



## HOUNSLOW FRIENDS OF FAITH

Newsletter ~ August/September 2021

Keeping you up to date with Interfaith and Community News

**'Stories of Hope'** on 14<sup>th</sup> July 7pm HFOF collaborated with 'Near Neighbours' to hold a session entitled *Stories of Hope* which brought together ten community leaders and faith members from the London Borough of Hounslow to talk honestly about the challenges faced locally during the pandemic and to share any positives from this time and ideas about the future. It was facilitated in a sensitive way allowing those involved a worthwhile time of sharing and getting to know one other better.

Near Neighbour's facilitator Anita Beeden ended the session with this quote by Father Richard Rohr, a Franciscan friar and ecumenical teacher who bears witness to the deep wisdom of Christian mysticism and traditions of action and contemplation.

*There is a deep relationship between the inner revolution of prayer and transformation of social structures and consciousness. Our hope lies in the fact that meditation is going to change the society that we live in - just as it has changed us.*

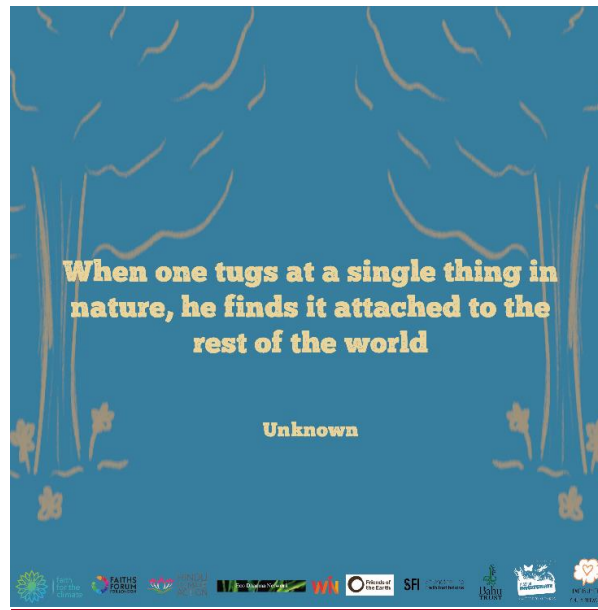
(Near Neighbours is a charity which works to bring together neighbours; helping to develop relationships across diverse faiths and ethnicities in order to improve communities)

**Hounslow Friends of Faith virtual AGM** was held on zoom at 7pm on 21st July and attended by thirty eight members. The agenda included a review of the past year, a financial report and the election of trustees and officers for the coming year. The proposal that Ajit Singh and Prem Sondhi be made Patrons of HFOF was unanimously agreed by the meeting. Formal recognition of their new status as Patrons will be made at an evening reception at Hounslow House on Thursday November 18<sup>th</sup> during National Interfaith Week.



Following the AGM business the guest speaker was Malcolm Deboo who gave an introduction to the Zoroastrian faith. Zoroastrianism is the oldest religion that is still being practiced in the world today with about 150,000 members all over the world. It was the first monotheistic world religion. Zoroastrians believe that all creation has only one life and there is no reincarnation. Their way of life is based on *good thoughts, good words and good deeds*. Following the talk there was a lively Q&A session.

## **'Where Nature meets Faith'**



This summer Faiths Forum for London in partnership with Faith for the climate, Faiths United Youth Network and The Royal Parks explored issues of faith, sustainability, nature and our environment in the run up to the Conference of the Parties in Glasgow, through a webinar series titled “Where Nature Meets Faith”. These very interesting *Where Nature Meets Faith* webinars have been uploaded to the [Faiths Forum for London YouTube](#) and are available to watch at any time.

Please click the links below or go to:

<http://faithsforum.com/event/where-nature-meets-faith-webinar-series/>

**Where Nature Meets Faith: from a [Christian and Islamic perspective](#)**

**Where Nature Meets Faith: from a [Zoroastrian & Baha'i perspective](#)**

**Where Nature Meets Faith: from a [Buddhist & Jain perspective](#)**

**Where Nature Meets Faith: from a [Hindu & Sikh perspective](#)**

**Where Nature Meets Faith: from a [Jewish Perspective & Guided Walks Info](#)**

### **An Invitation to Participate in a LBH Residents' Survey:**

The London Borough of Hounslow is working in partnership with The Audience Agency to better understand engagement with arts and culture across the borough. Please take a few moments to fill out this survey and help them to better understand which venues/events you visit, whether you participate in any creative activities and how you like to connect with your local communities. The information you provide will help organisations across the borough provide an accessible, relevant and engaging cultural offer for everyone.

Access the survey here: <https://research.audiencesurveys.org/s.asp?k=162324991028>



# VOLUNTEERING WITH THE MET

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) is substantially increasing the number of volunteers from across London's communities who work with us.

## WHY APPLY?

- Support your local community by working to reduce crime and making it a safer place
- Develop skills that will support your professional career
- Gain valuable experience of working with the Metropolitan Police Service
- We offer a range of exciting deployments
- Freedom to choose where you volunteer across London

### Community Based Volunteers (CBV)

**Role description:** Volunteers that wish to support policing and London Safety Centre (LSC) activities that aim to prevent crime, promote safety and make a positive contribution to their local communities. Deployments include reassurance patrols and weapons sweeps.

### Surge Volunteers (SVs)

**Role description:** Individuals who assist during unprecedented times or national emergencies where the demand on the police is exceptionally high and additional support is required. This could be a London-wide crisis such as the COVID pandemic, flooding, or large-scale power outages.

### Police Support Volunteers (PSV)

**Role description:** Volunteers that support front-line policing activities within police buildings.

### Metropolitan Special Constables (MSC)

**Role description:** Volunteer police officers that perform the same tasks as a regular officer.

### Volunteer Cadet Leaders (VCL)

**Role description:** Volunteers that support the running of cadet youth groups.



[www.met.police.uk/car/careers/met/police-volunteer-roles/](http://www.met.police.uk/car/careers/met/police-volunteer-roles/)

[londonsafetycentrevolunteers@met.police.uk](mailto:londonsafetycentrevolunteers@met.police.uk)

## Combatting Knife Crime: Making Communities Safer & Working in Partnership to Tackle Serious Youth Violence

Tuesday, October 5th 2021

Webinar

### Key Speakers Include:

**Bruce Houlder CB QC DL**, Founder of **Greater London Knife Crime Initiative**

**Joe Raby**, Gangs and Violence Reduction Manager at **Catch22 Justice**

**Dr Megan McElhone**, Lecturer in Criminology at Birkbeck, **University of London**

[Event Details Website](#) [Register to Attend](#)

Knife crime is at its highest recorded level in the past 10 years, with 46,000 offences involving a knife or sharp instrument in England and Wales in the year ending March 2020. During the COVID-19 lockdown period, police have recorded rises in knife crime and youth violence throughout many parts of the UK. Of further concern is that in 2020, the number of 'children in need' assessments that identified gangs as a factor increased by 34%.

### Programme

- Assess the impact of Covid-19 on the spread of knife crime and the increasing number of vulnerable young people being exploited as a result
- Consider how to better identify and support children and young people at risk of committing a knife-related crime
- Discuss alternative ways to make communities safer, such as that from a public health perspective, or more innovative early intervention solutions
- Examine concerns with the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, and whether it will succeed in its aim of tackling knife crime
- Consider the impact that an increase in police stop and search powers will have on relationships between the public and police
- Discuss whether the government's strategy addresses the root causes of knife crime and develop an understanding of what a long-term strategy may look like
- Explore collaborative opportunities and discuss better preventative measures

To register for the briefing, please [click here](#).

## Security Advice for Everyone



- 23<sup>rd</sup> September at 2pm, **Basic security** (An introduction to security for places of worship and faith communities):  
Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/5vyvskku>
- 29<sup>th</sup> September at 7pm, **Hate crime and your community** (How to deal with racial and religious hatred – especially in the digital age):  
Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/9fks3n7r>
- 6<sup>th</sup> October at 2pm, **Event security for your community** (Appropriate security measures to ensure the safety of large numbers of people):  
Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/ewc4yzz7>
- 13<sup>th</sup> October at 7pm, **Organising security** (Security and risk management, and how to develop a security plan):  
Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/4c3xut6p>

In the meantime, if we can be of any help, please contact us on .

Also – check out our website for more information, and registration details as new webinars are released, at [safe.cst.org.uk](https://safe.cst.org.uk) or contact: [enquiries@safe.cst.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@safe.cst.org.uk) please follow us on: LinkedIn: [safe-by-cst](https://www.linkedin.com/company/safe-by-cst) or Twitter: [@SAFE\\_CST](https://twitter.com/SAFE_CST)

### Phone Scams

**Nearly a third of all fraud is committed over the telephone.**

National Fraud Intelligence Bureau.

For helpful hints from the Metropolitan Police to protect yourself please visit:

<https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/advice/>

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

### **August**

#### **6 – 15<sup>th</sup> Zoroastrian: FRAVARDIGAN/MUKTAD (Shahenshahi-Parsi)**

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. Daily samples of sacred food are tasted by them during the daily ceremonies.

#### **10<sup>th</sup> Muslim: ISLAMIC NEW YEAR 1443 / AL-HIJRA / RA'S UL 'AM (Muharram 1)**

This day commemorates the Hijra or migration of the Prophet Muhammad from Makkah to Medina in 622 CE, which led to the establishment of the Muslim community there. The day is not universally celebrated amongst Sunni Muslims but is notable as Muslim years are dated from this time and are marked AH (After the Hijrah). In 2021 CE the Muslim year 1443 AH begins.

#### **16<sup>th</sup> Zoroastrian: NAVROSE/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 – giving more time for making merry!

#### **19<sup>th</sup> Muslim: ASHURA (10th Muharram)**

For Sunni Muslims Ashura is a minor fast observed by the Prophet. Shi'a Muslims recall a great tragedy that took place in AH 61 (680 CE). The Imam Husayn (son of Ali and Fatimah and therefore grandson of the Prophet) was attacked and killed at Karbala (now in Iraq) along with his family and followers by the troops of the Caliph Yazid.

#### **21<sup>th</sup> Zoroastrian: KHORDAD SAL**

This 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. It is customary on this day to visit the Fire Temple, to give thanks to Ahura Mazda for giving humanity the Prophet Zarathushtra, to participate in a *jashan* or thanksgiving ceremony, to listen to stories of the miraculous birth and life of Prophet Zarathushtra, and to share in a happy community meal, a drink and a dance.

#### **29<sup>th</sup>- 30<sup>th</sup> Hindu: RAKSHA BANDHAN**

*Raksha* means 'protection' and *bandhan* means 'to tie'. Girls and married women in families of a north Indian background tie a *rakhi* (amulet) on the right wrists of their brothers, wishing them protection from evil influences of various kinds.

#### **29/30<sup>th</sup> Hindu: JANMASHTAMI / KRISHNA JAYANTI**

Birthday of Krishna. Many *Hindus* fast till midnight, the time of Krishna's birth. Those unable to fast will have some fruit and milk. In the temples Krishna is welcomed with singing, dancing and sweets. In some homes and temples an image of the new-born Krishna is put in a cradle. Krishna is a very popular avatar or incarnation of Vishnu and this festival is celebrated widely.

### **September**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Sikh: INSTALLATION OF THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB IN THE HARMANDIR SAHIB, the Golden Temple, Amritsar 1604 CE**

The Sikhs' fifth Guru, Arjan Dev, installed the volume of scripture, the Adi Granth, on this date. It consisted of the hymns of the first five Gurus plus those of other 'saint-poets'. Hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur were later added to form the present Guru Granth Sahib.

## September

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Zoroastrian:** FRAVARDIN MAH PARAB (Shahenshahi; Parsi)

At Fravardin Zoroastrians visit the Zoroastrian Cemetery in Brookwood, Surrey to participate in a *jashan* ceremony in memory of the departed *fravashis* (guardian spirits and souls of the community). Sacred food is prepared as an offering to the departed during the *jashan* and is later shared by the participants.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Jewish:** ROSH HASHANNAH

This festival begins ten days of self-examination. The ram's horn (*shofar*) blown in the synagogue recalls Abraham's sacrifice of a ram instead of his son, Isaac. Apples dipped in honey are eaten in the hope of a 'sweet' new year. The greeting is '*Leshanah Tovah Tikatev*' (may you be inscribed for a good year).

### **10<sup>th</sup> Hindu:** GANESH CHATURTHI Birthday of Ganesh

This is a Hindu festival in honour of Ganesh, the god of good fortune and new beginnings. He was the elephant headed son of Lord Shiva and Parvati, and is often referred to as Ganupati.

Celebrations conclude with the immersion in water of the image of Ganesh.

### **10<sup>th</sup> Jain:** SAMVATSARI

(International Forgiveness Day for Jains), is the last day of Paryushana. It is the holiest day of the Jain calendar. Many Jains observe a complete fast on this day. The whole day is spent in prayers and contemplation.

### **11<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> Jain:** PARYUSHAN PARVA

These are eight days of purification, devoted to study, prayer, meditation and fasting, and ending with a period of confession and forgiveness. Often monks will be invited to give teachings from the Jain scriptures. Paryushana means 'to stay in one place', which signifies a time of reflection and repentance. Originally the practice was monastic for the most part.

### **16<sup>th</sup> Jewish:** YOM KIPPUR

The last of the ten days of repentance is the holiest day of the Jewish year. It is expressed through a total fast 25 hours long. Jews spend the eve and most of the day in prayer, asking for forgiveness for past wrongs and resolving to improve in the future. The Book of Jonah is read.

### **21<sup>st</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> Jewish:** SUKKOT

This harvest festival recalls the 40 years the Jews spent in the wilderness on the way from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land. A temporary hut or booth – called a *sukkah* – is used for eating meals and for visits and socialising. The roof, which has to be open in part to the elements, is covered with branches and decorated with fruit.

### **29<sup>th</sup> Jewish:** SIMCHAT TORAH

The annual reading of the *Torah* is completed on this day. The reading moves from the last words of Deuteronomy to the first ones of Genesis. All the *Torah* scrolls are paraded around the synagogue, while children dance and sing, as do many of the adults.

### **Sept/Oct Christian:** HARVEST FESTIVAL (date varies)

Displays of various foods are made in churches and Sunday schools and services are held to give thanks for the goodness of God's gifts in nature.

## October

### **1<sup>st</sup> Zoroastrian (Iranian): JASHN-E MEHERGAN (or MIHR JASHAN)**

The festival of Mehergan is dedicated to the divinity Meher or Mithra, who is associated with the sun and with justice. Thanks are offered at the fire temple and the community shares in a meal that includes dry fruits and nuts, along with a drink, dancing and merrymaking.

### **1<sup>st</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'.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Hindu: GANDHI JAYANTI**

Gandhi Jayanti is an Indian national holiday that celebrates the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, who is referred to as the 'Father of the Nation'. He was the driving force behind the foundation of the state of India. His birthday is celebrated with services, prayers and painting and essay contests, using topics that glorify peace and non-violence, and the singing of Gandhi's favourite devotional song entitled 'Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram' (Ram Dhun for short).

### **6<sup>th</sup> Baha'i: ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF THE BAB Baha'i**

The *Bab* (the title means 'Gate') called people to religious renewal and to await the coming of a messenger from God, believed to be Baha'u'llah (a title that means 'Glory of God').

### **7<sup>th</sup> Baha'i: ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF THE BAHU'ULLAH Baha'i**

Founder of the Baha'i faith, he was born the eldest son of a Persian nobleman in Tehran, Persia, in 1817.

### **6<sup>th</sup> – 14<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> INTER FAITH 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.

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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 September.

**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.*