



## HOUNSLOW FRIENDS OF FAITH

Newsletter ~ October ~ November 2021

Keeping you up to date with Interfaith and Community News

Interfaith Week 14<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> November

Hounslow Friends of Faith are celebrating National Interfaith Week with a meeting in Hounslow House from **6.30pm – 8.30pm** on **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> November**. There will be a light finger buffet and the opportunity to meet with old and new friends of faith. An interfaith calendar for 2022 will be launched as well as an information booklet written by individuals from the different faiths and beliefs represented in the borough. Both of these will be given away free to those attending. Also the long standing commitment of Mr Ajit Singh MBE and Mr Prem Sondhi to the promotion of the interfaith aims of increasing knowledge, contact and understanding between people of different faiths and those of no belief will be acknowledged and honoured as they are made Patrons of Hounslow Friends of Faith.

### Visit to Ealing Synagogue



On the 23rd September a multifaith group visited the Ealing United Synagogue for an eagerly anticipated Sukkot event arranged by Basil Mann our long serving Jewish member of the HFOF committee. Rabbi Hershi Vogel gave an illuminating introduction

to the festival and its spiritual significance as both a harvest festival and as a Torah commanded commemoration of the children of Israel's endurance during their forty years after the Exodus from Egypt surviving in the wilderness with only temporary shelter.

We heard how this is a delightful and much loved week-long festival celebrated by Jewish families after the solemnity of Yom Kippur during the Jewish season of festivals. A temporary booth is put up in gardens and on balconies partly open to the sky and festooned with foliage, fruit and flowers where the family will eat their meals for the duration of the festival. Our group visited the sukkah put up at the synagogue covered in laurel leaves and we heard more about its significance and the Sukkot prayers and rituals.

Basil gave us a fascinating guided tour of the synagogue and opened the tabernacle specially draped in white for the season of festivals. We were shown the beautiful scrolls covered in the traditional elaborate silver ornamentation. The regular Orthodox Jewish services were described and we were able to look at displays of photographs and documents illustrating the history of Ealing synagogue.

The visit concluded by sharing fruit in the sukkah, group photographs and a final blessing from the rabbi who was warmly thanked for his welcome. All agreed it had been a most memorable and enjoyable occasion and for some of the group it had been their first visit to a synagogue.

The Jewish Scripture Scrolls



Words and Pictures contributed by David Baldwin

**Hounslow Friends of Faith received an invitation from Richmond Faiths Forum  
to join a zoom entitled: Young Voices from Israel/Palestine on 4<sup>th</sup> October  
facilitated by 'Solutions not Sides' an Education Charity**

We were first shown short videos describing the lives of two young women in their twenties; one a Conservative Jewish Israeli and the other a Muslim Palestinian. (We were asked not to share the women's names outside the zoom for security reasons.)

Both women were present on the zoom and answered questions posed by those attending. We heard that the Palestinian woman had never been allowed to visit Israel and while growing up she was taught the Israelis were the enemy and had all the power. The Israelis she saw were mainly soldiers with weapons. It was not until she visited Germany for a summer peace camp three years ago that she met Israelis for the first time. Likewise the Jewish woman who had travelled and lived in many countries as she grew up thought she had never been close to one of the 'enemy' Palestinians. When she discovered that some of her fellow students, who were Arab Israelis, were actually Palestinians she was surprised that they were human just like her.

During the discussions similarities were made between the situation in Israel-Palestine and how it was in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. Again there was demonising of the opposition and almost no meeting across the divide between Protestants and Roman Catholics.

The two women are both active peace campaigners but said how hard it is and although they remained hopeful they did not see much progress. The evening helped me understand a little more the complexities and problems of the area and has encouraged me to continue praying for peace in this 'Holy Land'.

Barbara McIntivey

**A prayer from The Methodist Prayer Handbook 2021/22:**

For Israel/Palestine, the land of promise, **we give thanks**

For the hopes of the children and the wisdom of the aged, **we give thanks**

For the prayers of the honest and the recognition of reality, **we give thanks**

For the array of faiths, cultures, races and traditions, **we give thanks**

May we at a distance, honour all that is good, lament all that is tragic,  
seek knowledge in our ignorance and be humble in our assessment  
so we may think, speak and act with integrity. **Amen**

**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 7.30 – 9.30pm at St Mary's Church, Osterley Road**

***Can we be an Eco-friendly Community?***

Films/Panel representing local environmental initiatives/Q & A session  
tea/coffee/juice/wine

RSVP [stmaryparishcentre@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:stmaryparishcentre@tiscali.co.uk) or 020 8569 7312

Hounslow Council would like to invite you  
to an online discussion to celebrate

# BLACK | HISTORY MONTH

**Wednesday 20th October 2021**

**5.30pm to 7.30pm**

*Zoom event*

Reflecting this year's Black History Month theme of 'Proud to Be', the event will be a wide-ranging discussion about the challenges, contributions and achievements of Hounslow's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, including the important work of the Tackling Race Inequalities Members Task Group.

Representatives of community groups will talk about the history of their communities in Hounslow, as well as about how their groups were formed, challenges faced and how they overcame them. The Pakistan Welfare Association will also discuss the purpose of the BAME Consortium and what it aims to achieve.

Keynote Speakers include:

- Cllr Katherine Dunne (Hounslow Council Cabinet Member for Equalities)
- Cllr Lilly Bath (Chair of the Tackling Race Inequalities Members Task Group)
- Garvin Snell (Community activist and founder of the No Shame in Running youth violence charity)
- Benjamin Busenze (Descendants community group)
- Hussein Hassan (Ilays, a non-profit organisation set up by East African community in West London)
- Mohinder Dosanjh (Trinjan, Hounslow-based women's social and community group)
- Ata Chaudhry (Pakistan Welfare Association)

**The event is FREE but must be  
booked in advance. Register  
your place via Eventbrite.**



**CLICK HERE TO BOOK**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/black-history-month-theme-proud-to-be-tickets-172847319987>

**or email [equalities@hounslow.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@hounslow.gov.uk)**



[www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk](http://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk)

To register for the Black History Month event click [here](#)

## An Introduction to Nishkam School, Osterley, West London by the Principal Tom Cragg

I am delighted to have been asked to write a few words about our wonderful school and perhaps alter one or two preconceptions about who we are and what we stand for.

### **Who is the school for?**

We are a school with a 'Sikh ethos', but we are a multi-faith school, so you are very welcome if you are a practising Sikh or if you practise any other religion. If you do not practise any religion, you are equally welcome. This is an inclusive school for the local community and as we have expanded, we have seen a steadily increasing number of pupils from TW7 joining us.

### **A Strong Interfaith Commitment**

The Sikh faith is emphatic about respecting all religions and beliefs, and does not look to convert others. Our patron, Bhai Sahib Ji, says: "everybody on earth is part of one big family" and for me, that really encapsulates our intention to serve all groups within our community.

In our assemblies and tutor times, I always find it moving to see Sikh, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim prayers spoken by our pupils. This is a school with a Sikh ethos but where pupils from all denominations are able to express their individual spirituality. I think that is so relevant for our pluralistic society, and a core part of our ethos at Nishkam School West London.

### **Virtues-led Education**

What also underpins everything that we do and every relationship that we have at Nishkam is our virtues, which permeate every aspect of school life:

The virtues are clear to see in the school's biggest statements and ideas:

Our name, Nishkam, meaning selfless, emphasizes that our core purpose is to serve others. Our motto: 'man neeva mat uchi' meaning 'to be humble to be wise' promotes the idea that by showing greater humility, we are open to gaining greater wisdom

But the virtues are also present in our smallest daily actions: for example, offering encouragement when work is a challenge (kindness), taking pride in our appearance (cleanliness) or showing courtesy around the school building.

And the virtues apply to everyone:

Staff have to reflect on their journey with the virtues and we also run workshops to explore with parents how the language of virtues might work at home.

It is by instilling this strong moral code in all members of our community, and using it as our starting point, that we aim to create not only great students but also great people.

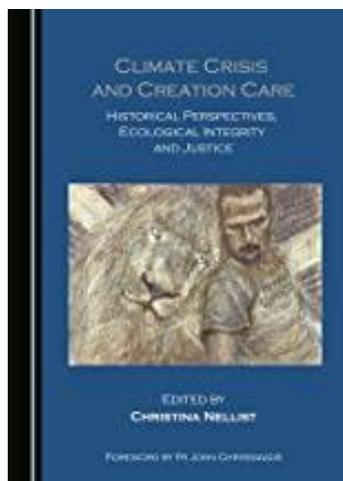
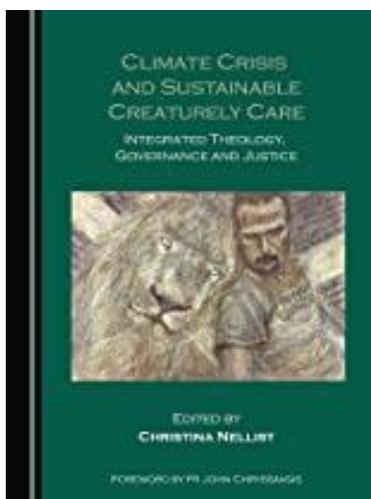


If you wish to find out more about Nishkam School West London, please contact us at [Enquiries.NSWL@nishkamschools.org](mailto:Enquiries.NSWL@nishkamschools.org)

### **New Books about the Climate Crisis**

Charanjit Ajit Singh has contributed to both the books below which are edited by Dr Christina Nellist – Printed in Hardback cost £67.99

**Climate Crisis and Sustainable Creaturely Care: Integrated Theology, Governance and Justice**  
**and Climate Crisis and Creation Care: Historical Perspectives, Ecological Integrity and Justice.**



## **Statement from faith leaders and leading scientists who met at the Vatican**

Link to read full statement below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/holy-see-faith-and-science-an-appeal-for-cop26>

## **Peace Leaflet Ahmadiyya Muslim Women's Association**

This leaflet presents the **Islamic teachings of peace, love, mercy, justice, tolerance, and fulfilment of everyone's rights** – all of these are key to establishing peace in every nation in the world. Please find the link to the leaflet here: <https://lajna.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/tabligh-peace-leaflet.pdf>

The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) who is founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community said: ***“Treat all the creation of God with such deep love as though they are your close family members. Treat mankind in the same way that a mother treats her child. This is the way you should be and not that you help someone only so that you can attain benefit or take a favour in return.”***

The fifth Successor of the Promised Messiah has championed **the need for universal human rights and justice for all**. He has written to and met with world leaders and has travelled around the world to spread the message of peace and unity, delivering **keynote addresses at Capitol Hill in USA, the EU Parliament, Canadian National Parliament, the UNESCO Headquarters** in Paris and various other establishments, enlightening the world about the true teachings of Islam. He said: ***“I pray that a spirit of service to humanity takes permanent root in society, so that we protect our future and leave behind a better world for our children and coming generations to live in.”***

## **Hosts needed for Survivors of Modern Slavery**

**Hope at Home** is a hosting scheme for survivors of modern slavery based in the UK. Survivors needing accommodation are matched with volunteer host families in the community to provide temporary bedspaces and a welcoming environment.

As you can imagine, a large number of referrals are received from organisations in London and the surrounding areas but there are not the number of hosts to match the demand. Here are two events for people to find out more about modern slavery and how they can make a difference:

- 19<sup>th</sup> October at 7:30pm held over zoom. The information and sign up link is **here**. This session is only one hour and there is no obligation for those joining to sign up to anything!
- 18<sup>th</sup> November 7:30pm at Best Western Swiss Cottage Hotel, London. The information and sign up link is **here**. This is an in-person event with a guest speaker from the Human Trafficking Foundation as well as refreshments. Again, there is no obligation for anyone to sign up – it is simply an information session.

### **Some actions proposed by the Metropolitan Police following the murder of Sarah Everard:**

- We will soon publish a new strategy for tackling violence against women and girls. This will outline how we will prioritise action against sexual and violent predatory offenders.
- We have established specialist Predatory Offender Units and since last November they have arrested more than 2,000 suspects for domestic abuse, sex offences and for child abuse.
- The Met is growing and we are deploying 650 new officers into busy public places, including those where women and girls often lack confidence that they are safe.
- We are also stepping up reassurance patrols and providing an increased police presence where it is most needed by identifying key "hotspot" locations for offences of violence and harassment. We are allocating officers solely for patrol in those areas.
- Understanding the concerns of women in London is really important to us and we are undertaking a range of activities so we can better listen and respond.

#### **The HFOF secretary sent the following message to the local Faith Liaison Team:**

*On behalf of Hounslow Friends of Faith I am sending you this message to say how much our on-going relationship with your team is valued, as is the support you offer to the local communities in Hounslow. We have the utmost confidence in your integrity and commitment to community harmony and safer neighbourhoods for everyone. Sadly the recent revelations about some police officers' horrific behaviour towards women will have caused a loss of trust in the police in general for some people.*

*You are in our thoughts and prayers.*

#### **Free Ascentis Level 3 Qualification in English for Literacy and Language Teaching**

- Eligibility Criteria: Candidates must be 18+, reside in London and earn below London Living Wage [£21,800]
- Course Delivery: 10-week intensive online course. Two groups of up to 10 candidates commence every two weeks
- Upon completion candidates are able to volunteer with Twin Group for up to 28 days per calendar month should they wish to volunteer

We are currently working with the Mayor of London in order to support London's voluntary and community groups who deliver English language activities and support ESOL learners, from conversation clubs to ESOL classes. One in three Londoners were born outside the UK, and more than 300 languages are currently spoken on our streets. The Mayor has described the importance of English communications and the need for government and cities to improve the level of support that we provide to learners.

With this in mind, we have been provided with funding which enables us to offer free Level 3 Qualifications for ESOL Teachers, Volunteers and Teaching Assistants.

For further information please visit our website: <https://www.twinemployment.com/our-programmes/esol-teacher-qualification>.

Or contact **Adam Koodoruth** Employment Consultant by phone on 07563 027 092 or by email: [akoodoruth@twinkuk.com](mailto:akoodoruth@twinkuk.com)

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

### **October**

- 6th – 15<sup>th</sup>**      **Hindu:** NAVARATI  
**11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>**      **Hindu:** DURGA PUJA  
**14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>**      **Hindu:** DASSEHRA / VIJAYA DASHAMIPUJA

Navaratri means 'nine nights', which is how long the festival lasts. In Northern India the performance of the Ram Lila during Navaratri commemorates Rama's victory over Ravana, the demon king of Sri Lanka. The day after the end of Navaratri is celebrated as the 'victorious tenth' (Vijaya Dashami) and huge figures of Ravana are filled with fireworks and burned on Ram Lila grounds (public areas). In the UK some temple congregations carry this out on a smaller scale. Elsewhere the goddess Durga is worshipped on the eighth day. Panjabis mark the day by giving food and other items to young girls.

### **10<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>**      WEEK OF PRAYER FOR WORLD PEACE

Prayers from the literature of several different world religions are published each year in a special leaflet. They are composed and used by many different religious communities.

### **19<sup>th</sup>**      **Muslim:** Prophet MUHAMMAD'S Birthday (Sunni) **24<sup>th</sup> November** (Shia)

**19<sup>th</sup>**      **Buddhist:** ANAPANASATI DAY The last day on which the Kathina may be held. On the final day of the three months long Rains Retreat, a Kathina robe is made of patches of cloth. It is presented to a particularly deserving or virtuous monk, in a ceremony conducted by four of his colleagues.

### **20<sup>th</sup>**      **Buddhist:** PAVARANA DAY

The last day of the Rains Retreat (the *Vassa*) is known as *Pavarana* Day or 'Leaving the *Vassa*'. *Pavarana* means 'to invite' and on this day monks who have completed the Retreat invite their fellows to admonish them for any failings. It is also known as '*Sangha* Day'.

### **20<sup>th</sup>**      **Sikh:** Conferring Guruship on the GURU GRANTH SAHIB in 1708

**31<sup>st</sup>**      **Pagan:** HALLOWEEN Traditional activities include trick-or-treating, bonfires, costume parties and carving jack-o-lanterns.

### **November**

**1<sup>st</sup>**      **Christian:** ALL SAINTS' DAY Saints and Martyrs remembered.

**2<sup>nd</sup>**      **Christian:** All SOULS' DAY All departed faithful Christians remembered.

**4<sup>th</sup>**      **Hindu/Jain:** DIVALI / DIWALI / DEEPAVALI Hindu New Year Festival

**4<sup>th</sup>**      **Sikh:** DIVALI / BANDI CHHOR DIVAS Sikhs also celebrate Divali since Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru, was released from Gwalior prison on this day.

**14<sup>th</sup>**      REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY the Sunday nearest to Armistice Day, devoted to remembering the dead of the two World wars and subsequent conflicts.

**14<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>**      INTERFAITH WEEK seeks to strengthen good inter-faith relations, increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities, and increase understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs.

**19<sup>th</sup>**      **Sikh:** BIRTHDAY OF GURU NANAK (1469 CE)

## **November**

**24<sup>th</sup> Sikh:** MARTYRDOM OF GURU TEGH BAHADUR (1675)

**28<sup>th</sup> Christian:** ADVENT The start of the Christian year, four Sundays before Christmas (Western Churches).

**29<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> December Jewish:** HANUKAH Celebrates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after it was recaptured from the Syrian Greeks by the Maccabee brothers in 165 BCE. For the eight evenings of the festival, candles are lit from right to left in a nine-branched *menorah* – one candle for each evening. Foods cooked with oil - such as doughnuts and *latkes* (potato cakes) – are traditional to remember the miracle with oil that happened at this time.

Please send details of any religious festivals, special events or items of interest which you wish to be included in the next newsletter to HFOF secretary Rev Barbara McIntivey [info@hounslowfriendsoffaith.org](mailto:info@hounslowfriendsoffaith.org) by 25th November.

**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.

*If you do not wish to receive any further communications from Hounslow Friends of Faith then please let the secretary know and your details will be removed from the mailing list.*