



Concord

LEEDS INTERFAITH FELLOWSHIP
www.concord-leeds.org.uk

Newsletter - July 2007

Understanding Christian Scriptures

WE GATHERED on 24th April for the second meeting in our series on the scriptures of the faiths. This time the Christian scriptures were the focus of attention in a joint presentation by two of our members; John Summerwill (Methodist Local Preacher and RE Teacher) and Trevor Bates (Retired Methodist Minister) speaking from their deep knowledge and practice.

However interesting a topic might be, two hours of solid talking would have been daunting, but the presentation was enlivened by the alternation of voices; question breaks; and some final sharing and discussion in small groups.

The Christian faith is probably unique in its felt need to translate afresh the earliest versions of its scripture into the language of the day, and to take account of newly discovered early texts. John made this point as he stood behind a stack of bibles in versions ranging from the 'King James Bible' of 1611, and its revision of 1881/84, to the many translations and paraphrases in modern English which came later. These were all versions which he had acquired and used

from and including his schooldays. In addition he brought the complete Bible in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek. All of these were passed round the room for inspection. We then heard variously from both speakers how Christians regard the Bible, how they use it, what different types of literature it contains, and finally, of its importance for Christians in what it says and reveals about Jesus to inspire and nurture their faith.

This was a very good meeting, continuing the high standard set by Rabbi Jason Kleiman in the first meeting.

Peter Dale

John Summerwill & Trevor Bates





Understanding the Qur'an

THE third meeting in our Understanding Scriptures Series was almost a disaster when the 30-or-so people who came for it found themselves locked out of Thomas Danby College! Although the room had been booked, the College was closed for half term. The day was saved by Dr Hassan Alkatib, who invited us to the Grand Mosque. Piled into cars, we crossed the city to Burley, where we were warmly welcomed and given a comfortable space. It was appropriate—perhaps providential—that the talk on the Qur'an was given in a mosque.

The imam of the nearby Makkah Mosque, Qari Asim, gave us a very well organised, clear and comprehensive introduction to the Qur'an, explaining how the revelation came to the Prophet Muhammad and how eventually it came to be written down. He illustrated its structure and character, the different themes which it teaches, the ways in which it is interpreted and applied,

and its immense importance in Muslim faith, worship and daily life. Copies of translations and commentaries were passed around, and Asim gave us extensive printed notes to take away and read at leisure. There was plenty of opportunity for questions and discussion, making a very interesting and worthwhile meeting.

We are most grateful to Asim for his talk and to the good people of the Grand Mosque for their generous hospitality.



Leeds Faiths Forum AGM

TUESDAY July 3rd saw a large turnout for the Annual General Meeting of Leeds Faiths Forum in St Anne's Cathedral Centre. David Jackson, the Interfaith Co-ordinator for the Catholic Diocese of Leeds, spoke of Multifaith Relations in a Changing World, the problems faced and the way forward. Dr Hassan Alkatib gave an outline of LFF's achievements over the past year and

Afshan Tabassum provided a powerpoint presentation of her work as Development Worker.

This was followed by the election of Board Members, including Joyce Sundram as the Concord representative. Finally thanks and good wishes were expressed to out-going members, Revd David Randolph-Horn and Joan Gardner, and special thanks went to Afshan Tabassum and Ian Owers. *Cynthia Dickinson*

Singing in the Synagogue

It was a smaller than usual gathering of Concord members and friends for the visit to Street Lane Synagogue on June 6th, but those who missed it missed a treat. We were given an excellent talk by Michael Surr about the history of the synagogue, its design features, the worship that takes place there, and about its place in the life of the Jewish community in Moortown. This very fine building is really rather too big now for a diminishing community, but it remains very important as the place where the significant events in Jewish family life—circumcisions, bar mitzvahs, weddings,

the commemoration of the dead, and festivals are celebrated, as well as the place of daily and Shabbat prayers, a house of study and a social centre.

Our visit coincided with the regular choir practice, and so as a bonus we had a performance from the unaccompanied male choir of a number of songs which are sung in worship—melodious, harmonious, with catchy rhythms, and with that very distinctive minor-major, bitter-sweet character that tugs at the emotions even though one does not understand the Hebrew words.

John Summerwill

LEEDS
International Jewish
Performing Arts Festival
European Day of Jewish
Culture and Heritage
2007

Sunday September 2nd
—Thursday September
6th at Carriage Works,
Millennium Square and
Marjorie & Arnold Ziff
Community Centre, 311
Stonegate Road LS17

A celebration of Jewish
theatre, music and arts.
Contact Makor
Productions
0113 268 0899

BRADFORD
SYNAGOGUE,
7a Bowland Street BD1.
A little known 1880s
Moorish gem. Tour the
Synagogue and
Artefacts. **Sunday 2nd**
September 10.30am -
3pm



Above: the Synagogue Choir

Below: Michael Surr talks to the Concord members at the Synagogue.



Walk of Friendship 5th May 2007

ABOUT 100 people took part in Concord's second Walk of Friendship, this time in the Chapeltown area, the first event of the Treasures in Leeds week.

The starting point was the Catholic Church of Our Lady and St Stanislaw,



home to Leeds' large and growing Polish community, where we were welcomed. The Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Muhammad Iqbal, and Labour MP Fabian Hamilton led the walk down Harrogate Road to the mainly Caribbean Pentecostal Church of God of Prophecy.





Speeches were made at the splendid purpose-built Sikh Temple, where the crowd were also generously fed in the Langar.

The next part of the walk took us to Spencer Place and the Leeds Central Mosque. The imam spoke about Muslim understandings of Jesus.



The last place on the route was St Aidan's Church (Church of England), a fine Victorian building with some remarkable mosaics by artist Frank Brangwyn.



More pictures in colour on our website

Notes from the AGM

THIS year's AGM, held on June 27th at the Friends' Meeting House, started with an informal talk by Jill Mann (Together for Peace) and two 'PeaceJam' girls, Martha and Sukhmani). Supported by donations from Concord, they had attended the 10th Anniversary PeaceJam event in Denver, Colorado, last September and spoke of the inspiration from Nobel Peace Laureates, particularly Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Jody Williams. Both girls found the experience life-changing and are determined to continue working for peace in their schools and at the Together for Peace festival in November.

Jill Mann gave us some general information on Together for Peace and told us they are hoping to raise funds that will enable more young people to participate in Peace-Jam Costa Rica 2008.

Jill can be contacted by phone 0113 3508085 or info@togetherforpeace.co.uk

After a short break for refreshments we continued with our business meeting. The first issue raised was that of Pagans being included on the Yorkshire & Humber Faiths Forum Council. Talks are on-going between our two organisations and the matter has been discussed by Y&HFF; they are, for the time being, restricting Council membership to the nine faiths recognised by the Inter Faith Network UK.

Reports from the Secretary and Treasurer were accepted and it was noted how much has been achieved over the past year.

Existing Executive Committee members have agreed to continue for another year and two new members, Jennifer Anderson and Dr Hamed Pakrooh, were elected.

The committee for 2007/8 is:-

Chair - Dr Sewa Singh Kalsi;
Secretary - Cynthia Dickinson;
Treasurer - Stephen Tucker;

Membership/Newsletter - John Summerwill;
Publicity - Jennifer Anderson.

Members: Ethel Baker, Elizabeth Bernheim, David Hick, Hardeep Kaur Kalsi, Dr Hamed Pakrooh and Joyce Sundram.

The Council of Faiths also has two new members, Dr Kenneth Firth and Carol Wise:

Brahma Kumaris - David Goodman;
Buddhist - Ruth Stocks;
Hindu - Lalita & Suresh Kanvinde;
Christian - John Fountain and Dr Kenneth Firth;
Christian Scientist - Anne Mepham;
Pagan - Pippa Lee Meer;
Quaker - Carol Wise.

It was noted that we still do not have a representative from the Muslim faith community on either the Committee or Council of Faiths although we do have friendly relations with several Leeds Mosques. The Islamic community is an important part of the city so all members are encouraged to invite their Muslim friends to join us.

Dr Kalsi announced plans for a Peter Bell Memorial Dinner to take place early next year.

Finally there were two interesting suggestions from the floor: one was to have 'interviews' with members of Concord printed in the newsletter; and the other, following from our recent visit to the Synagogue, was for Concord to arrange for members to experience actual services at different places of worship.

Cynthia Dickinson



Concord Programme for Autumn 2007

Sunday 5th August 2.00 pm

PICNIC FOR PEACE – Hiroshima & Nagasaki Remembrance

Bring & share vegetarian food and soft drinks. Meet at 'bandstand' between Mansion & Upper Lake, Roundhay Park

Thursday 6th September 7.00 pm at Friends' Meeting House, Carlton Hill
FOOD, FEASTS AND FASTING FROM A JEWISH PERSPECTIVE

Monday 24th September 7.00 pm in the Beech Room at Thomas Danby College
An introduction to the HINDU SCRIPTURES, looking at some specific passages and their importance for today's faith community

Wednesday 17th October 7.00 pm in the Banquet Suite at Leeds Civic Hall
ANNUAL PEACE SERVICE, with Leeds Peacelink

Monday 29th October 7.00 pm in the Beech Room at Thomas Danby College
An introduction to the BUDDHIST SCRIPTURES, looking at some specific passages and their importance for today's faith community

Monday 26th November 7.00 pm in the Beech Room at Thomas Danby College
An introduction to the SIKH SCRIPTURES, looking at some specific passages and their importance for today's faith community

Other Events of Interest to Concord Members

- **Wednesday 8th August** at Mariners' Resource Centre Leeds 11
Celebrate Multicultural Leeds—Diversity, Respect, Inclusion, Friendship and Harmony. Contact Sue Burkill or Catherine Loftus on 0113 246 8982
- **Saturday 8th September** in the City Centre
Planet Leeds—celebrate our city of global culture – bring music, dance and theatre to the city centre for a day long street festival. Phone Pete or Sarah 0113 2162367 e-mail s.frith@parklanecoll@ac.yk
- **Tuesday 18 September 11.00 am—1.30pm** in Leeds Church Institute.
Planning meeting for **Treasures Revealed in Leeds 2008**. Lunch included.
- **Wednesday 10th to Friday 12th October** at Leeds Parish Church
The Leeds Pageant—the story of the city and its people of faith, from its mysterious origins to its future as an international city of peace. From spectacle to stark intimacy this production will combine the creative flare of professionals and amateurs alike. Drawn from a variety of communities this epic tale will weave together the many voices of Leeds as the bubbling river weaves through the heart of the city. www.celebrateleeds07.com/leeds-pageant

Interfaith Calendar Autumn 2007

AUGUST

2	Lughnassad	Pagan
11	Lailat al Miraj	Muslim
28	Raksha Bandhan	Hindu

SEPTEMBER

3-4	Krishna Jayanto	Hindu
9	Racial Justice Sunday	Christian
13-14	Rosh Hashanah	Jewish
13	Ramadan begins	Muslim
15	Ganesh Chaturthi	Hindu
21	Autumn Equinox	Pagan
22	Yom Kippur	Jewish
27-3 Oct	Sukkot	Jewish

OCTOBER

4	Shemini Atzeret	Jewish
5	Simchat Torah	Jewish
9	Laylat ul Qadr	Muslim
11-19	Navaratri & Durgapuja	Hindu
13	Eid ul Fitr	Muslim
20	Birth of the Bab	Baha'i
	Installation of the Guru Granth	Sikh
21	Dassehra	Hindu
21-28	One World Week / Week of Prayer for World Peace	
27	Sangha Day	Buddhist

NOVEMBER

1	All Saints' Day	Christian
	Samhain	Pagan
5	Kathina Day	Buddhist
9	Diwali	Hindu, Sikh
11	Remembrance Sunday	
12	Birthday of Baha'u'llah	Baha'i
24	Guru Tegh Bahadur Martyrdom	
	Birthday of Guru Nanak	Sikh
26	Day of Covenant	Baha'i
28	Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Baha	Baha'i

DECEMBER

2	Beginning of Advent	Christian
5-12	Hanukkah	Jewish
8	Bodhi Day	Buddhist
12	Hajj begins	Muslim
20	Eid ul Adha	Muslim
21	Yule	Pagan
25	Christmas	Christian

Treasures Revealed in Leeds 2008

(organised by the Churches Regional
Commission)

AFTER another very successful Treasures Revealed in Leeds, in which Concord took a very active part, plans are already under way for next year's event to take place between Saturday May 3rd and Sunday May 11th 2008.

Concord's Walk of Friendship 2007 in Chapeltown was billed as the "Inaugural Event". Hopefully we can do the same next year in the south of the city, linking places of worship in the Beeston area.

Both CRC and Concord would like to see even more 'Treasures' from different faith communities. While there were some mosques and gurdwaras and even a Pagan stone circle involved this year, there could be more. Many people are interested in visiting synagogues, Hindu temples, Buddhist, Brahma Kumaris or Baha'i meeting places, as well as different denominations within the Christian faith.

The next planning meeting will be on Tuesday 18th September at 11.00 am in the Leeds Church Institute, New Market Street (opposite the Corn Exchange). If you would like your place of worship to be involved—and it only needs to be for an hour or so on the day of your choice—just let CRC know.

info@crc-online.org.uk 0113 244 3413

Cynthia

*This newsletter edited by
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