

The Parish Church of St Anne, Kew



SOCIAL JUSTICE FORUM

Year 1: Fourth meeting. Saturday 15 October, 2016, 10-12.

FOCUS on REFUGEES 4

Programme

1. Welcome, introductions, guide to session and update
2. Liturgy
3. Study
4. Silent prayer and reflection
5. Reporting on action
6. Review of year and looking forward
7. Closing prayers

UPDATE SINCE MAY

22 June	Prayer vigil during Refugee Week under the auspices of Churches Together in Kew.
30 June	Refugees Welcome in Richmond Event at St Mary's University, Strawberry Hill, attended by about 150 people.
8 September	First meeting with Breaking Barriers, charity helping refugees find appropriate employment
19 September	Second meeting with Breaking Barriers.
1 October	Harvest Festival Supper provided by the Chickpea Sisters via CARAS*
2 October	Harvest Festival services. Special preacher: Canon Nicholas Sagovsky, who has been closely involved with refugees and asylum seekers in the UK.
2 October	Harvest Festival special collection for CARAS*

* Community Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers, the Tooting based charity of which Judith Evans is a patron.

LITURGY (leader in **bold**) *The liturgy is based on 'Love in action', from the Corrymeela Community worship book.*

Leader: God, you are love itself.

All: You have shown yourself to us in many ways – all of which speak of love.

Leader: Let us give thanks for the Prayer Vigil in Refugee Week, for the Refugees Welcome in Richmond event and for our Harvest Supper and Harvest Services this month.

All: Loving God, we give thanks for the work of your Holy Spirit among us. Open our ears to hear your call and open our hearts to respond.

Leader: Let us give thanks for the work of CARAS, for the Chickpea Sisters and for all the new people we met through our Harvest Supper.

All: Loving God, we give thanks for the work of your Holy Spirit among us. Open our ears to hear your call and open our hearts to respond.

Leader: Let us give thanks for the ministry of Nicholas Sagovsky, our preacher on Sunday, and for all he has done to help refugees and asylum seekers

All: Loving God, we give thanks for the work of your Holy Spirit among us. Open our ears to hear your call and open our hearts to respond.

Leader: This is the commandment Jesus gives us: we who love God must love our sisters and brothers too. We say slowly:

All: Loving God, we confess that we are often selfish and unloving. We have not loved You with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbour as ourself. Renew us with your love Lord. Free us to say to the stranger: 'here is one who will increase our love'.

Leader: Loving God, give us a vision of our world as your love would make it. We say together slowly:

All: A world where the weak are protected rather than exploited, and none go hungry or poor;

A world where the benefits and resources of the world are shared, and everyone can enjoy them;

A world where different nations, races and cultures live in tolerance and mutual respect;

A world where peace is built with justice, and justice is guided by love;

And give us the courage and inspiration to build it,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

STUDY: extracts from Canon Nicholas Sagovsky's Harvest sermon:
Deuteronomy 26 v. 1-11; Hebrews 13 v. 1-4, 6; Luke 10 v. 25-37

SILENT PRAYER AND REFLECTION

Prayers

Loving God, we give you thanks for all the people we are coming across who are witnessing to the justice, kindness and humble walking with you to which you are calling us. We pray for them and for the coming of your Kingdom, in the name of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen

Merciful God, we pray for all whose desperation leads them to the sea, to undertake perilous voyages, often following dangerous land journeys -those escaping brutal wars -those fleeing religious persecution -those escaping climate disasters and economic ruin -those looking for hope in a hopeless situation. May we look beyond our own fears and concerns to the needs of those who have nothing, risk everything and depend on the kindness of strangers. May our hearts be opened, our leaders be challenged and our self-interest be called out, in Jesus' name. Amen

Glory to God, whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: glory to him from generation to generation in the church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. *Ephesians 3 v 20-21*

Reflections

In the tender compassion of our God, the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace. *Benedictus, v 9-10*

Peace is the fruit of an anxious daily care to see that each person lives in the justice that God intends. *Pope Paul VI, 1967*

The love of Christ compels us: we are ambassadors for him.

2 Corinthians 5, v 14 ,20.

All the flowers of all the tomorrows are in the seeds of today.

REPORTING ON ACTION

1. Breaking Barriers <http://www.breaking-barriers.co.uk/>

A note from Sally Cannon: In all, our group over the two meetings comprised 15 people, a few of whom were from St Anne's. Of the people who went to the meetings, at least 12 have now volunteered or already started to support

the charity. Volunteers are now working directly with refugees at a centre in Clapham Junction, usually on a Thursday and I will be doing the same when I return from holiday. .. They are a very new organisation that is having to develop very quickly to meet the needs of their clients at the same time as meeting the requirements of their funding streams.”

2. CARAS (Community Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers)

www.caras.org.uk

Following the Harvest Supper, Judith Evans received this email from Zara Hosany who chairs the CARAS trustees:

“Thank you so much for bringing us together which such wonderful, thoughtful and caring people... What a fabulous event. On behalf of all who all within the community of CARAS, Jess, Kwasi, Rosie and The Chickpea Sisters thank you from the bottom of our hearts. I also had some moving conversations with a few people about what next. I'm wondering if the group had an aim they were working towards achieving or anything specific they wanted to do or were interested in?”

3. THE QUEEN'S SCHOOL, a note from Churches Together in Kew

“A group at Queen's School, Kew are organising a collection of clothes and toiletries on October 20th. They will then be packing and sending them on to displaced persons in the Syrian area. They are also looking for banana crates for supermarkets as evidently these are the right size to pack on the lorries.

They will need help sorting and packing on either 20th or Friday 21st. Venue tbc. If you would like to help in any way, please contact the organiser direct: Marie on 07817981044

marie.dargelos@gmail.com “

4. Refugees Welcome in Richmond (RWinR)

http://www.refugeeswelcomeinrichmond.org/properties/ . This is the initiative in which Churches Together in Kew (CTinK) are involved, to try, with the support of Richmond Council, to find private rented housing in our borough for 50 Syrian refugee households, currently living in refugee camps as there is nowhere for them to go. The Council has appointed a Project Support officer, Ketna Gohil. Two properties have been offered, and the Council is working with the Home Office and UNHCR to make things happen. Ketna has asked that RWinR should continue to help in two ways:

a) To find more rental properties for Syrian families within LBRuT. It was agreed that local faith groups & churches may have information about potential landlords and various people offered to make contact in their local area; Valerie Booth, Chair of Churches Together in Kew, and a member of St Winefride's congregation is our liaison person.

b) To let Ketna know about support available for the refugees when they arrive. **Valerie Booth has suggested that we should let Ketna know about our links with Breaking Barriers and their work.**

It is also helpful to look at the national Refugees Welcome website:
<http://www.refugees-welcome.org.uk/>

*Next Meeting of Refugees Welcome in Richmond: Thursday 10th November
7.30pm – 9.00pm, in the Terrace Room, York House*

CLOSING PRAYER: the Lord's Prayer together (slowly!).

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. Faith leaders letter to the Prime Minister in September 2016, signed by 224 faith leaders in the UK

We are leaders from Britain's major faiths: Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Zoroastrian. All our faiths compel us to affirm the dignity of all human beings and to offer help to anyone in need. As people of faith, we call on your Government urgently to revise its policy towards refugees. The best of this country is represented by the generosity, kindness, solidarity and decency that Britain has at many times shown those fleeing persecution, even at times of far greater deprivation and difficulty than the present day. We rejoice in the mosaic of different faiths and British communities that we now represent. We are proud that in May 2016, in a survey by Amnesty International, 83% of Britons said they would welcome refugees into their neighbourhoods and households.

In the face of the unfolding human catastrophe, there are immediate and viable steps that the Government can take to offer sanctuary to more refugees. We call on you to create safe, legal routes of travel, for example by adopting fair and humane family reunion policies for refugees. Under the present immigration rules, a British doctor of Syrian origin could not bring her parents from a refugee camp in Lebanon – even though they were refugees and she could support and house them. A Syrian child who arrived alone in the UK could not bring his parents from a refugee camp in Jordan – even if the child were recognised a refugee and even though his parents were themselves refugees. Families in these situations can currently be reunited only by resorting to desperately unsafe irregular journeys, sometimes ending in avoidable tragedies.

We urge you to do more to welcome refugees and to ensure that your Government adheres to four refugee principles. These principles have already been endorsed by over three hundred and fifty judges and lawyers; by the main humanitarian aid and refugee agencies; and by over a hundred and twenty-five economists. These four principles were the 'charter' of a

demonstration last September 2015 attended by 90,000 people. On 17 September, these four refugee principles will underpin another major demonstration in London in support of refugees:

1. The UK should take a fair and proportionate share of refugees, both those already within Europe and those still outside it.
2. Safe and legal routes to the UK, as well as to the rest of Europe, need to be established.
3. Safe and legal routes within Europe, including the UK, should be established.
4. There should be access to fair and thorough procedures to determine eligibility for international protection wherever it is sought.

All our faiths teach us to alleviate suffering and share with those in need; many of our members and congregants are already active in helping refugees. We call on the Government to do more.

2. Community Sponsorship Scheme

The Archbishop of Canterbury has welcomed a new scheme to allow community groups to directly sponsor a refugee family. The scheme will enable charities, faith groups, churches and businesses to take on the role of supporting resettled refugees in the UK. Archbishop Justin Welby said the scheme would allow churches and other civil society groups “to provide sanctuary to those fleeing war-torn places ... The Full Community Sponsorship Scheme presents churches and other civil society groups with the opportunity to provide sanctuary to those fleeing war-torn places. Refugees, like all people, are treasured human beings made in the image of God who deserve safety, freedom and the opportunity to flourish. It is an enormous privilege to welcome a family to live in a cottage in the grounds of Lambeth Palace. I am hugely grateful to the Home Office and Lambeth Council for their tireless work and support in enabling this to happen.”

Downloaded 29 July 2016

www.localgov.co.uk/Community-sponsorship-scheme-to-support-refugees.../41285

3. Migration Museum Project.

The Migration Museum Project plans to create the UK’s first dedicated Migration Museum and to tell the story of movement into and out of the UK in a fresh and engaging way. The museum will be an enquiry into who we are, where we came from and where we are going. Britons at home and abroad have a shared cultural history and an exciting future. The museum aims to represent the thrilling tales, the emotion and the history that have gone into shaping our national fabric; it aims to be the museum of all our stories. The museum website is full of interesting material.

<http://migrationmuseum.org/>

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

26 November 2016	Next Social Justice Forum meeting with a talk by Judge John Manuell
11 February 2017	Social Justice Forum meeting
20 May 2017	Social Justice Forum meeting – three hours of prayer led by Sister Sue, Society of St Francis.
24-26 May 2017	Understanding Islam, three day course by Chris Hower, in Kew (eight places available)
June 2017	Refugee Week 2017