



Faiths engage

Monthly Newsletter—Issue 75—December 2025

Welcome to the latest edition of Faiths Engage

As we draw towards the close of the year, we reflect on a month rich with connection, creativity and shared learning. We look forward to our Thank You Evening taking place this Thursday to celebrate our oral history project, Living Together, honouring voices and stories that remind us of the strength found in diversity.

As 2025 comes to a close, we are grateful for a year filled with events, friendships and meaningful encounters across faiths. From all of us at St Philip's Centre, we wish you a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Revd Canon Dr Tom Wilson
Director, St Philip's Centre



Corporate

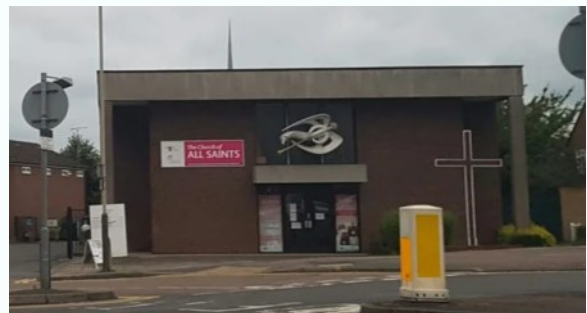


EMCYP

Residents from Eyres Monsell Club for Young People were treated to a tour of Leicester's iconic Golden Mile last week. Sights, shops and snacks were the order of the day.

Cricket Foundation

Further insights about participation and inclusion in Cricket came from our focus group with members of the local Pakistani Christian community.



Coming up this month...

This month sees the start of our Confidently Addressing Radicalisation and Extremism (CARE) courses that aim to raise awareness of current local and national terrorist risks, threats and messaging, enabling participants to confidently engage with counter terrorism measures and make appropriate referrals.



Connecting Communities

On Tuesday 18th November I had the privilege of being invited to speak at the Northampton District **ReNew Conference** for Lay Staff and



Volunteers. The day was one of worship praise and reflection. I was invited by Matt Forsyth, Northampton District Mission Team Leader, to be a speaker. We chatted about how St Philip's Centre can bring their experience when organising events, about my role and prior experience as well as what we can offer local churches. Matt then asked me to share how a recent event had gone. We talked about the pop up museum and art day. Attendees at



the conference were particularly interested in the quotes from scripture and the leaf display that I took along. Attendees said that big take-aways from our chat were that personal contact was important, to just have a go – things didn't need to be complicated and to focus on similarity not difference.

We have run several events this month focussing on bringing people of different backgrounds together.



The first, '**Knitted Together**' was held during Interfaith Week at Bishop Street Methodist Church. Knitters from around the city were invited to come together to knit squares to be made into a blanket. The majority of knitters came from Belgrave library's Wednesday knitting group. Everyone had a good time and would like to meet again, hoping that more knitters from different areas of the city will join next time.

At St Peter's Highfields we ran **Light in the World** and had a discussion with a small group about how Light features in our religion. We talked about Advent and Diwali whilst decorating tealights and eating mince pies. Nila shared a little bit about her journey to England from Ukraine and said how comforting it felt sharing something normal with others.



I'm looking forward to our next two craft and chat events – '**Christmas is Coming**' at St Mary's Humberstone 2-3pm on Wednesday 10th December and at St Philip's Church on Sunday 14th December after service – approx. 10.30am.

We had our last of the three scheduled **Tea and Samosas** chats. The group of ladies has decided that they would like to continue with the sessions with more directed chats. We will next meet on 17th December bringing a photo of a special place to share with the group.

Cathryn Parsons
Churches Training Officer





Education

Our team of dedicated faith practitioners recently delivered a Roadshow at Inglehurst Junior School, carrying all the faith boxes and display materials up several flights of stairs - a real team effort, and we are incredibly grateful to everyone involved. The Roadshow was also part of Brockington College's Enrichment Day. Despite the many other activities competing for their attention, the students remained genuinely engaged and eager to hear what our practitioners shared about their respective faiths.

We also organised a school visit to both a Mandir and a Gurdwara for Belton Primary School. Their teacher shared the following feedback:

"Our recent trip to the Leicester Mandir and Gurdwara was an unforgettable experience for both staff and children. We spent the day exploring Leicester's rich cultural heritage, beginning with the Mandir, where the children were captivated by its enormous size, beauty, and the peaceful atmosphere of the main prayer hall. We then enjoyed lunch at St Philip's Church, surrounded by its beautiful stained-glass windows. The support from the St Philip's Centre throughout the day was outstanding... In the afternoon, we visited the Gurdwara, where the children respectfully wore head coverings and were given a full tour, including the kitchen filled with the wonderful aromas of freshly prepared food. They also had the chance to observe the priest reading from the holy text in the upstairs prayer hall — an experience they may never have again. We would highly recommend the St Philip's Centre for school trips."

In addition, we are currently delivering a series of faith assemblies at Broomfield Primary School.



Supporting the work of St Philip's Centre this Christmas

Did you know you can support the valuable work of the St Philip's Centre every time you shop online?

1.2 million users have helped to support over 100,000 causes, raising over £20million.

Shop with over 3,300 online stores including Amazon, John Lewis, M&S, Next, Viking and Sainsbury's to name but a few.

Find us on www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stphilipscentreltd/ to start.





Connecting Communities

Last Thursday, 27th November, I hosted one of our "Connecting Communities" events. It was one of St Philip's Centre's activities for interfaith week. The theme was "Light in the darkness," and the focus of our discussions was what gives us hope in difficult times. Each of our speakers gave a five-minute presentation of their perspective on the topic. We then split into three groups to take the discussion deeper.



The conversations ranged from the personal to the general and all stages in-between. On a practical note, it worked well to have short presentations followed by spending the majority of the time in group discussions. Most people come to events wanting to talk and listen - and how often do you get to discuss the deep things of life with people you do not know very well?

Two of the St Philip's Centre values are (1) encounter - meeting people you would not otherwise get a chance to know and (2) understanding - comprehending how others see the world. There's no pressure to agree - indeed true relationships of trust (another SPC value) form between people who have worked through their disagreements and are now ready to work together for the good of all.

We'll keep on running more Connecting Communities events in 2026 - let me know if you'd like to be informed of future dates.

Revd Canon Dr Tom Wilson
Director, St Philip's Centre



Earlier this month Jacqui and I attended carbon literacy training, organised by East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire). It was an eye opening day—we've come away with a plan to reduce St Philip's Centre's carbon footprint. Lots to be getting on with!



Funding Support

St. Philip's Centre is grateful for the funding it receives from the following and from many individual supporters, Friends, Associates and Member Churches.

All Saints' Educational Trust
The Anglican Diocese of Leicester
The Garfield Weston Foundation
The Keswick Hall Trust
Active Together
Home Office

The P & C Hickinbotham Charitable Trust
The N C Bellefontaine Trust
The Northampton District of the Methodist Church
The National Lottery Heritage Fund
Leicestershire and Rutland Cricket Foundation



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