



# Concord

LEEDS INTERFAITH FELLOWSHIP  
[www.concord-leeds.org.uk](http://www.concord-leeds.org.uk)  
Reg. Charity No 516339

and LEEDS CITY COUNCIL  
PEACELINK GROUP



## The Annual Inter-Faith Peace Service

Wednesday 18th October 2017  
The Banquet Hall, Leeds Civic Hall

Welcome to the Annual Inter-Faith Peace Service, which has been organised by Concord in conjunction with Peacelink.

We are grateful to Leeds City Council for the use of the Civic Hall and to Councillor David Blackburn, Chair of the Peacelink Group, for his help and participation.

Thank you for your attendance.



We hope you will show your appreciation by putting a donation in the bucket at the door on your way out for the Lord's Mayor's Charity Appeal. *Candlelighters* supports families in which a child has cancer. Donations will be used to renovate a cottage used by families whilst a child is in Leeds Children's Hospital for treatment.



## Order of Service

*Music will be played and images projected by Leeds Brahma Kumaris before the service begins.*

- Welcome by John Summerwill, Co-Chair of Concord
- John Summerwill introduces Councillor David Blackburn
- Brief address by Councillor Blackburn, who leads the—

**THANKSGIVING PRAYER** by Revd Dr Deborah Clark)  
*(audience please say the words in **bold print**)*

We give you thanks, Holy Creator, for the wondrous diversity of your creation;  
rainforest and desert,  
snowstorm and sunshine,  
ant and whale.

We give you thanks for the wondrous diversity of your people;  
for the beauty of our many colours, sizes, and shapes,  
for the richness of our languages,  
for the different ways you have revealed your truth to us.

**Teach us to value all your creation.**

We give you thanks, Majestic One, for the freedom to worship you;  
for music which awakens us to your beauty,  
for scripture which teaches us how to live,  
for prayer which assures us of your presence,  
for community which strengthens our faith.

**May we worship you with our whole selves.**

We give you thanks, Source of blessing, for the gift of each other:  
for the love and encouragement we offer one another,  
for the chance to learn from one another,  
for the ways we challenge each other to move beyond our narrow vision.

**May we treasure one another.**

We give you thanks, You who call us, for the opportunity to serve:  
for your commandment to love our neighbour,  
for the ways you call us to share your truth,  
for hands and minds and hearts and talents,  
for the capacity to make a difference,  
for friends and neighbours who work beside us.

**May we serve you faithfully.**

We give you thanks, Source of all that is possible, for promises not yet come to fruition:  
for the dream of peace,  
for the vision of a world where no one goes hungry.  
for gifts yet to be developed,  
for the capacity to learn and grow and change.

**Help us move toward your future with hope.  
We give you thanks, Source of life, for all your wondrous gifts.  
Awaken us to deeper gratitude every day of our lives.**

- Students from Abbey Grange CofE Academy — Uwais Aziz, Jemima Bailey, Rachel Hall, Elijah Hubbard, Mohsin Janghir, Michaela Moore, Elijah Taylor, Abby Warner — share their thoughts on Peace. Arranged by the Chaplain, Kay Brown.

### **Peace speech**

My name is Rachel and I am Head Girl of Abbey Grange.

Peace is an overwhelming word – never mind an overwhelming idea.

[The biblical concept of Shalom is much than just the absence of war or struggle; it includes harmonious relationships, social justice and material prosperity for all.]

Richard Georges wrote a poem called ‘Oceans’. The first line reads like this

“I once tried to hold the ocean in my hands, in a glass”

He describes wanting to roll an ocean into a ball in his hands – to hold it up to his eye and inspect it.

This is what we tend to do with peace. We pull it apart – turn it into something small and controllable because the larger version is “too much”.

The ocean is loud and roaring – it breaks buildings and is home to thousands of different kinds of sea creatures – that is a mighty force.

Peace is a mighty force and we’re terrified of it. We tend to take it less seriously once we have downsized it, once we ignore it and say “Oh well, I can’t do anything about that.” Once we decide that we are too small and that it’s some other guy’s job, it becomes less scary.

We tend to put it on the back burner because even then because we still don’t know what to do with it. You’ve hired this guy to do your job for you but can you trust him? Does he check out?

Peace is too big of an ocean, too big of challenge for just me or just you to comprehend. If you came into work one day and your boss asked you to “solve peace today” – you’d resign or give it a try and give up eventually.

We cannot ignore peace, it’s a necessity. So actually, taking a small glass of water and attempting to understand it – isn’t a bad idea. World wide, universal peace is too big.

We as a community at Abbey Grange recognise this, we asked two questions to try and understand peace in everyday community, as we believe that this is the best place to start.

What one thing could you change in your life for peace?

and Who would you be if you were working for peace?

Here are some more responses to the question 'What one thing could you change in your life for peace?'

I could go to church and learn more about it

I could stop arguing with my family

A gentle answer quiets anger, but a harsh one stirs it up. (Proverbs 15)

I could encourage people to accept the diversity between the different faiths and also the different types of cultures

I could try to get along with everyone and support anyone who needs help in and out of school

And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. (Luke 6)

I could always be honest

An honest answer is a sign of true friendship (Proverbs 19)

I could not retaliate when my sister winds me up

I could change other people's environment, bringing them closer to their inner peace, instead of searching for it externally.

The Greek word Sophrosyne means a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and a deep awareness of one's true self, and resulting in true happiness.

What would you be if you were working for peace?

I would be a leader of a charity so I can use money to change peace locally and my charity could be promoted nationally

I would be a member of parliament because I could try to make a difference in the government

I would make a charity to help everyone who is in unfortunate circumstances, for example I would try to help the people of Burma who are very unlucky

I would be a national leader because I could control war so there would be no fighting and there will be peace instead

I would be a vicar so I could spread peace across the church and preach about peace to the members of the congregation, helping people to understand it with a Christian point of view

I would stop wars

I would be a doctor and help everyone have an equal chance at life and be helped

I would be a people's champion, because I know what it's like to be at the bottom and isolated, so I would fight for mine and society's rights by exploring and unlocking the truth

'Hi, I'm Mohsin, Mohsin Janghir. Hope you all are enjoying yourselves, being peaceful. After having reflected upon the video and the other ideas, as all of you are older than the children in the video, and myself, I'd like for you to

think to yourself, just for a minute, about these questions, and how they'd impact YOUR life. Would they change who you are? Would you hang around with different people? Would your environment change? I know they're big questions, but as mature adults, we can all comprehend change and adaptability, so I ask you, what's one thing you can adapt to bring greater peace in your life, and reflecting upon that change, who would you want to be?'

Thank you for listening.

- Sue Owen briefly explains The World Peace Flame ®

## World Peace Flame

Firstly, I would like to thank Concord Interfaith for all their continued work, thank you. Thank you also Cllr Blackburn for all your dedicated support and hard work for both Peacelink and the City of Leeds. It is a great pleasure and honour to be part of this special service, as we have been for many years now with the World Peace Flame. I believe the WPF represents the light and peace which resides in each one of us, a representation of who we really are at the core of our being. I am delighted to announce for anyone who may not know—but most people who know me can't help but know—Leeds now burns a permanent public WPF in Garforth. On the 28th April, with the support of our two local councillors, Cllr. Mark Dobson and Cllr. Sarah Field, and along with Garforth in Bloom and The Garforth and District Lions, Garforth installed and lit England's first public World Peace Flame Monument. This was an amazing community project, in which Garforth in Bloom not only donated funds alongside our other supporters, but provided a beautiful space within the Garforth Diamond Jubilee Garden where the first World Peace Flame in England shines its light of peace far and wide. We believe the monument will become the catalyst for more towns, villages and suburbs to want their own piece of peace and the opportunity to come

together as a community. We are already thrilled at the response in Garforth, and its influence has already led to our two local adjoining villages contacting us to start their own projects with the intention of having their own public World Peace Flames, by next year.

Next year of course being 2018 and the 100 year anniversary of the end of WW1. York Minster intends to display the WPF in one of their chapels for the whole of the year as a dedication to peace. I believe we can all become the peace we wish to see in the world, and gatherings like this, where we can honour and respect each other and each other's beliefs in Peace is where it can all start. I invite you all to take several WPF candles away with you today, even if you have taken one previously, and pass these on to friends, family, colleagues, anyone who may be troubled, and in need of peace. Each candle is lit from this precious flame of peace, and every candle it lights becomes another WPF, thus passing it on. I invite you to carry a WPF with you, it does not have to be lit, it carries the energy regardless, and use it as a point of focus, in any and every situation. You see I do believe that each one of us has the choice to become the peace we wish to see in the world. Thank you all for making a difference to Peace and the World. OM SHANTE



- The lighting of candles by representatives of the Faith Communities in Leeds:

Bahá'í	Kian Samari
Brahma Kumari	Usha Chohan
Buddhist	Julia da Silva
Christian	Anne-Marie Granger
Hindu	Shyam Sunder Tah
Jewish	Val Mogendorff
Muslim	Ustadh Adam Aslam
Pagan	Jay Anderson
Sikh	Karandeep Singh



- Cllr Blackburn lights a candle on behalf of all of the people of Leeds

- Moment of quietness, with lights turned down

- All stand to say 'We Are One', led by the Chair:

*(please say the words in **bold print**)*

The Universe speaks in many languages but only one voice

It speaks the language of hope

It speaks the language of compassion

It is the language of the heart and the language of the soul

It is the still small voice that says

**We are one**

No matter the blood, no matter the skin

No matter the world, no matter the star

**We are one**

No matter the pain, no matter the loss,

no matter the doubt, no matter the fear

**We are one**

Here, gathered together in common cause

we agree to recognise this singular truth, this singular rule

that we must listen to one another

because each voice heard enriches and enobles us

and each voice lost diminishes us

**We are the voice of the universe**

**the soul of creation**

**the fire that will light the way to a better future.**

**We are one**

*(from original words by J Michael*

*Straczynski)*

I charge you all that each one of you concentrate all the thoughts of your heart on love and unity. When a thought of war comes, oppose it by a stronger thought of peace. A thought of hatred must be destroyed by a more powerful thought of love. Thoughts of war bring destruction to all harmony, well-being, restfulness and content. Thoughts of love are constructive of brotherhood, peace, friendship, and happiness. When soldiers of the world draw their swords to kill, soldiers of God clasp each other's hands! So may all the savagery of man disappear by the Mercy of God, working through the pure in heart and the sincere of soul. Do not think the peace of the world an ideal impossible to attain! Nothing is impossible to the Divine Benevolence of God.

If you desire with all your heart, friendship with every race on earth, your thought, spiritual and 30 positive, will spread; it will become the desire of others, growing stronger and stronger, until it reaches the minds of all men. Do not despair! Work steadily. Sincerity and love will conquer hate. How many seemingly impossible events are coming to pass in these days! Set your faces steadily towards the Light of the World. Show love to all; 'Love is the breath of the Holy Spirit in the heart of Man'. Take courage! God never forsakes His children who strive and work and pray! Let your hearts be filled with the strenuous desire that tranquillity and harmony may encircle all this warring world. So will success crown your efforts, and with the universal brotherhood will come the Kingdom of God in peace and goodwill.

*'Abdu'l Bahá*

### **Peace and Reconciliation**

The world seems lost in a fog of war and strife  
Mistrust and senseless act  
What can each of us do  
To bring light and peace to ourselves and the world?

I remember who I am  
Who each human being is in essence  
I the spiritual being, the soul, star of light  
Connect with the heart of my being  
And emerge compassion and mercy  
And the purest feelings of goodwill.

I choose to send pure thoughts  
Of pure vibration, of purest love  
That touch all hearts, all minds  
This is the power of true feelings

It is the light of healing.  
It is the light of peace, and hope  
And reconciliation  
Enabling all to forgive, and to forget  
And to resolve all that has occurred  
And the light fills the darkness.

In that light all can see  
And all can feel the reality  
of our eternal connection with each other  
of true brotherhood of the world  
family of souls

I see the world  
I see my family, my relatives,  
I see my friends, workmates and neighbours  
I see all, I see them with love

I feel the loving presence of the One  
who is  
The Ocean of Unconditional love for all  
Who always has keeps  
the pure positive vision of all souls  
That powerful beautiful transformative  
energy

Heals hearts, releases sorrow and re-emerges truth  
In all souls

In the company of this loving God  
I feel great love flowing from my heart  
As I see them  
For I see my brothers and sisters  
I see them with love.

## **Buddhist** - Kate Yeping Yeo

We are all human beings, whatever our positions. If we open our hearts and speak with sincerity, we can communicate and touch others on the deepest level. World peace starts with trust between one individual and another.

The ultimate doubt we can experience might be expressed in this way: "In this moment I do not believe that I can reveal my Buddhahood." The Buddha wants us to know in the depths of our being that that last statement is just not true. A doubt which leads us to question and learn is a useful doubt. But a harboured doubt which festers and causes us to be deluded about our true potential is an aspect of fundamental darkness and needs to be seen for what it is.

## **Christian** - Tim Bean **A Christian Prayer for Peace**

'Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbour bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual and of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of

mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.'

*James 3: 13-18*

Trusting in your mercy, Lord, we pray:

that people everywhere may reject the use of nuclear weapons and the threat to use them;

that peace negotiators may discern the ways of peace and meet as fellow human beings rather than as enemies;

that governments may turn from warlike ploys of power to service in the welfare of our common humanity;

that the strategists of defence may be free from the fear which produces the arms race;

that defence forces may be freed from the passion to punish and take revenge;

and that we all may learn what it means to love those who are regarded as our enemies.

God of Peace, hear our prayer.

*From a Palm Sunday Peace Service, Sydney, Australia*

## **Hindu** - Usha Bhardwaj

Hinduism preaches and prays for world peace. The main teaching is that one should not use one's strength to attack the weak but should use it for the protection of the weak and for upholding righteousness. The ultimate goal of Hinduism is peace for all.

All Hindu prayers end with a special word: Peace, OM SHANTI SHANTI SHANTI meaning - peace peace peace.

O God Thou giver of life  
Remover of pain and sorrow  
Bestower of happiness and creator of the universe  
You art most luminous, pure and adorable

We meditate on thee  
 May you inspire and guide our intellect  
 in the right direction  
 O God lead us from untruth to truth  
 Leads us from darkness to light  
 Lead us from death to immorality  
 Brothers should not fight with brothers  
 sisters should be kind  
 All should speak gently with each other  
 and generate an attitude of truth service  
 and cooperation  
 May there be peace in heaven  
 Peace in the atmosphere  
 Peace across the waters  
 May there be peace on earth  
 May peace flow from herbs , plants and  
 trees  
 May all the celestial beings radiate peace  
 May peace pervade all quarters  
 May that peace come to all of us  
 May there be peace everywhere  
 O God grant happiness to all  
 May all be free from disabilities  
 May all look for the goods in others  
 May none suffer from sadness or sorrow  
 May there be peace everywhere  
 OM SHANTI SHANTI SHANTI

**Jewish - Val Mogendorff**

And it shall be at the end of the days, that  
 the mountain of the Lord's house shall  
 be firmly established at the top of the  
 mountains, and it shall be raised above  
 the hills, and peoples shall stream upon it.

And many nations shall go, and they  
 shall say, "Come, let us go up to the  
 Lord's mount and to the house of the  
 God of Jacob, and let Him teach us of  
 His ways, and we will go in His paths,"  
 for out of Zion shall the Torah come  
 forth, and the word of the Lord from  
 Jerusalem.

And he shall judge between many  
 peoples and reprove mighty nations  
 afar off; and they shall beat their swords  
 into ploughshares, and their spears into  
 pruning hooks; nations shall not lift the  
 sword against nation; neither shall they  
 learn war anymore.

And they shall dwell each man under  
 his vine and under his fig tree, and no  
 one shall make them move, for the  
 mouth of the Lord of Hosts has spoken.

*Micah 4:1-5*

**Muslim - Syedha Batool Al fadheel**

*Surah: Hujuraat - The Chambers - verse 13*

In the name of Allah the most merciful  
 the most beneficent ;  
 Oh mankind, indeed we have created  
 you into various nations and tribes  
 and sourced you of a male and female  
 parent; that you may learn to recognise:  
 learn from each other. Indeed the  
 closest to God are those who are  
 righteous. Indeed he is all knowing and  
 all aware.

*Surah 107 al Maoon- Small Deeds*

Have you seen those who reject the  
 final judgment?

They are those who drive away the  
 orphans in need

And encourage not the feeding of the  
 poor.

So woe to a worshipping person

Who is heedless in valuing their  
 prayers ,

Who show off their their good works

And withhold the smallest acts of  
 kindness.

**Pagan - Brian Willimott**

In times of hostility and strife, we come  
 together as a people,

As a people, we must pray for peace;  
 Lord and Lady, may there be peace.

In times of hostility and strife, we come  
 together in our communities,

As communities, we must pray for peace;  
 Lord and Lady, may there be peace.

In times of hostility and strife, we come  
 together in our families,

As families, we must pray for peace;  
 Lord and Lady, may there be peace.

In times of hostility and strife, we find  
 ourselves as individuals,

As individuals, we must pray for peace;  
Lord and Lady, may there be peace.

As a people, as communities, as families,  
as individuals, we must pray for peace;  
Lord and Lady, bring us peace.”

*Adapted from "A Pagan Ritual Prayer Book" by Ceisiwr Serith*

## **Sikh - Gurmukh Singh Deagon**

### **Ek Onkar**

There is Only One God.

**Waheguru** (God) creates

**Waheguru** (God) maintains

**Waheguru** (God) takes it away

Learn to Live and accept his will.

*Ang 846, Extract from Guru Granth Sahib Ji*  
**sooraj kiran milae jal kaa jal hooaa  
raam |**

The rays of light merge with the sun, and  
water merges with water.

**jothee joth ralee sanpooran theaa  
raam |**

One's light blends with the Light, and  
one becomes totally perfect.

**breham dheesai breham suneesai  
eaek eaek vakhaaneeai |**

I see God, hear God, and speak of the  
One and only God.

**aatham pasaraa karanehaaraa  
prabh binaa nehee jaaneeai |**

The soul is the Creator of the expanse  
of creation. Without God, I know no  
other at all.

**aap karathaa aap bhugathaa aap  
kaaran keeaa |**

He Himself is the Creator, and He  
Himself is the Enjoyer. He created the  
creation.

**binavanth naanak saeee jaanehi  
jinaee har ras peeaa |4|2|**

Prays Nanak, they alone know this, who  
drink in the subtle essence of the Lord.

||4||2||

- The lighting of candles by representatives of the Faith Communities in

## **One Planet, One People (Baha'i Songbook)**

We're all living in a dream of one  
world, hoping that everyone will love  
as they were meant to love.

We're all living in a dream of one  
world, hoping that everyone will live as  
they were meant to live.

One planet, one people, please God we  
may achieve it. One planet, one people,  
please.

One planet, one people, please God we  
may achieve it. One planet, one people,  
please.

We're all living in a dream of world  
peace, hoping that everyone sees a  
world of love and unity.



We're all living in a dream of world  
peace, a world of different countries,  
living in peace and harmony.

One planet, one people, please God we  
may achieve it. One planet, one people,  
please (people please).

One planet, one people, please God we  
may achieve it. One planet, one people,  
please (people please).

One planet, one people, please.

Leeds:

Bahá'í	Kian Samari
Brahma Kumari	Usha Chohan
Buddhist	Julia da Silva
Christian	Anne-Marie Granger
Hindu	Shyam Sunder Tah
Jewish	Val Mogendorff
Muslim	Ustadh Adam Aslam
Pagan	
Sikh	Balbir Kaur

- Cllr Blackburn lights a candle on behalf of all of the people of Leeds
- Moment of quietness, with lights turned down
- All stand to say 'We Are One', led by the Chair:
- Chair's final comments
- Chair reads a Franciscan Benediction

May God bless us with discomfort, at easy answers,  
half-truths, and superficial relationships,  
so that we may live deep within each other's heart.

May God bless us with anger at injustice,  
oppression, and exploitation of people,  
so that we may work for justice, freedom, and peace.

May God bless us with tears to shed  
for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, and war,  
so that we may reach out our hand to comfort them and turn their pain  
to joy.

And may God bless us with enough foolishness  
to believe that we can make a difference in this world,  
so that we can do what others claim cannot be  
done.

**AMEN**

- The Chair invites everyone to talk to a stranger.

Greetings to one another:

**Shalom, salaam, shanti, peace be with you.**



*Would all speakers, readers, candle-lighters, musicians and organisers please stay in the room until a photograph has been taken.*

*Please contribute to the Lord Mayor's Charity Appeal on your way out.*

*Special thanks to Manish, Susan and Valerie of the Brahma Kumaris for sound control, background music and images and the setting up of the candles.*

**Concord - Leeds Interfaith Fellowship**

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