

# Faiths engage

Monthly Newsletter—Issue 45—May 2023

## Welcome to the latest edition of Faiths Engage

Near Neighbours has made a significant impact in Leicester in the past few months. I am particularly grateful to Viv for all her hard work on this project. Happily, she has not left her employment in the Centre; she now works on our heritage project, *Memories of Living Well Together*. If you would like to share your story of migrating to Leicester, please do get in touch. April has also been a busy month of celebrating religious festivals for many of Leicester's faith communities, and I've joined in where I could. Our corporate work continues to go from strength to strength, with particular highlights being the Police Expo and RISE course at Gateway College and CARE Gold held back in March.

With every good wish

Revd Dr Tom Wilson

Director, St Philip's Centre Ltd

### Near Neighbours Small Grants

It only seems like yesterday that I received a phone call from Tom to ask if I would be interested in a 6-month part-time contract as Near Neighbours Co-ordinator for Leicester. The contract came to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> March and now is a good time to reflect on the impact that Near Neighbours has made over the past 6 months.

Although the government funding was significantly reduced this time, NN was still able to provide funding towards four excellent projects. All four of them were tailored to the communities in Leicester and were focused on bringing together people from diverse communities to build relationships and help transform neighbourhoods. The Leicester Stories of Hope project brought together ladies from the Hindu and Muslim communities to share experiences, especially during the troubles which took place last Autumn. The relationships that have blossomed over the period of the project have enabled great communication between the communities. One participant said *"The most beautiful aspect was we all want to be part of bigger change in Leicester. We all brought ideas to the table to help create change in the community, it instilled so much hope."*



Another project enabled the volunteers who help with "The Feed" at St Peter's Highfields to be trained in Safeguarding, Food Hygiene, Conflict Management and First Aid. By participating in the training, volunteers from St Peter's Church and the Midland Langar Seva Society will be far better equipped to provide an effective and safe environment for feeding vulnerable people. Projects at Afro Innovations and Leicester City of Sanctuary both provide valuable support to refugees and asylum seekers who are new to Leicester. I was able to hear testimonies from people who had been helped significantly by Afro Innovations. I also saw the happy children who were playing in the safe environment provided by LCOS – many of them were living in one room in a local hotel and had no other opportunities for playing with other children. In total, Near Neighbours awarded £13,054 to projects in Leicester. I wish them all well in the future as they aim to transform their communities by building relationships and bringing hope into Leicester.

Viv Froggatt

## Work with Churches

### Methodist Women in Britain Conference

On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> April, Tom and Dr Mary Brewer travelled to the Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick, Derbyshire for the Methodist Women In Britain (MWIB) conference.

Mary led two workshops on the theme of "Life as a Jewish person in the UK today." She gave a short presentation, which was followed by a lively question and answer session.

Thanks to MWIB for the opportunity and Mary for her excellent input.



### Queen's Theological Foundation

James and three faith practitioners went to the Queen's Foundation in Birmingham to speak to Anglican and Methodist Ordinands as part of their interfaith module. Surinder and Ramila explored Sikh and Hindu scriptures, respectively, with them, while Bernard explored how Christians can approach Matthew's Passion Account with Jewish people in mind. The group enjoyed the training and particularly appreciated considering passages that could be problematic and how to preach on them, as well as reflecting on other people's scriptures, learning from them and thinking about what is similar to and different from their own.



### How Passover is celebrated

The Centre hosted Sheila Gewolb to talk about how she celebrates Passover at home. It was a fascinating conversation about the different customs around Passover there are and how different Jewish groups celebrate the Seder. She also brought along resources that are used such as Haggadahs and some educational resources such as the plate pictured.

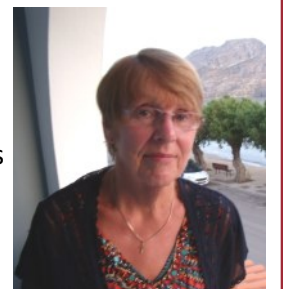


If you would like your church or group to have a discussion about festivals please get in touch with James [courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk) or 0116 273 3459 (Option 6).

## Community

### Pamela Howe R.I.P.

We were saddened to hear of the recent death of Pam Howe, a previous Trustee and volunteer at St Philip's Centre and previous member of St Philip's Church. She was a regular member of our dialogue groups and a great help and support for our social events, as well as at one time helping to co-ordinate our Associates' Scheme. We are immensely grateful for all Pam did to support St Philip's Centre over many years. We send our love and prayers to Stephen and all the family at this sad time.



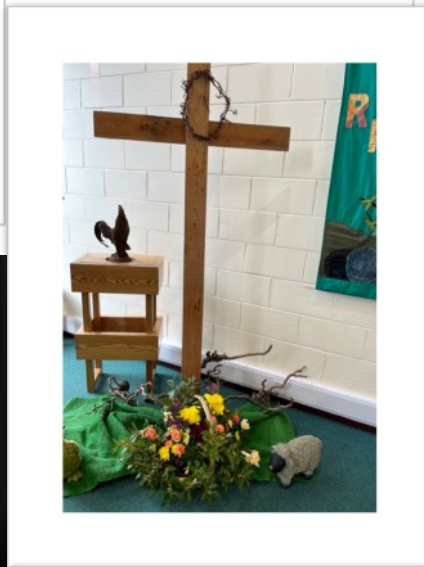
### Festivals

It has been a busy month of festivals and celebrations in many different faith communities. This year is one of only three per century when Pesach, Ramadan and Easter coincide. It has therefore been a particular joy for me to attend a seder meal and several iftars, as well as participating in Easter festivities. I have also managed to attend bhajans at Ram Mandir and the Sikh Museum Initiative's Vaisakhi event held at the New Walk Museum. I wish the Bhai community a blessed Ridvan. I know there are other community events I didn't manage to attend, but I've really enjoyed those I have made it to. I will do my best to attend as many others as I can. The photos are on the next page.

Revd Dr Tom Wilson  
Director, St Philip's Centre



## Festivals—photographs



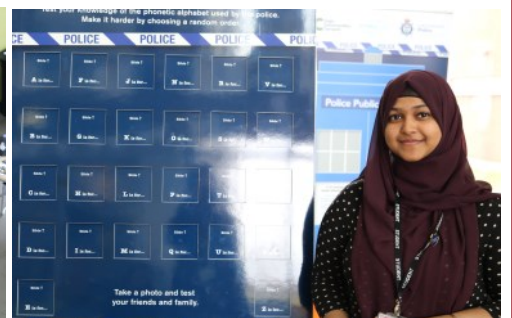
## Corporate Work

Our RISE Life Skills programme has continued at Gateway College with really good engagement from the young people and we have received superb feedback from the college:

*"The RISE programme has been an excellent opportunity for students to develop those wider employability skills and develop a better understanding of equality and diversity. The students all discuss how impactful the programme has been for them."*

We have also continued our Cops Communities Consent (CCC) Expos, the last one being at Gateway College. The staff said:

*"This was a great opportunity for students to interact with the Police in an informal setting. They often only see the negative stories in relation to police, young people and ethnic minorities. These Expos have been an excellent chance to increase trust, respect and further understanding about the important role the Police play in the local community."*



## CARE GOLD

On Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March the St Philip's Centre was pleased to hold the annual CARE Gold (Confidently Addressing Radicalisation & Extremism) seminar, this year arranged at the Leicester Racecourse Conference Centre. Ben Smith, Leicester Prevent Coordinator chaired the event and provided an opening input for the day considering the global, national, and local issues that have influenced, or been considered within delivery of the Prevent programme in Leicester during the previous 12 months.

The theme for this year's event was to act as a point of reflection on 2022/23 Prevent delivery and we lined up a selection of agencies to consider this theme of the day. In addition to the Leicester Prevent Coordinator's opening presentation we also welcomed presentations from the Home Office Prevent Local Delivery Team, the Department for Education (DfE), Leicester City Council's Prevent Education Officer (PEO), and also a Prevent Intervention Provider (IP) on the trends they have seen as part of their role mentoring cases from the Prevent Channel process.

CARE Gold provides a means of providing all previous participants of the CARE Silver 1 day Prevent training with an annual knowledge 'top up' on the very latest Prevent related information. We are currently scheduling our CARE Silver training dates for 2023/24, if you are interested in finding out more, please contact Ben Smith, Leicester Prevent Coordinator.



### Anxiety Awareness Evening

**Facilitated by Rehana Sidat—CEO—Jamila's Legacy  
BSc (Hons) Cognitive Behavioural Therapeutic Approaches**



**Special Guest : Dr Vesna Acovski**

**Consultant Psychiatrist in Adult Mental Health**

**Clinical Director for Adult Mental Health Community Services & Psychological Therapies  
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust**

**Wednesday 17th May from 5.30—8.00 pm, St Philip's Church Hall  
Information stalls, refreshments & buffet meal**

**Booking essential via Eventbrite—**

**<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/599331926927>**

For further information or stall booking, contact Rehana Sidat—  
info@jamilaslegacy.co.uk - 07821 849336



## Funding Support

*Active Together  
All Saints' Educational Trust  
Anglican Diocese of Leicester  
The Benefact Trust  
The Dunhill Medical Trust  
Home Office  
The J R Corah Foundation Fund  
Leicester College  
Leicestershire & Rutland Community Foundation  
Leicester City Council*

*The Linking Network  
Methodist Connexion  
National Lottery Heritage Fund  
N C Bellefontaine Trust  
Near Neighbours (DLUHC)  
Northampton District of the Methodist Church  
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Open Society Foundations  
P & C Hickinbotham Charitable Trust  
Shire Funding  
The United Reformed Church*



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