

Newsletter

January 2017

Keeping you up to date with Hounslow Friends of Faith

Best wishes for a prosperous and peaceful 2017.

Best wishes also to everyone for some of the various festivals which take place in December and January. I'm sorry if yours is not included.

Muslims have just marked the Birth of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which this year fell on 12th December and celebrations took place throughout the month. Christians celebrated Christmas on 25th December or for the Coptic and Russian Orthodox Church on 7th January. For the Jewish community Hanukah fell also on 25th December. And Sikhs celebrated the 350th anniversary of the birth of the 10th Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, on 5th January.

Holocaust Memorial Day

Monday 30th January 10.30am

An event to mark Holocaust Memorial Day is taking place at Lampton Park Conference Centre at Hounslow Civic Centre on 30th January. The speaker will be Susie Barnett whose family escaped from Nazi Germany.

Students from Kingsley Academy will also be attending. They have been studying 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas', a book and later film of a fictional story about two young boys, one Jewish and one not, who get to know

each other at a concentration camp, with devastating results.

The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust highlights not only the genocide of the Jewish people, but also more recent ones such as in Cambodia, Rwanda, Dafur and Bosnia. While of course it is important never to forget the holocaust, and to hear the stories of survivors, the event can remind us to be vigilant to stand together for peace and good relations with all groups.

The ceremony starts at 10.30am and will be followed by refreshments. It is open to all. Do come and show your support.

Refugees Welcome Hounslow

Following two successful meetings, a group is getting together to plan for welcoming up to 10 families from Syria who LB Hounslow have promised to take as part of the Government's resettlement scheme. The families will be selected by the UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) from long term refugee camps in the region.

Five areas of work have been identified and volunteers are asked to get in touch and say which they can offer to help.

A) HOUSING

- helping to advertise/source/manage rented accommodation for refugee families.

The most immediate task as nothing can happen until there is housing for them. If you know anyone who would be prepared to lease a house or flat for a minimum of two years please get in touch. Note that families will receive guaranteed housing benefit and that there would be no agents' fees to pay.

B) PUBLICITY/COMMUNICATIONS

- helping communicate within the group but also publicise what we are doing to others and let them know about needs.
- work starting from now, but will ramp up when families arrive*

C) MONEY/FUNDRAISING

- helping with raising money (and awareness) of what we are doing and keeping track of what funding we need. Anything from just sending an email to contacts, to fundraising events.
- This will need to happen from now onwards and likely to be ongoing.*

D) WELFARE & WELCOME

- Anything from being able to speak Arabic, doing meals, offering accompaniment to appointments, doctors, helping navigate the 'system' including benefits/money etc.
- This will get going once families arrive with some organisation needed now.*

E) EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

- supporting refugees to ensure they access support to get them and any children into education and jobs.
- *Again, will start once families arrive.*

To offer help or just to know more, contact Alison Tsang, Refugees Welcome Hounslow on refugeeswelcomehounslow@gmail.com or Tom Gillum on 07825 041432 or email tom.gillum@london.anglican.org

Launch of Support Unit at the West London Family Court in Feltham

The Personal Support Unit (PSU) is a charity which helps those who face the civil and family courts without legal

representation and often with little understanding of the complexities of the court system. PSU assistance is given for as long as needed, free of charge.

Since it began work two months ago, the new unit in Feltham has helped 75 people at the Court, which covers 10 boroughs in west London. Some needed support a number of times. PSU has already recruited 38 volunteers, above its initial target, including law students from both Brunel and West London Universities. More are however needed to meet the demand. Volunteering provides useful experience for anyone thinking of a career in social work or law. Do pass this information on to anyone looking for experience in this area.

A reception to mark the launch of the unit takes place on 19th January 2017 5.30 – 7.30pm at Hounslow Registry Office, Feltham Lodge, Harlington Road West, Feltham TW14 0JJ. If you'd like to attend, register your name on <https://www.thepsu.org/?page=CiviCRM&q=civicrm/event/info&reset=1&id=47>

This charity, which is partially funded by the Ministry of Justice, is supported by the Greater London Lieutenancy and the Deputy Lieutenant Maria Pedro will be at the event.

For more information about the unit and how you can help see www.psu.org.uk.

Women's Discussion Group

After a very successful Women's Group craft workshop during Inter Faith Week last November, the group is ready to look ahead to 2017.

There is to be a coffee morning on Saturday 21st January at the church hall of Southville Methodist Church, corner of

Tachbrook Road and Bedfont Lane in Feltham TW14 9NX from 10.30 – 12.

The group plans to meet every two months. Women of all faiths and none are invited to come along and help plan the spring programme. For further details ring 020 8560 5887 or 07931 944790.

Digging the Dirt Theatre Show Saturday 4th March 7pm Isleworth

What do you give up in the name of political freedom? How far do you compromise to protect your principles?

An award-winning production that weaves together two stories of people standing up for what they believe to be right. One is based on the Digger movement of 1649, which saw a group of people striving to create a more equal society by occupying common land. The other is about a whistle-blower within the intelligence services who attempts to halt the invasion of Iraq in 2003. The twin stories twist around each other as the pressure builds.

The show takes place at Brentford and Isleworth Quaker Meeting House, Quakers Lane, London Road, Isleworth TW7 5AZ at 7pm. Tickets are free, but must be booked. A voluntary donation of £5 would be welcome towards expenses. Ring 07812 833635.

Free, accredited youth leadership course for 16 – 25 year olds

The course begins on 13th February and runs at Heythrop College, University of London in Kensington W8 5HN for 5 non-consecutive days. Full details of the course are listed here:

<https://www.cuf.org.uk/catalyst-east-midlands-and-south>.

Catalyst is a dynamic and interactive young leader training programme. It involves a range of activities and learning opportunities based on themes such as: Networking, Leadership, Teamwork, Inter Faith, Communication and Community. The course runs between 10am-5pm each day, and it is required to attend all days.

The course allows young people to explore controversial and sensitive issues in an open, friendly and supportive environment. The programme develops teamwork and provides leadership skills in a non-academic environment that make a real difference in communities. It's particularly good for:

- Youth, charity or community workers
- Those involved in or who've just finished formal education
- Those considering career options
- Anyone who wants to be challenged and to identify their skills!

The programme is run by the St Phillip's Centre from Leicester and is made available for free to young people in the London area through Near Neighbours.

For more information email riaz.ravat@stphilipscentre.co.uk or ring Becky on 07837 936 957.

Police launch 'Hate Crime App' for mobile phones and tablets

The spike of attacks against people because of their faith, race or country of origin which occurred immediately after the Brexit vote has thankfully subsided. The level of attacks is now back to the pre-vote level which itself is too high. These incidents may be both physical, on-line or via social media.

All hate crimes and incidents should be reported, whether someone has been a victim, a witness or is reporting on behalf of someone else. By informing police when they happen, it may be able to prevent these incidents from happening to someone else. It will also help the police understand the extent of hate crime in a local area so they can better respond to it.

These crimes undermine community cohesion and the sense of well being and harmony which faith groups are working to achieve.

It is now possible to report incidents via a free downloadable app for smartphones which works alongside the full web facility at www.report-it.org.uk.

The App gives basic information about what a hate crime is and can link directly to an online facility to report incidents directly to the police force where the crime took place. Users can also share the app with friends by email and sms (text).

[The mobile app can be downloaded here](#), via this qr_code below or by this link: [http://report-it.org.uk/police in the uk launch hate crime app for mobi](http://report-it.org.uk/police%20in%20the%20uk%20launch%20hate%20crime%20app%20for%20mobi)



For support and information about hate crime locally, contact PC Keyur Patel on 020 8247 6185 (x36185) email Keyur.Patel@met.pnn.police.uk or

Sophie Clark, Hate Crime Advocate on 020 8583 2464 Mobile: 07980 963553 email Sophie.Clark@hounslow.gov.uk

Bikes for Refugees

The Bike Project (TBP) is a community of refugees, mechanics and volunteers, based in Herne Hill who give secondhand bikes to refugees and asylum seekers. They rely on a steady donation of bikes from generous individuals and organisations. Since March 2013 they have distributed over 2,000 bikes. They are currently looking to set up more drop-off points for bike donations in different parts of London with space and capacity to get involved. Can any Hounslow group help?

The Bike Project's bike hubs are normally places such as community centres, places of worship (churches, mosques, temples, gurdwaras etc), offices, schools, or similar organisations with enough space to offer a secure space for at least 10 bikes (kept indoors or outdoors). There needs to be a designated person who can coordinate bike donations and collections and reliable and regular opening hours. The charity will direct donations to the drop off hub and arrange regular collections.

In return TBP can offer an annual free two hour Dr Bike session run by one of their professional mechanics for you and your community and other benefits.

To find out more ring 020 7733 8098 or email: caz@thebikeproject.co.uk. See <http://thebikeproject.co.uk/about>

For further information on these stories: **020 8560 5887 or 07812 833635**
info@hounslowfriendsoffait.org