



Faiths engage

Monthly Newsletter—Issue 54—February 2024

Welcome to the latest edition of Faiths Engage

Welcome to the latest issue of Faiths engage. In this issue, you can read some reflections from our oral history project – do get in touch if you would like to hear more about this. We reflect on the sad news of the death of Dr Ramesh Mehta. There are updates on our schools and corporate work and notice of some up-coming events.

Revd Dr Tom Wilson
Director, St Philip's Centre

Memories of Living Well Together

Leicester has a positive reputation for its harmony and ability of many communities to live well together. We at the St Philip's Centre are grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund and those who play the lottery, for funding a project that documents and preserves the experiences that lie behind the cohesion and community spirit of the city. Below are some of their reflections on 'Why Leicester?'

Carmelita lived in the Philippines and worked at the British Council, where she met her husband. When he returned to England, she came with him, so she moved for love!

Ruth had friends in Leicester and every time she came to visit, she realised that she liked the atmosphere in Leicester better than London, where she was living at the time. She remembered that "the pace of life in London was a bit hectic and there was so much pressure and also I realised when I came to Leicester I didn't worry so much about when I'm supposed to be doing abcd. Life was a bit slower and a bit more what I was used to back home." Ruth's best friend lived in Leicester, so it really was a good place for her to settle.

Uri said he was walking up from the train station through Victoria Park to Clarendon Park and he had a sense of Leicester "as a kind of laid-back place, as a place to raise small kids." He added, "it was just nicer here."

Maryan moved to Leicester because she trusted what her family and friends said. Although she had a nice house and a good job in the Netherlands, she was not happy. In particular, she worried about the impact on her son. She did not want her son to grow up in an area where his religion or his background was criticised almost every day. Maryan said Somalis are "nomadic people ... we trust our family members who are already here." So she moved to Leicester without visiting first to check it was somewhere she wanted to live.

Marieyvonne didn't know anything about England before she came. All she knew about was David Beckham. She thought he was pretty good looking, so moving to Leicester sounded nice if it would be full of handsome men like him!

Scan the QR code to hear their reflections in full.



Work with Schools

January kicked off to a busy start. We delivered Religion and Belief Workshops on Judaism at Huncote Primary School and St Denys CofE Infant School, Ibstock and a Hinduism Assembly and workshop at Hose CofE Primary School. Our first Roadshow of the year took place at Battling Brook Primary School, allowing 280 children to interact with our faith practitioners, enjoy dressing up, and participate in the faith game.



Also during January, Burbage Junior School and Harby CofE Primary School visited the Mosque and engaged in an activity at St. Philip's Church. The activity involved creating Eid lanterns and learning about the Five Pillars of Islam. This involved the children in drawing their hands and writing down five things that were important to them.



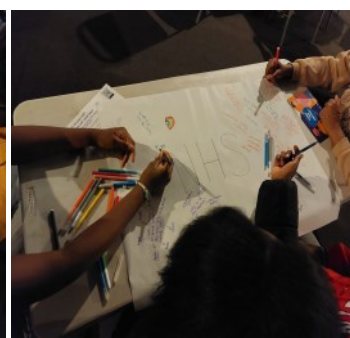
A special highlight of January was the visit of Claire Wilson, the Head of Burton-On-the-Wolds Primary School to the Centre. She explored the potential for incorporating our education programmes into her school and discussed the prospect of collaborative efforts with other schools in the area.



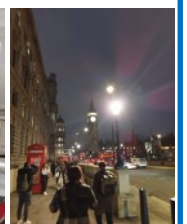
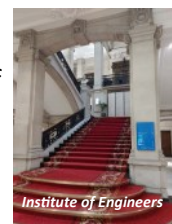
Ramila Chauhan

Corporate Work

St Philip's Centre is partnering with the NHS in promoting their #WhatYouSaying survey project to hear the views of children and young people on the NHS. In January, we have held some very engaging sessions with young people at Shri Guru Harkrishan Sahib Ji Gurdwara as well as the Redeemed Christian Church of God.



In this month Riaz was invited to speak at a religious education conference organised by The Open University in London. Riaz was part of a panel which discussed aspects of the OU's work in the field of interfaith education and to outline some experiences which St Philip's Centre has had in this vital area of work.



The months ahead are looking very busy with Religion & Belief training sessions booked in for Leicestershire Police, Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service, Leicestershire County Council and NHS staff.

Near Neighbours

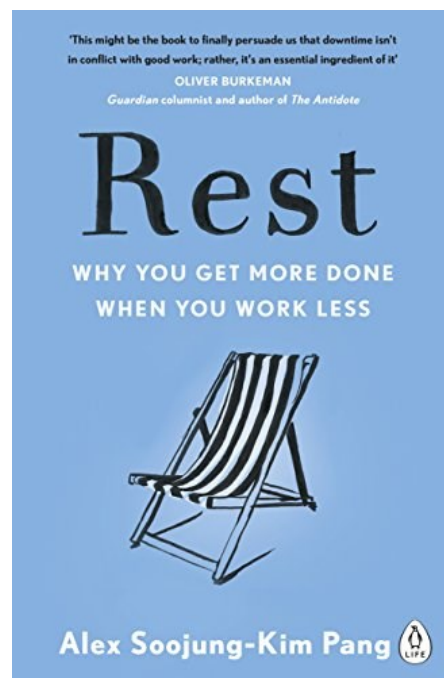
A few weeks ago, as part of our Near Neighbours funded capacity building work, I worked with a small group of leaders. We were thinking about resting well so that you can work well. I've been strongly impacted by Alex Soojung-Kim Pang on this topic. He writes: "Rest turns out to be like sex or singing or running. Everyone basically knows how to do it, but with a little work and understanding, you can learn to do it a lot better." Deliberate rest is a key component in living well. Pang uses the example of breathing. Of course, everyone knows how to breathe. But "learning to breathe more deeply helps athletes compete harder. It helps soldiers and sailors remain calm in battle. It helps musicians sing with greater control. It enables actors and politicians to project their voices." Rest, like breathing, is a skill to cultivate.

Pang makes six suggestions for stimulating creativity:

1. Four hours – Pang argues this is the maximum amount of truly creative work we can sustain on a daily basis. Organize your life to maximize those four hours.
2. Morning routine – he argues many people use the early hours of the morning as the time to be most creative. For some, not really being awake is part of their creativity.
3. Walk – we think best when moving. Sitting can imply stuckness. Standing, walking, moving enables motion and this includes movement towards solutions for complex problems.
4. Nap – the after lunch "horizontal half-hour" is recommended as a way of restoring energy.
5. Stop – "a counterintuitive but effective form of deliberate rest is to stop working at just the right point: to see your next move, but leave it until tomorrow." The idea is that this means it is easy to start again next day, as you know straight away how to begin.
6. Sleep – essential for being creative. Sleep gives the brain the chance to repair itself, to process the day's events, and solidify memory of new skills. What stops you sleeping well? Can you control some of these things?

Which speaks most to you?

Tom Wilson



As we approached the end of 2023, we heard the very sad news that Dr. Ramesh Mehta MBBS passed away. Ramesh bhai as he was known, formed a vital link between the Jain Centre and St Philip's Centre alongside his wife Dr. Shashi Mehta who is one of our key faith practitioners. Ramesh bhai was a calm, considerate, knowledgeable and modest individual who over the years helped us in so many different ways. Along with Riaz, he authored our Jainism booklet, hosted several training and education sessions on Jainism and assisted greatly with our 'Cops Communities Consent' (CCC) project in terms of the links made with Antwerp in Belgium – also home to a significant Jain community. Our Deputy Director – Riaz Ravat has sent condolences to the family on behalf of SPC and he attended Ramesh bhai's funeral. Dr. Ramesh Mehta MBBS, Rest In Peace.



We were also sad to hear the passing of Father Kordys of the Polish Catholic Church. Father Kordys and his community has been working with us on our safeguarding project. He attended some of our events. Our condolences go to the Polish community.

Forthcoming Events

The Ways of Love

**Tuesday 13th February,
11am to 12.30pm at St Philip's Centre
Pancakes provided**

Join Tom and Pradip to talk about what the Hindu and Christian traditions each us about the love of God.

Email courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk
to book a place

International Women's Day

**Tuesday 5th March 2024,
2pm to 3.30 pm
St Denys Parish Centre
Church Road, Evington, LE5 6FA**

An afternoon to celebrate International Women's Day and to hear interesting speakers share their experiences. Q & A session and time for informal conversations—and tea and cake!

Contact Viv Froggatt for more information
nn2@stphilipscentre.co.uk

The Epistle to the Hebrews

**Tuesday 5th March 2024,
10am to 12.30pm at St Philip's Centre
Lunch provided**

An opportunity to discuss this complex New Testament text with Jewish and Christian colleagues

Email courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk
to book a place

What Vaisakhi means to me

**Tuesday 9th April 2024,
12 noon to 1.30pm at
St Philip's Centre
Lunch provided**

An opportunity to learn about Vaisakhi with Karter Singh Bring

Email admin@stphilipscentre.co.uk
to book a place

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*

*The M B Reckitt Trust
Methodist Connexion
National Lottery Heritage Fund
N C Bellefontaine Trust
Near Neighbours (DLUHC)
Northampton District of the Methodist Church
P & C Hickinbotham Charitable Trust
Shire Funding
The Spalding Trust
The United Reformed Church
The Westhill Foundation*



Faiths Engage is the newsletter of St Philip's Centre Ltd

2A Stoughton Drive North, Leicester LE5 5UB

Tel: 0116 273 3459

admin@stphilipscentre.co.uk

Twitter: @SPCLEicester Facebook: stphilipscentreltd