

HOUNSLOW FRIENDS OF FAITH

Newsletter ~ June/July 2020

Keeping you up to date with Interfaith and Community News

Dates of Future Events and Activities

Due to the coronavirus pandemic all Places of Worship have been closed and gatherings banned since lockdown commenced in March. It is unlikely that Hounslow Friends of Faith will be able to organise any meetings or activities this year. The trustees will have a virtual committee meeting soon to discuss the way forward and how to manage AGM business and how to mark Interfaith Week in November without being able to meet up physically.

At a virtual interfaith dialogue on 27th May organised by Shafiq Rehman from Hounslow Jamia Masjid members of different faith groups in Hounslow were given the opportunity to share the impact of Covid-19 on their communities and what support they are providing. Here are some notes from that meeting:

- There has been co-operation in areas and with the Council Hub to provide deliveries of food, medicines and emotional support to the community
- A big increase of people relying on Food Banks
- Many takeaway meals provided
- Online worship, fellowship and prayer groups on Zoom, Youtube and WhatsApp have been provided often shared and appreciated by more than the usual members (could be continued into the future)
- Those unable to link in online have been included through written materials and telephone calls
- Gap in the care of the elderly
- Anxiety about finances and the economy in Hounslow if Heathrow Airport and other businesses badly affected
- Concern about the mental health of individuals of all ages and those who will fear to leave their homes
- 7,000 people in Hounslow have been shielding
- Concern about the grooming and radicalisation of vulnerable young people online
- Issues around bereavement
- A rise in Domestic Violence
- Concern for the homeless
- Hounslow Citizens Advice has continued its free advice on: 0300 330 1185 which is open Monday to Friday from 10.00 to 1300 and 14.00-15.00

Places of worship have shared in new ways:

- Sewing scrubs and wash bags for the local NHS
- Drive thru Iftars
- Drive thru sweet distribution for children at Eid
- Support for parents home schooling

An Invitation to share your experience about the impact of Covid-19

Community Voices (a collaboration of different health, care and community organisations, community activists and individuals working across North West London) would like to collect stories from our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds (BAME) residents, community representatives, faith leaders, staff and health and care leaders about how they are coping during the coronavirus pandemic.

COVID-19 appears to be affecting BAME communities disproportionately. We need to understand why this is happening and what we can do to support our communities.

If you would like to get involved you can share your story in any way you choose. You can write, draw, paint, speak or sing about your experience.

The stories that we collect will be analysed by the Community Voices team working alongside the people who contribute their experiences. The themes will be used to help us and our organisations understand the challenges being faced by our communities and our BAME workforce and recommend immediate action to take.

Email houccg.communications@nhs.net to find out more. We will send you more information and a consent form to complete first.

Sarah Stayt - Communications and Engagement Deputy Manager
Email: sarah.stayt@nhs.net Landline: 0208 538 2454 Mobile: 07876 816 321

Covid-19 and BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) Communities

COVID-19 has been causing many deaths. These have been across the population and affecting people of all backgrounds. There is, however, a markedly higher death rate among those of BAME backgrounds. There is significant overlap between BAME groups and particular faith communities and sections of those and some are seeing a sharply increased rate of deaths, particularly among NHS doctors, nurses and other staff and other health workers. Among these were the first four doctors to die (all Muslim), a Sikh A and E Consultant and a Hindu neonatal specialist as well as those of other backgrounds.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/articles/coronavirusrelateddeathsbyethnicgroupenglandandwales/2march2020to10.04.20>

On 16 April the Government announced a review looking at how different factors can impact on people's health outcomes from COVID-19. This is being led by Professor Kevin Fenton, Public Health Director for London. The review has been holding a number of virtual roundtables, including with faith groups. Its report is anticipated by early June.

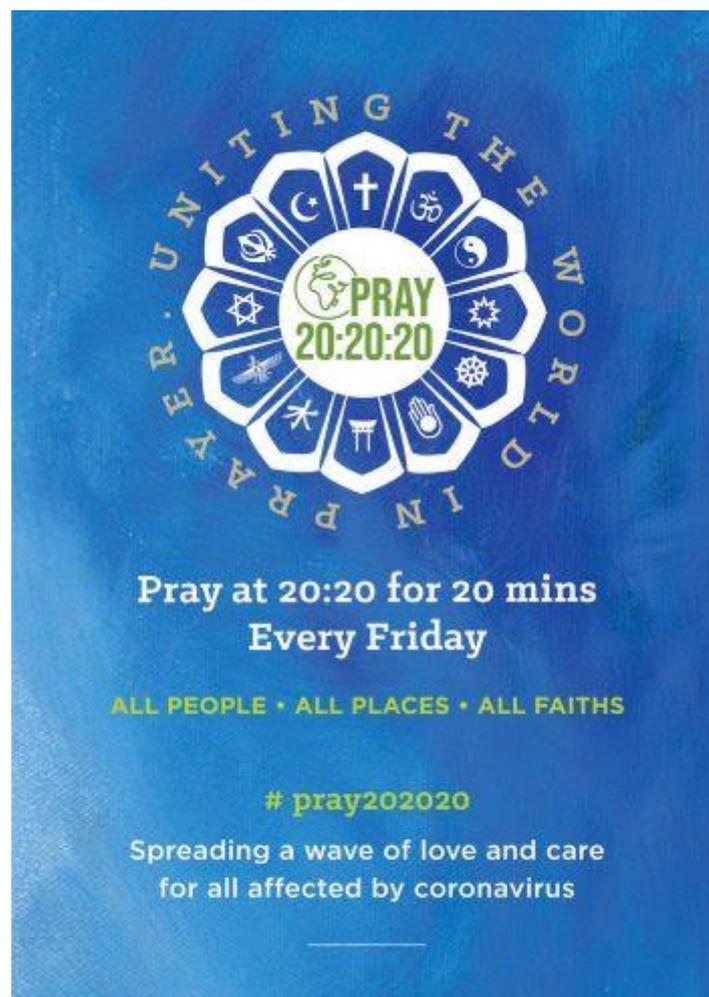
Organ Donation

Following the passing of the Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Act last year a new opt out system for organ donation came into law in England on 20 May. All adults in England will now be considered as having agreed to donate their own organs when they die unless they record a decision not to donate (also known as 'opt out'), or are in one of the excluded groups. 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/> There is also a selection of downloadable faith and belief-specific donor cards so people can show their support for donation alongside their own faith or beliefs as well as share with family and friends. The cards can be found at <https://www.nhsbt.nhs.uk/how-youcan-help/get-involved/download-digital-materials/faith-and-belief-donor-cards/>

The above two items are taken from IFN bulletin May/June

There have been calls for prayer from many faith groups including:

PRAY20:20:20 - Uniting the World in Prayer - Ashwin Mehta
Trustee, Shrimad Rajchandra Mission Dharampur (UK)



Green Doctors are expert energy advisers who help London residents save money, stay warm, and improve energy efficiency in the home.

They are offering **FREE pre-booked phone consultations**

During telephone consultation, the Green Doctor will help residents to:

- save money on their energy bills
- switch energy provider to save money
- access the Priority Services Register
- access the Warm Homes Discount
- apply for grants for energy and water debt
- refer residents to other services for additional support

To book a free telephone consultation with one of the Green Doctors who can provide tailored advice, individuals can:

- self-refer for a telephone consultation by completing this online form (if the person you would like to refer does not have access to the internet, you or a third person can fill the form on their behalf): <https://groundwork.secure.force.com/enquiry/> or,
- call us on **0300 365 3005 (free number)** to arrange a callback.

This programme is funded by the council.



The Green Doctors are still on call. Do you know someone we can help?

As a response to COVID-19, our expert energy advisers are now offering free phone consultations to help households across London save money, save energy, stay warm and stay out of debt.

Find out about our [free phone consultations](#).

Domestic Abuse

Across London, the Metropolitan Police continue to prioritise and respond to domestic abuse calls. We continue to work closely with partners to ensure victims receive the support and service they need.

Some Helpline details:

The 24/7 National Domestic Abuse helpline, which offers support to victims and people affected by domestic abuse, is free to call on 0808 2000 247.

The Respect Phoneline provides confidential advice and support to help perpetrators stop being violent and abusive, and is free to call 0808 8024040

Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327 a confidential helpline for male victims of domestic violence and those supporting them www.mensadvice.org.uk

Karma Nirvana: 0800 5999 247 Mon to Fri 9am–5pm supporting victims of honour based abuse and forced marriage www.karmanirvana.org.uk

Hour Glass: 0808 808 8141 challenging the abuse of older people in all its forms www.wearehourglass.org

Galop LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0800 999 5428 www.galop.org.uk

Childline: 0800 1111 If you're a child or young person and domestic abuse is happening in your home or relationship.

For more information about support services that are available, go to <https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/daa/domestic-abuse/>

For government guidance for people in danger of domestic abuse during coronavirus, go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-and-domestic-abuse>

Loving Mother Earth

a poem contributed by Nimu Ladva of the Hounslow Brahma Kumaris

Mother Earth has called us back over the last few days and held us tightly to her bosom. She is about to let us go again.....

Please... Please... Please...

Let's not disappoint Her.

I read a line the other day: "I wish for a world with no borders".

Can we do this?

We are all of Earth, on Earth, living on Her.

We are the same, She gives to all of us abundantly...

equally, so surely it is so very easy to have a world with no borders,
a world with no need for any armies.

Our next step forward needs to be in a mind and heart
set of unconditional unrestrained love and giving.

It has been the case in the recent past to always
create with the primary intention of making money.

Us, the people, all of humanity have been given
the unparalleled and infinite gift of creativity not to be chained and restricted
with such petty and shallow notions of making more profit.

Technology and services as of recent have been designed to have a life span,
they will function somewhat, but will then break so the consumer must replace it.
It is a vampiric shallow construct that sucks the life blood out of our very Earth...
the home where we all are living.

Every little inconsequential action and purchase made to continually
be replaced in order to make more profit.

Requiring more raw materials, which are taken from our Mother Earth,
digging and probing deeper into Her heart and soul.

To extract the raw materials machines are used consuming and burning fossil fuels,
where pollutants are then thrown out into Her atmosphere.
Then these raw materials are transported by vehicles, again with the same effect.....
They are then brought to factories that manipulate and adjust in all manner of ways
to create your breakable time stamped items.
All the while spewing its factory waste from below and above.
Once your 'made to break' items are created,
they are shipped, flown and driven to your door
by means of burning up the Earth warming fuels.

We cannot continue in such a naive manner anymore.
If we want to sustain a comfortable way of life,
it has to be done with open arms and hearts.
It has to be done without profit always being the sole reason.
If we open our hearts and minds out completely...
Then first we are freed, we feel we can breathe
and our highest creative potential is released.
I believe that us, as humans can create methods that can be harmonious to all.
To Nature, to us, to Mother Earth...
and to the entire unified consciousness.

Is it not shameful to realize that for so long we have been using
the same modes of transport, and burning the same fossil fuels?
Are we really not smart enough to create clean fuel, abundant clean fuel?
Is hydrogen not worth looking into, the by-product mainly being water...
Can the water then not be split and re-used again...
just pondering out loud?

We need to live and create in such a way that every action we take,
be that small or large we do that with consideration to all.
We NEED to do this now.
Selfishness is shallow, evil, and really quite boring.
If you feel the same way, if you feel something needs to be done,
if you feel we can do better, then please, pick up your pens and pencils
and show they are mightier than a sword and the machines...
Be the rebellion. Be part of the movement.
Speak up and stand for what is right.
If you speak true from your heart,
then your intentions, your message will always take flight.
Those intentions will be guided and they will be supported.

Pass this intention on.
Pass your own heart-felt intentions on to all those who might listen.
Pass this on to all those you feel are in places of influence
that can make immediate and real change.
It takes only but a single and gentle wind
to form waves that carry over entire oceans.

The personal payment and reward every individual will receive in choosing to live life in such a complete and giving way is True Happiness and True Contentment which are never fleeting. Your loving actions will always be rewarded with beauty reflected right back to you. This is a way of life worth living. Pleaseeeee... Scream your own loving message out the world. Pleaseeeeeeeeeee... Let's change Together we can all do this. Om Shanti

Written by Angelo Bastiaensz

Best wishes to all who will be observing days of special significance:

June

- 16th **Sikh:** Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru was executed on the orders of the Moghul Emperor, Jehangir, for refusing to pay a fine arising from a charge of treason. Guru Arjan made the first compilation of the Sikh Scriptures, called the *Adi Granth*, and supervised the completion of what is now the Golden Temple in Amritsar.
- 21st **Humanist:** World Humanist Day is celebrated annually around the world on the June solstice.
- 23rd **Hindu:** Ratha Yatra 'Chariot journey'. This is observed most notably at Puri in the Indian state of Orissa, where processions of thousands of devotees pull huge waggons (*rathas*) supporting images of Krishna. He is known under the name of 'Jagannath', (Lord of the Universe), from which the English term 'juggernaut' comes. Krishna is attended on his journey by his brother and sister.

July

- 5th **Buddhist:** Asalha Puja/ Dhamma Day Dhammacakka day – '*The turning of the wheel of teaching*'. A Theravada celebration of the First Proclamation by Gautama to five ascetics in the Deer Park near Benares. In it he taught the Middle Way, the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths.
- 7 – 16th **Zoroastrian:** (Kadmi) Fravardigan. In the Fravardigan festival the immortal souls, together with their *fravashis* (the guardian spirits of departed ancestors, half man/half bird), come to reside in the place of worship. Many Zoroastrians take time off to pray, recite the five *Gathas* and cleanse their houses.
- 17th **Zoroastrian:** (Kadmi) Navroze / No Ruz New Year's Day on the Shenshai Calendar. By the twentieth century the Parsis of India had become the largest group in the world practising Zoroastrianism, and in the twenty first century over 95% of Zoroastrians in the UK are Parsis. Like their Indian counterparts, they celebrate two new years

- 19th **Baha'i:** Martyrdom of the Bab. The *Bab* was executed by firing squad in Tabriz, Persia, at noon on this day. The *Bab's* death is commemorated at noon with readings and prayers from the Baha'i Scriptures
- 22nd **Zoroastrian:** (Kadmi) Khordad Sal is the Birthday of Zarathushtra and falls on the sixth day after NoRuz. *Khordad* means perfection and the festival of Khordad Sal symbolically celebrates the birthday of Prophet Zarathushtra.
- 23 – 31st **Muslim:** Dul Hijjah (first 10 days of the Hajj) 28 – 2nd August Hajj to Mecca
- 24th **Buddhist:** Chakor. This Tibetan/Nepalese festival commemorates the first teaching (*the turning of the wheel of law*) given by the historical Buddha.
- 30th **Jewish:** Tisha B'Av A full day fast mourning the destruction of the first and second Temples in Jerusalem and other tragedies in Jewish history. The Book of Lamentations is read.
- 31st – 4th August **Muslim:** Eid-Al-Adha (Festival of Sacrifice) This major festival (al-Eid al-Kabir) commemorates Ibrahim's (Abraham's) willingness to sacrifice his son, Ismail.

Please send details of any religious festivals, special events or items of interest which you wish to be included in the next newsletter to Rev Barbara McIntivey info@hounslowfriendsoffait.org by 25th July.

Please note: If you are receiving this newsletter as the named person from an organisation please circulate it within your group and do let me know if there is someone else to whom it should be sent as well as/or instead of you.

As the lockdown eases and more people return to work and children to school may you keep safe and well.

CORONAVIRUS
FOLLOW THE RULES, SAVE LIVES

 Stay at home as much as possible	 Work from home if you can	 Limit contact with other people
 Keep your distance if you go out (2 metres apart)	 Wash your hands regularly	

 If you or anyone in your household has symptoms, you must all self-isolate 