



Faiths engage

Monthly Newsletter—Issue 79— May 2026

Welcome to the latest edition of Faiths Engage

Leicester's rich tapestry of stories continues to unfold through our latest events and projects. From Professor Bernard Ryan's exploration of the city's remarkable migration history to the launch of the *Living Together* exhibition, we're celebrating the voices that shape our diverse community. Recent workshops and interfaith encounters have highlighted how young people and trainee teachers alike are engaging with Leicester's unique blend of cultures. Join us as we share, listen and learn from the experiences that make our city extraordinary.

Revd Canon Dr Tom Wilson

Director

St Philip's Centre

From 4% to 41%: Understanding Leicester's Migration Journey

As part of the exhibition of our oral history project at Leicester Cathedral, you are warmly invited to a talk on Leicester's Migration Story, given by Professor Bernard Ryan.

It is on **Thursday 21st May 7pm** (doors open at 6.30pm)

Leicester's foreign-born population rose from 4% in 1961 to 41% in the census of 2021. Bernard will speak on the many layers to history of migration to Leicester behind the headline figures. He will highlight the diverse origins, and the varied legal routes, of those who have moved to the city over the period.

Bernard Ryan is Professor of Migration Law at the University of Leicester. He chairs the University's Migration and Citizenship Network, which promotes research on migration in a range of academic disciplines. His current research interests cover the history of Britain's immigration and nationality law, and immigration policy developments in a time of increasing populism.



Tickets available here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1983860935462?aff=oddtcreator>

ONLY IN LEICESTER

5.30pm—7.00pm, Wednesday 10th June

A celebration of "Only in Leicester" stories - part of the intercultural city project that helps people learn how to live well together.

Leicester is the UK's most ethnically and culturally diverse city. It has seen sustained inward migration for decades, and perhaps even for centuries. According to the 2021 Census, it was the UK's most plural city, with no single religious or ethnic group making up more than 50% of the population. Residents of Leicester speak over a hundred different languages, with just over 4 in 10 people born outside the UK.

It is a young city, with a median age of 33, compared to 40 nationally. Leicester is a melting pot, a blend of cultures, ethnicities, worldviews and experiences, which gives rise to "only in Leicester" experiences. We will share stories and celebrate the diversity of our great city.



Book via Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1987670604284?aff=oddtcreator>



Supporting the work of St Philip's Centre

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.

Corporate News—Faiths and Farming!



In April, we ran some workshops in a unique setting! Our 'Multi Faith Mosaic' engaged with students at Lodge Farm Education – a fantastic setting where students learn practical skills as part of their studies. The session covered elements of Leicester's rich history and provided a platform where students could share their stories about their backgrounds and interests.



Living Together Launches at Leicester Cathedral

A special event took place on Wednesday 22nd April to celebrate the public launch of the Living Together exhibition at Leicester Cathedral.

This marks the next phase of the public outreach programme that forms part of the Living Together oral history project, which saw 103 people interviewed about their experience of and feelings towards Leicester.

Tom Wilson spoke about the project and some of the most interesting insights the interviews brought to the fore. Attendees were able to take a look at the exhibition, listen to clips from the interviews, and contribute their own thoughts and feelings about life in Leicester.

The Living Together exhibition will run at Leicester Cathedral until 31st May, while the concurrent exhibition at Leicester Museum will be available until 21st May. After this, the exhibition will be displayed at a variety of venues across Leicester, including libraries and the Haymarket Shopping Centre.



Celebrating Bobby's Restaurant 50th Birthday with a Chaat Challenge

On Wednesday 29th April, one of the oldest Indian vegetarian restaurants in the UK hosted a special event for schoolchildren as part of their 50th birthday celebrations.

Bobby's Restaurant on Leicester's famous 'Golden Mile' together with staff from St Philip's Centre, welcomed schoolchildren from Nettleham Church of England Primary School in Lincolnshire to take part in an 'Incredible Indian' experience day. The sightseeing tour included a supermarket, saree shop and jewellery stores.

The highlight of the day was the children undertaking a 'Chaat Challenge'. Dharmesh Lakhani, owner of Bobby's, told the story of the dish and provided a demonstration. The children then curated their own versions of the Indian street food delicacy to take home to eat with their families.

Bobby's opened on 14th February 1976 and was named after a famous Bollywood film by the same name. A large mural of the two principal figures from the 1973 movie has been painted outside the restaurant. The wall now serves as a popular selfie site.



Faith, Community and Connection: Police Recruits Reflect on a Powerful Day of Learning

On Thursday 23rd April, Police Recruits were joined by their course Lead, Rich Neal, for an Introduction to Religion and Belief Training at the Gurdwara Guru Panth Parkash on Ashford Road, Leicester.

Some of the feedback we received:

"The Facts of Faith game was a real eye opener. I found it really useful to understand how vast each faith is."

"Really enjoyed today, learnt a ton and it will be hugely helpful moving forward."

"Everyone was super nice and welcoming and related faith to police work which is helpful."

"Refreshments were amazing!"

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my day and have learnt a lot but I feel that there is a lot more to learn, especially with religions that I had never heard of before today."





Opening Doors, Opening Minds: Trainees Reflect on Interfaith Encounters

For the past few years, we have had the privilege of organising our *Places of Peace* visits to places of worship for trainee teachers from Leicester and Leicestershire SCITTs. These visits play a vital role in helping trainees develop an understanding of the diverse faiths and cultures within Leicester and Leicestershire, the communities in which they will be teaching.

St Philip's Centre has been delighted to host these visits, which include a mosque, a synagogue and a church. Below are some reflections from the trainees on their experiences.

 **Thank you** 



To
Saint Philips Centre

A huge thank you to everyone who made today possible, you have made the day really enjoyable, I feel as if I am walking away with so much more knowledge about the different faiths.

I now feel more confident in my own subject knowledge as somebody who does not follow a particular religion.

Continue to do what you do!

from
Madison

 **Thank you** 

Thank you for all the knowledge and experiences you have given us today. It has been truly informative in all areas. You have covered all the misconceptions I had before starting the day.

Sharing Stories Over Shared Tables at Hinckley URC

Surinder, Parbin, Hina, Bhanu and I met Lesley and her lunch club friends at Hinckley URC on a bright but cold April Tuesday. Over a beautifully cooked two course vegetarian lunch, participants had chance to talk to two Faith Practitioners and ask questions about their faith. We felt very welcomed with lots of laughter coming from the four tables. I was sad to hear at the end of the session that the lunch club will be closing due to lack of volunteers. Thank you for the warm welcome.



Cathryn Parsons
Churches Training Officer



Islamic Geometry Takes Centre Stage at Methodist Women's Conference

The Methodist Women in Britain Conference, held at Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick on 11th April was well attended, including the St Philip's Centre workshops. Due to the success of Islamic Geometry at our Family Art day last October, St Philip's Centre invited artist Safira Ali to accompany Cathryn to the conference. Safira delivered two workshops talking about and teaching Islamic Geometric Art. The participant had a go at using a compass for shape making and then painting. Both workshops were popular and oversubscribed! Despite the squeeze, everyone had a good time.





Behind the Scenes: Rehearsals Build Momentum for 20th Anniversary Show

Acts are starting to come together ready for St Philip's Centre 20th Anniversary Concert. It has been a privilege watching rehearsals, seeing how hard the performers are working to make sure we have an innovative and exiting concert.



We would like to invite you to St Philip's Centre
20th Anniversary Concert
6.30pm-8pm Saturday 16th May 2026



Trinity Methodist Church
Oadby,
LE2 4LA
Car Park LE2 5AF



A vibrant celebration of
Living Well Together
Blending different traditions of
singing, dancing and
instrumentals

Book your ticket at: TicketTailor - <https://buytickets.at/stphilipscentre/2096323>



St Philip's Centre
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Free



Leicester Living Together: Belonging and Change

Interactive workshops
exploring what it means to live
and work in Leicester.

5th May: Barriers and Challenges

20th May: Where is home?

15th June: Celebrating Leicester

All workshops are
11:00 - 12:30 at
St Philip's Centre,
2a Stoughton Drive North,
Leicester LE5 5UB

Lunch provided

Please register by emailing director@stphilipscentre.co.uk

Funding Support

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The Anglican Diocese of Leicester
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The Keswick Hall Trust
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The N C Bellefontaine Trust
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Faiths Engage is the newsletter of St Philip's Centre Ltd

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