



## HOUNSLOW FRIENDS OF FAITH

**Newsletter ~ June ~ July 2022**

**Keeping you up to date with Interfaith and Community News**

### Hounslow Friends of Faith News

#### Dates for your Diary:

#### HFOF Annual General Meeting Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July 6.30 – 9pm at Hounslow House

- 6.30pm light refreshments
- 7.00pm AGM business
- 7.30pm guest speaker Mr Nitin Mehta from the Jain Community

All are welcome to attend this meeting but please note that only paid up individual members and the designated person from member organisations are eligible to vote on items of business.

Annual Membership is £10 for individuals and £20 for organisations.

#### HFOF Annual Walk of Peace and Friendship Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August

Details will be circulated when arrangements are completed.

### Reflections on Past Events

#### An Iftar at Hounslow Jamia Mosque by David Baldwin, a Vice Chair of HFOF

The invitation to an Iftar at the Jamia Majid Hounslow on 20<sup>th</sup> April felt very special this year since it was the first ‘in person’ event of its kind since the lifting of covid restrictions. It was also part of the cluster of holy festivals being marked close together in the calendar this year and so served also as a celebration of religious diversity in our borough. It is also a privilege at this point in the Islamic calendar to be able to greet Muslim friends, neighbours and work colleagues with the traditional words ‘Ramadan Kareem’, have a ‘blessed Ramadan’, and to show respect and encouragement to those observing the holy month of fasting .

An estimated hundred and fifty people, which included groups of friends from other mosques and other faith communities, were seated at beautifully laid out banqueting tables.

Guests included the Mayor of Hounslow Cllr. Bishnu Gurung, Cllr. Amritpal Mann, Acting Chief Inspector Pali Grewal and other community representatives. After a recitation from the Quran by Sheikh Umar, a cleric from Medina, there was a reflection on the spiritual significance of Ramadan and the importance of interfaith harmony in Britain today from Imam Ammar Siddiqui.



Children from the Suffah Primary School delighted us all with a dramatised reading about Ramadan as one of the Pillars of Islam and the significance of the ninth month of the Islamic calendar as the month in which the Prophet (PBUH) received the first revelation of those comprising the Quran.

The fast was broken with the traditional dates and delicious fruit chaat and other tasty snacks. Later a delicious dinner was served after short speeches by guests and the presentation of awards by the Jamia Masjid for community service including one to Charanjit Ajitsingh Chair of Hounslow Friends of Faith. There was a lively and informal atmosphere as people circulated and chatted and immensely enjoyed the feast. Imam Ammar Siddiqui closed the Iftar with prayers and blessings after what was a most memorable occasion.

David Baldwin and Imam Ammar Siddiqui

### **Centenary Celebrations** a reflection from Charanjit AjitSingh

The Centenary Celebration of His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj, the inspiration behind the Swami Narayan Mandir Complex, Neasden, was held at Navnat Centre, Hayes on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

Hounslow Friends of Faith were represented at this interfaith event organised by the West London BAPS Swaminarayan Satsang Mandal. The colourful celebratory performance gave a wonderful glimpse of the life and teachings of Swamiji, one of the most influential spiritual leaders of recent times, and was aimed at inspiring the community to uphold their values, preserving culture and strengthening harmony. Sadhu Yogya Das, the Head of Communications at Neasden Temple, shared about Pramukh Swamiji Maharaj's meetings with key world figures including the Pope in 1984 and also some of his key teachings which are:-

- In the joy of others lies our own
- The world can become a happier place when harmony is embedded into everyday life.
- Not to convert but to transform lives by encouraging Christians to be better Christians and Hindus to be better Hindus through their Guru's teachings
- Inculcate values of Compassion and Benevolence
- Humanity is one family
- Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds you plant and sow.

The invited guests were served a delicious vegetarian meal and presented with a book and a box of Prasad from the temple. We also learnt that a group of Swami Narayan Community regularly meet in a school in Heston.

### **Promoting Safeguarding for Women 18<sup>th</sup> May** by Charanjit Ajit Singh

Hounslow Jama Masjid and the Metropolitan Police jointly organised this special seminar 'Promote Safeguarding Protect Lives' exclusively for women at the Masjid's community facility. Verses from the Holy Quran were recited and then explained in English that they spoke about God's command to men to treat women well, fairly and kindly.

Two female police officers, a sergeant and a police constable, from two faith backgrounds engaged openly yet discreetly with the fifteen women present on issues of concern to them. Some of the issues covered were violence against women and girls, domestic abuse, protecting women and girls in public places, victim support and empowering women to be stronger, cultural issues, confronting taboos, the need to access services and building resilience. The conversations were very valuable and illuminating because some women had the opportunity to share their experiences in confidence. It is important that both minority ethnic communities and women develop trusting relationships with the police after having been adversely affected by recent events in London.



### **The Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> June**

*"I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service... But I shall not have strength to carry out this resolution alone unless you join in it with me, as I now invite you to do: I know that your support will be unfailingly given. God help me to make good my vow, and God bless all of you who are willing to share in it."*

Princess Elizabeth, 21 April 1947

### **HFOF was represented at a Jubilee Lunch at St Stephens Church, Hounslow**

On Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> June, a Platinum Jubilee Celebration lunch was held under the spiritual leadership of Father David Cloake. There was a wonderful display of dishes which had been prepared by members of the congregation in their homes to share with each other.

The President, Mr Jagtar Singh Thetti, The Secretary, Mr Gurmeet Singh Dhanoa together with other members of the Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha joined in the celebration with their contribution of Bhajia (pakoras), freshly made in the Gurdwara Kitchen, and fruit to share. This was the first time that the Sikh community joined with the local Anglican community to share a lunch in honour of Her Majesty, the Queen. The Gurdwara President reflected on the Jubilee and congratulated the participants and added that the Gurdwara community is very proud that the new building of the Gurdwara was opened in 2004 by the Queen with Prince Phillip, this occasion she mentioned in her Christmas message that year. Prince Charles and Camilla, the last Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Kensington have also visited this Sikh place of worship.

All enjoyed eating a great meal together and meeting each other! Both leaders and communities have agreed to remain in contact and invite each other for future events. The Sikhs were shown round the Church and they valued the experience very much.

### **Community News Items**

#### **Faith Liaison Officer PC Muhammad Dar writes:**

The Government has now opened the funding scheme for places of worship. So you can apply for a non-repayable grant towards security measures such as CCTV cameras, perimeter fencing and other security measures.

If you require any help or support with completing the application form please get in touch with me on 07872 521247.

Also please see attached document and link below for further details and how to apply.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/places-of-worship-security-funding-scheme#overview-of-the-scheme>

### **Elinor Thomas | Engagement Officer Transport for London requests views:**

There is a consultation launched to seek views on expanding the **Ultra Low Emission Zone** (ULEZ) London-wide. The consultation will run until **29 July** and asks a number of questions on the proposals for the London-wide ULEZ. If a larger zone was introduced, it would have a transformative effect by the end of 2023. It is estimated that the number of cars not meeting the tough ULEZ emission standards each day would fall from 160,000 to 46,000 and number of vans from 42,000 to 26,000.

It is hoped that views will be shared about the way forward to achieving a clean, green and healthy future London via the [Have Your Say website](#) or on 0343 222 1155 or email [cleanairyourview@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:cleanairyourview@tfl.gov.uk)

### **Revenue from any unused parking spaces**

As businesses look to move from crisis to recovery, [YourParkingSpace](#) is supporting partners by creating a vital source of income marketing vacant parking bays to our online audience. Our main objective is to maximise the profitability of your parking assets without taking resources away from the current operational focus.

We already drive additional revenue via this method for a number of retailers across the UK including (Tesco, Morrison's and Premier Inn). With drivers actively looking to pre-book parking and minimise journeys on public transport, your spaces represent a great alternative.

Billy Morris – Commercial Executive/YourParkingSpace  
Studio 4.Import Building, 2 Clove Crescnt, London 14 2BE 07415 408 039

### **New Butterfly Volunteer Role at West Middlesex University Hospital**

The hospital is delighted to have received funding from NHS England and to be working in partnership with the Anne Robinson Trust, to develop a bespoke Butterfly Volunteer role to provide support to our patients who are in the last days and hours of life and those important to them. This new service will work cohesively with our ward teams, specialist palliative care and Chaplaincy service to enhance the care we provide to those patients who are in the last days and hours of life. The main role of the Butterfly Volunteers will be to offer company and companionship. They will also provide some respite care for those important to our patients.

Jo Taranowski, End of Life Care Volunteer Project Manager, said: “The Butterfly Volunteer role is a new volunteer role at West Middlesex University Hospital, and one which truly aims to improve our end of life patients’ experience. If you think this is something you would be interested in doing, but don’t have any experience, don’t worry it’s not needed—we just need the right people to step forward and volunteer! Training will be provided”.

Shauna McCann, Lead Nurse - Palliative and End of Life Care, said “The Butterfly Volunteers will provide an invaluable service to our patients. It will also provide the ward nurses an additional layer of support that they can provide. Being able to offer those important to the patient, a chance to take a break without worrying that their loved one will be alone is a small but vital service”.

If you are friendly, compassionate, supportive, caring, a great listener and comfortable to just sit and be still at times becoming a Butterfly Volunteer may really interest you. To find out more contact Jo either by email [jo.taranowski@nhs.net](mailto:jo.taranowski@nhs.net) or call 0208 321 6537

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

**June**

- 2<sup>nd</sup>** **Christian (Orthodox Churches) Ascension Day (40th day after Easter)** This day commemorates the last earthly appearance of the Risen Christ, who, according to Christian belief, ascended into heaven in the presence of many witnesses.
- 5<sup>th</sup>** **Christian: Pentecost** - celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- 5/6<sup>th</sup>** **Jewish: Shavuot / The Feast of Weeks** - Seven weeks after Pesach, Shavuot celebrates the revelation of the Torah on Mount Sinai and the early harvest season in Israel. Summer flowers and dairy foods abound.
- 13<sup>th</sup>** **Christian: Pentecost (Orthodox Churches)** celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- 16<sup>th</sup>** **Sikh: Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev (1606)** 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.

**July**

- 1st** **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.
- 7–12<sup>th</sup>** **Muslim:** Pilgrimage to Makkah / Hajj.
- 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.

- 10th Bahá'í: 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 Bahá'í Scriptures
- 10-22<sup>nd</sup> Muslim:** Eid-Al-Adha / The Festival of Sacrifice. This major festival (al-Eid al- Kabir) commemorates Ibrahim's (Abraham's) willingness to sacrifice his son, Ismail.
- 13<sup>th</sup> 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.
- 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
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Zoroastrian:** (Kadmi) Khordad Sal is the Birthday of Zarathushtra and falls on the sixth day after No Ruz. *Khordad* means perfection and the festival of Khordad Sal symbolically celebrates the birthday of Prophet Zarathushtra.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Muslim:** Islamic New Year 1444/AL-HIJRA / RA'S UL 'AM This day commemorates the migration of the Prophet Muhammad from Makkah to Medina in 622 CE, which led to the establishment of the Muslim community there.

## August

- 6<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> Zoroastrian:** FRAVARDIGAN / MUKTAD 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
- 7<sup>th</sup> 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.
- 11 – 12<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.

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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 [info@hounslowfriendsoffaith.org](mailto:info@hounslowfriendsoffaith.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.