD research 'Liberators, Occupiers, Pastors: Christian Encounters with Holocaust Survivors in Germany, 1945-50'.



Using case studies of a relief worker and an army chaplain he told the story of early Christian engagement with Holocaust survivors. Particularly moving was his discussion of the necessity of listening to the testimony of survivors. This led to reflection about how these encounters resulted in changing these people's understanding of their Christian faith.

## Rest: Why you get more done when you work less

On Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January, Tom worked with Darshak Lakhani to deliver an online session for Near Neighbours on "Rest: Why you get more done when you work less." Some of the key insights were:

1. Work and rest are partners. Rest is an essential component of good work.
2. Rest is active. It's more than just slumping in front of the telly.
3. Rest is a skill. Everyone knows how to breathe. But learning to breathe more deeply helps athletes compete harder. It helps soldiers and sailors remain calm in battle. It helps musicians sing with greater control. Rest, like breathing, is a skill to cultivate.
4. Deliberate rest stimulates and sustains creativity. Active rest is a complement to active and sustained work.

## Talking with Archdeacons

On Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January, Tom spent a few hours at a misty Launde Abbey, talking with a group of Archdeacons. He discussed the work of the Centre, in particular our work encouraging faith organisations to take safeguarding seriously and shared his six C's that relate to the disorder in Leicester East last year.

1. Complacency – it's been fine before, why wouldn't it be fine now?
2. Common concerns – cricket has been a source of tension before; why worry now? What are those issues that pop up from time to time but are never fully solved?
3. Complexity - facing so-called "wicked problems" – people deal with the easy issues themselves but pass on the tougher ones.
4. Challenge – we're all doing far more with far less; not having the time to properly understand, let alone deal with issues. The shrinking of the moderate middle ground is another part of this.
5. Competition – for resources (both financial and human resources) and attention (as an extension of point 4)
6. Community – who are we serving? What are we for? Who are members of our community?

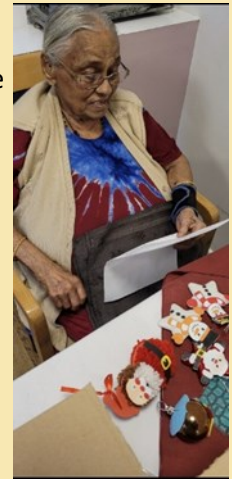




# Abbey Mead and Asra House – a case study in Intergenerational Linking

The very first care home to express an interest in taking part in Intergenerational Linking in Leicester, was Asra House. The activities coordinator, Sabbir, was from the start a passionate advocate for our work and his interest and commitment have been instrumental in sustaining the link and making it so successful. Their link with Abbey Mead Primary a school literally next door, was facilitated so smoothly with staff there reciprocating the commitment and enthusiasm and as such this link is strong and exciting.

As Covid restrictions made visiting impossible at the outset, the relationships were initiated through remote connections and exchanges. Wonderful “Words of Wisdom” photo messages were sent to the school, who replied with letters and Curiosity Questions.



As time went on the link developed and the children visited to sing Christmas carols in the car park to the residents in their conservatory! Christmas gifts of handmade decorations and cards made by the children were also delivered. Other deliveries included hot cross buns cooked by the children at school and delivered fresh for the residents to enjoy!



In the spring a gardening project got underway with the support of One Planet Matters, Growing Communities and on a very snowy day Project Manager, Kayla arrived to advise in the planting of trees in the school playground. Further details can be seen [here](#).



As the year progressed face-to-face visits inside the care home finally became possible and children read to the residents, created rangoli patterns and played games together.

This link has also included the older people attending the school to take part in colourful Holi celebrations in the playground and watch Diwali and Christmas performances.

As well as having classes take part in activities during the school day, at Abbey Mead they have created an after school club called, The Generation of Fun Club - a group of 12 children (years 3 to 6) who visit Asra House each Tuesday after school between 3.40 and 4.30. They discuss the activities on a half termly basis but have included many original ideas such as sharing in Navratri celebrations.

The children and residents of both settings are predominately of South Asian heritage and so the ability to use languages other than English, when communicating, has been another real strength element of this partnership. This has helped the older people feel less pressure to use English, if it is not their language of choice, so easing any anxiety or making communication less effective. But more so, it has given the children a real practical purpose to use their language skills as part of their school work – speaking so called, ‘community languages’ is sometimes not considered relevant for outside of the home and to have this skill recognised by their peers and teachers, as a strength and advantage, is a powerful and positive outcome of intergenerational linking in this context.

The partnership has been a model of good practice and is used by our Linking Project Officer to promote the project to others. Their achievements have shown just how beneficial intergenerational activities are to building a sense of community, reducing isolation, improving well-being, supporting communication skills, building empathy and encouraging social action.

# Forthcoming Events



## Interfaith Harmony Week Golden Rule Event Tuesday 7th February 11.45-1.15pm

Hear Pagan, Muslim and Hindu perspectives on the Golden Rule and think about how you can apply it to your daily life.

All welcome lunch provided. Held at the St Philip's Centre.

Please contact [courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk) to book for refreshment purposes

Photo by Elijah O'Donnell on Unsplash



## COMMUNITY REPORTING TASTER SESSION

Do people in your community have a stories to tell?  
Led by Dr Rob Watson (*Decentered Media*)

TUESDAY 21st February 2023  
10am until 1pm

ST PHILIP'S CENTRE  
2a Stoughton Drive North, Leicester  
LE5 5UB.

Being able to tell and share our stories is how we learn, grow and thrive. How would your communities or projects benefit by learning to be community reporters?

- We can tell and share our stories, direct from the people with lived experience.
- We are the experts who understand in our own experiences.
- Telling different types of stories and discussions can inspire people to make positive change in their lives.

Community reporting is for everyone who has something that they care about in their community.

Our community reporter taster session will introduce approaches to DIY and grassroots media that support positive social change.

Please contact Viv Froggatt for more information  
[nn2@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:nn2@stphilipscentre.co.uk)



## Book Launch His Blood Be Upon Us: Completion and Condemnation in Matthew's Gospel Revd Dr Tom Wilson

Tuesday 7th March 12:15 - 1:45 pm

Lunch provided



An exploration of passages in Matthew that have the potential to be interpreted antisemitically, including discussion of how such passages can be preached without perpetuating antisemitism.

To book your place, please email [courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk)

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

An evening of sharing experiences and conversations  
with inspirational women

WEDNESDAY 8th MARCH 2023  
6.45pm for 7pm (Finish by 8.30pm)

ST DENYS PARISH CENTRE  
Church Road, Evington, Leicester  
LE5 6FA



Our evening to celebrate International Women's Day will include the opportunity to hear interesting speakers share their experiences of working in:-

- The Legal Profession
- Education
- Local Government
- The NHS & Church of England

We'll also have a Q&A session with plenty of time for informal conversations and making new friends. Oh, and there'll be cake!!

Our speakers are:-

- Sally-Ann Flemmings
- Danquah
- Ifat Sultana
- Minaxi Patel
- Bidy Saunders

#EmbraceEquity

Please contact Viv Froggatt for more information  
[nn2@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:nn2@stphilipscentre.co.uk)



## Funding Support

All Saints' Trust  
Anglican Diocese of Leicester  
The Benefact Trust  
The Dunhill Medical Trust  
Home Office  
The J R Corah Foundation Fund  
Leicester College  
Leicestershire & Rutland Community Foundation  
Leicester City Council

The Linking Network  
Methodist Connexion  
National Lottery Heritage Fund  
N C Bellefontaine Trust  
Near Neighbours (DLUHC)  
Northampton District of the Methodist Church  
Open Society Foundations  
P & C Hickinbotham Charitable Trust  
The United Reformed Church



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