



Inter faith activity

What follows is a snapshot based on a questionnaire sent out to all circuits in the London District in May 2015. It is intended not only as a way of sharing information about existing activity but also to encourage reflection throughout the District on ways of strengthening our relationships with other faith communities. Updates and additional information are welcome and should be sent to the District Inter-Faith Coordinator, Rev David Musgrave:

davidmusgrave@hotmail.co.uk .

Links between local churches/circuits and other faith communities

Barnet and Queensbury (35): During the follow up to the controversial Methodist Conference Report on Israel and Palestine, Barnet Circuit was at the centre of discussions, protests and bridge building with the Jewish community. **Finchley**: Personal and Church level links to Finchley Progressive, Finchley Reformed Synagogues, Kinloss Synagogue, Finchley Mosque. Personal links with Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg, New North London Synagogue. Rev Michael Giles is joint leader of a very informal group of Christian and Jewish leaders called 'Finchley First' (in response to local concerns). **East Finchley** - a new link has been established with East Finchley Muslim Community Centre. **Trinity Golders Green**: extensive links with local synagogues, including congregational visits to local United Synagogue, demonstration Seder for Christians at Reformed synagogue, support for night shelter (partnership between Reformed Synagogue and Anglican church), shared meetings of minister and rabbi. **Hendon**: assembly on Christmas story at local Muslim Primary School (and plan to visit church in return), visit by Christian leaders to local United Synagogue, yearly Borough Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration at Middlesex University. **East Barnet**: links with local United and other synagogues, visit by Rabbi to Wesley Guild, Rabbi joins with Methodist minister and other clergy & civic leaders in yearly Remembrance Sunday Service held at Methodist Church, multi-faith justice & peace services (which include a Baha'i presence: New Southgate Cemetery in the Borough is a significant centre for Baha'is in Britain.)

Brixton and Streatham (18): developing a new dialogue with a Shia mosque in Streatham and looking at ways of bringing inter faith links into the circuit youth programme.

Forest (33): Leytonstone Church has worked closely with the Faith Communities Police Officer and through this link has shared in Churches Together discussions with Muslim leaders in tackling youth violence in Leytonstone. The Superintendent is the Free Churches' representative on Waltham Forest SACRE and makes contribution to the RE syllabus. Links have been established with Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu and Buddhist representatives. She speaks regularly at Holocaust Memorial Days.

The Superintendent is also a member of Waltham Forest Women's Interfaith Network (WIN). The Leytonstone Methodist Church hosted breakfast before last year's WIN friendship walk – an event which gives opportunity for

members and friends to walk to various places of worship and share their faith. The Council Leader and other councillors are part of the event.

Churches Together in Loughton [CTL] got involved with the national 'Hope not Hate campaign.' This was under the auspices of the Bishop of Barking. Because of BNP action we leafleted widely and had a presence at our local community centre which was the venue for weekly Muslim Friday prayers. In this clergy together with concerned Christians witnessed outside the community centre in solidarity. We are into our second year of a small local group comprising Muslim, Christian and Jewish women. We meet in our Muslim co-founders home; share food and news; silent prayer and follow a thematic programme

Harlesden (13): For the past three years, the church has met with the Harrow Progressive Synagogue and the Ealing Road Central Mosque for a 3 faiths annual conference on the issue of water in Palestine, Israel and Jordan. There is also a pilgrimage every summer to the Holy Land to highlight the issue of water in the political context of the region.

Harrow & Hillingdon (36): Hayes & Hillingdon Area: Rev Helen Watson has been a speaker at the local mosque and involved in worship at a synagogue, involved in the 'faith in schools' lessons in many schools in the Hillingdon Borough and at Uxbridge College over the last 5 years. Recently she has also been running a radio show for Hayes FM, interviewing members of various faiths on a variety of topics. **North Harrow Methodist Church:** Richard Reid (local preacher) and Rev John Swarbrick represent North Harrow Methodist church at regular meetings with representatives from St Alban's Church of England and from the Shia Muslim community (SICM) currently meeting in temporary premises in North Harrow. **Northwood Methodist Church** has links with Northwood & Pinner Liberal Synagogue. At **Christ Church** one member is cultivating links with a local Mosque.

Kingston-upon-Thames (38): There is an Invitation each year for ministers and lay delegates to attend a Holocaust Memorial Service at the local Orthodox synagogue; during 2009/2010 the circuit participated in and hosted some conversations around the Israel/Palestine issue from the Methodist Conference.

Lesnes Abbey (30): Most of the circuit churches are keenly involved in churches together and also with other faiths. There are hopes of doing community outreach projects together, and of involving youth.

Newham (20): The Community Centre at Harold Road, Upton Park, is engaged in community development and has link with a lot of people from other faiths. The circuit is also involved with the Faith Space at the Westfield Shopping Centre in Stratford. There are hopes of developing a women's group in East Ham.

Sutton (39): Sutton Trinity Church have a general interest in developing links with other faith communities and have visited a Synagogue, Mosque and Buddhist temple

West London Mission (2): The Westminster Winter Night Shelter is run by six churches and the West London Synagogue. Each November the Marylebone inter-faith service is held, organised by the Marylebone Society and local Councillors, and hosted by a different faith group each year.

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Inter faith networks (eg borough level)

Barnet Multi Faith forum: Rev Shaun Sanders is the treasurer. Involved with the emergency plan, recently agreed a covenant with Barnet Council and in 2016 plan to hold a Faith Festival.

Brent Multi Faith Forum: Rev Leao Neto is part of the Steering Group. The forum engages in monthly conversations with different departments of the Council, trying to bring to them the views from the religious communities. They also run a course for the police on how to relate to religious communities. A Brent wide voters registration event and a hustings in 2015 both happened at the Methodist Church in Harlesden. There are several on going training courses on engaging with Social Isolation and Pastoral Care, on Mental Health, on relating to the provision for Social Care.

Barking Borough Faith forum (Rev Stephen Poole is a member)

Camden Faith Leaders' Group: Rev Timothy Bradshaw attends regularly.

Epping Forest District Council Interfaith Forum: This small Local Authority group met between 2007 and 2011. Part of its work was input into the Chairman's annual service; public activities; running a stall at Epping Town Show. At the beginning of the economic/ financial crisis [2009] the Forum held an evening to discuss what faith communities might do to help those in need. The Forum planned an offer to Primary and Secondary Schools which, though it didn't come to fruition, had been in co-operation with the RE advisor.

Harrow Interfaith council is not particularly active or dynamic. Rev John Swarbrick & Rev Sue Male have spoken about making links between the North Harrow group and the Three Faiths Forum (Jewish-Christian-Muslim) in Pinner.

Hillingdon Inter Faith Network involves at least one minister and two Local Preachers. Involvement includes working in multi-faith teams which visit local schools. One of the ministers was also involved in supporting families whose children had run off to Syria.

Islington Faiths Forum : Rev Jennifer Potter is current Chair.

Kingston-upon-Thames: Rev Bonni-Belle Pickard is currently a member of the **Interfaith Forum** of the Royal Borough.

Lambeth Faiths Together in Lambeth (Rev David Musgrave is a member of the managing committee). An annual Inter Faith Walk is held in a different part of the Borough, as well as a number of other public activities, including election hustings. There are regular meetings with the Borough Police commander.

Lewisham: **Regular inter-faith meetings** in Lewisham are arranged under the auspices of the police; on 31 May 2015 an Interfaith Walk of Peace took place in Lewisham

Newham: **Three Faiths Forum** (Redbridge, Newham and Forest), Faithful Friends. (Forest Gate, Newham), TELCO.

Sutton: There is a **Faith and Belief Forum** in Sutton Borough

Wandsworth: Rev Richard Grocott is a member of Wandsworth Council's '**Multi faith leaders group**'

Westminster: Rev Val Reid is a Free Churches Representative to **SACRE**

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Involvement in inter faith chaplaincy

Work in Multi-Faith Chaplaincy at **City University** (Rev Ian Worsfold)

Lesnes Abbey: active part in **Prayer space at O2**, an Interfaith project. Rev Hayford Ofori-Attah is Chair.

Rev Michael Giles is the Free Church Chaplain at the **North London Hospice**, an Inter Faith Chaplaincy.

Heathrow multi-faith chaplaincy: Rev Nick Skelding is one of the Chaplains and they have a monthly team meeting for chaplains of all faiths and there are friendly relationships but no serious dialogue about faith issues.

Individual Methodists involved or interested in inter faith relations

Barnet: Rev Shaun Sanders, Rev David Newton, Rev Colin Smith.

Brixton & Streatham: Rev David Musgrave

Forest: Barbara Holden, Angela Aldred, Gill Webster

Harlesden: Rev Leao Neto

Harrow & Hillingdon: Joy Barrow

Kingston-upon-Thames: Rev Dr Stan Brown (from Sept 2015)

Newham: Rev Nicola Vidamour, Deacon Debbie Buckley, David Mensah

Sutton: Rev Des Williamson (AM)

West London Mission: Rev Val Reid

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