



# Faiths engage

Monthly Newsletter—Issue 62—October 2024

## Welcome to the latest edition of Faiths Engage

Summer seems a long time ago, especially with all the rain we've had recently! We aren't letting the damp weather get in the way of the many activities that have taken place over the last month. These include hosting a book launch, attending the official unveiling of the "Sculptural Gateway" as well as continuing working with schools, colleges, the police, places of worship and those training to become Christian clergy. We're launching the second phase of our oral history project "Memories of Living well together" – and are grateful to The National Lottery Heritage Fund for their generous support. We're honoured to have been shortlisted in the Community Impact category of the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce awards. Finally, we're continuing to develop our Friends of St Philip's Centre scheme – do get in touch if you would like to join.

*Revd Dr Tom Wilson, Director of St Philip's Centre*

## East Midlands Chamber Awards

In August, we received warming news that St Philip's Centre had been named as a finalist in the Community Impact category for the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce awards. This is as a result of the hard work undertaken by our staff, trustees and our team of faith practitioners who come from many different religious and belief communities. Their daily efforts in engaging schoolchildren, teachers and workplace employees including those serving in public services has contributed to this achievement. We are grateful for this. The next steps are over the coming period, a judging panel will assess our work further and the winner will be announced at an event this autumn.



## Book Launch

On Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September, we were pleased to host former trustee, Revd Dr Israel Selvanayagam, to launch his latest book, *The Hindu Religious Traditions: A Comprehensive Introduction*. Running to two volumes and 1124 pages, it certainly is comprehensive!

Israel shared some of his personal ministerial and academic journey and his experience of religious dialogue in India and the UK, as well as giving an overview of the contents of the book. From my perspective, Israel's suggestions for Hindu-Christian dialogue are the highlight of an incredibly useful and rich resource.

A copy is available in the Centre library – please let me know if you'd like to have a look at it.



*Tom Wilson*

## Meet the Friend - Roy Kirk

I am very grateful to all the individuals who support the work of the Centre through our Friends scheme. I had a chat with Roy, who recently became a Friend, to find out what motivated him.

Roy first got involved with the St Philip's Centre in 2012, when he was helping his church develop stronger links with the local community. The Centre facilitated visits to places of worship for members of the congregation and supported the development of the "Festival of Seasons Greetings," which over the years has developed into the incredibly popular and successful Humberstone Spring Festival.

Much of Roy's professional life was as a university librarian, and he's put those skills to good use in organising the small library at the St Philip's Centre. When Roy was working in the library one day in June 2016, there was a knock on the door, and a request that Roy help at short notice, facilitating a school visit to Leicester's Progressive Jewish Community. Roy was soon a regular part of the education team, and said a particular highlight was the World in One Street tour of Narborough Road, revisiting the area he grew up in. Roy also enjoyed arranging Taste of Faith encounters between his fellow congregants and people of different religions.

When I asked Roy why he became a Friend of the Centre, he said it was for two reasons – to help with the financial challenges the Centre faces and to give back to an organisation that has given him so much. We are very grateful to Roy for all his support over the years.

To find out more about the Friends scheme, please get in touch: [director@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:director@stphilipscentre.co.uk)



*Tom Wilson*

## Education Derbyshire

The new academic year began with two roadshows in September, one at Ibstock Primary School. The other Roadshow was organised by Belton Church of England Primary School in collaboration with three other smaller schools: St Hardulph CofE Primary, Long Whatton CofE Primary, and Diseworth CE Primary and was held at Diseworth Village Hall. The Roadshow offered children from these schools the chance to explore and learn about various faiths that they may not usually encounter. Our very own Maureen Hebblewhite joined the Roadshow team as the Christian faith practitioner for this one, highlighting the fact that we are in urgent need of Christian faith practitioners to assist us in this work. If you would be interested in helping, please get in touch with Ramila—[education@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:education@stphilipscentre.co.uk)



# Memories of Living Well Together

We're very excited to announce that we have received a grant of £160,000 from The National Lottery Heritage Fund for the next phase of our Memories of Living Well Together project.

Following on from our pilot project which took place last year, we are now expanding our project to include interviews with people who were born in Leicester and those who have moved here from other parts of the UK as well as expanding our contact with those who have moved to Leicester from overseas.

Our recordings from the pilot project produced a wealth of fascinating insights from a diverse group of participants which we were able to share with some schools and other groups. Tom and Viv will again be leading on the project with valued support from Nima and Elliott. We will be busy recording conversations over the next 12 – 18 months with the aim of creating insightful and useful resources for use by schools and adult groups. Linking to the pilot project, the recordings will also be catalogued and stored in the East Midlands Oral History Archive. The MoLWT project plan also includes the development of an exhibition which will be displayed in the museum and cathedral during 2027.



Having been attentive to feedback from the pilot project, we know that there are some people in Leicester that haven't felt that their voices have been heard in recent research projects. With that in mind, we are looking forward to linking up with them and hearing their stories to provide a balanced archive of experiences and insights. We would love to hear from anyone who might be interested in telling their story and being recorded for future historical research.

Using money raised by National Lottery players, The National Lottery Heritage Fund supports projects that connect people and communities with the UK's heritage. Memories of Living Well Together is made possible with The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Thanks to National Lottery players, we have been able to fund this project to record and archive conversations with people who live in Leicester.

*Viv Froggatt*



## Training for St Mellitus College

One of the commitments of St Philip's Centre is that when we are running training, we avoid "punishing via PowerPoint." I spent most of Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September running training on interfaith relations for about a hundred people who are training to be Church of England vicars. We heard from people of different religious perspectives (thank you Bernard, Imran and Kartar), discussed in small groups, debated in whole group plenary, read the Bible together and on our own. I did my best to keep things moving, and did occasionally use a PowerPoint slide, but only as a last resort. The wisdom and experience in the room generated some great learning, which was far more satisfying all round.

*Tom Wilson*



## Corporate Work

The pace has moved up a gear from September, with two Religion & Belief Training sessions for Leicestershire Police including one session for Police Community Support Officers. We engaged 31 staff in total. We were also pleased to have received a colleague from Active Together who attended our training.



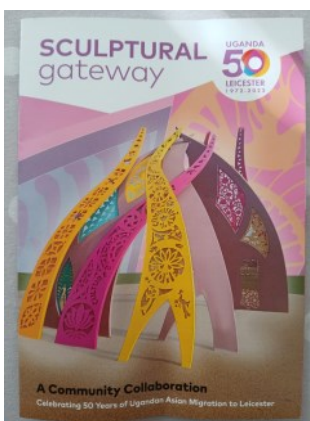
Thank you to all who contributed



Also in September, our *Safer Faiths, Safer Followers* project continued with two new 'Behaviour Management' sessions which took place at Oadby Central Mosque and the Polish Catholic Centre. We were delighted to have representation from a number of faith communities for these sessions.



On 28th September, Riaz was delighted to attend the official unveiling of the 'Sculptural Gateway' which celebrated 50 years of Ugandan migration to Leicester and marked the fantastic economic and social contribution made by those who made Leicester their new home.



## 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.

*All Saints' Educational Trust;*  
*Anglican Diocese of Leicester;*  
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*Shire Funding.*

# Thank You

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