

# INTERFAITH NEWS



A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF BRIGHTON AND HOVE INTERFAITH CONTACT GROUP

Winter 2014



Beverley Minster

# Holding the darkness in the light commemorating the past embracing the future

An act of commemoration before Holocaust Memorial Day

*Brighton Quaker Meeting House,  
Ship Street, Brighton  
Sunday January 26  
2.30 – 5.00 p.m.*



Brighton Quakers are opening their meeting house to the public to remember those who died during the dark period of the Second World War, to those who died as a result of prejudice and hatred throughout the twentieth century, and continue to do so today.

Quakers cherish the light of God in all people, yet recognise that darkness also lies in the human heart. This event is an act of witnessing that in spite of all suffering, the light is greater than the darkness. We hope that everyone will feel they have a part to play during the afternoon, in silence, listening, perhaps even speaking if they feel called to do so.

“The light for which the world longs is already shining. It is shining into the darkness, but the darkness does not apprehend it. It is shining into the darkness, but the darkness is not overcoming it. It is shining in many a soul, and already the new order has begun within the kingdom of the heart. It is shining in many a small group and creating a heavenly-earthly fellowship of children of the light. It will always shine and lead many into the world of need, that they may bear it up into the heart of God.”

*Thomas Kelly, Quaker, in 1941.*

# Interfaith Service for National Interfaith Week

Our Interfaith Service, held during or close to National Interfaith Week in late November, has become a feature of the City's calendar. It took place in 2013 on 24 November at Brighton Unitarian Church in New Road.

We were pleased to welcome the Mayor, Cllr Denise Cobb, Deputy Lieutenant, Roger French OBE and the Hon. Caroline Lucas MP, all of whom participated in the service. The theme for the service was 'The Path of Forgiveness'; in the event this turned out to be particularly appropriate as many people's thoughts around this time were inevitably focused on the life of Nelson Mandela and his encouragement towards forgiveness.

Readings and thoughts on the theme were given by representatives from Bahai, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim, Pagan, Quaker and Unitarian communities.

Brighton Voices Choir treated us to a range of sacred and spiritual music, all beautifully sung.

Razia Aziz also sung solo devotional songs, accompanying herself on the guitar.

Azan, the Call to Prayer from Brighton and Hove Muslim Forum

Jeff Jones, Brighton Unitarian Church





Sadie Turner, Pagan (top left) Caroline Lucas MP (top right)

Vivienne Ross, Quaker (left)

Lisa Mohebati, Bahai (bottom left)

Rabbi Elli Sarah, Brighton and Hove Progressive Synagogue





Brighton Voices Choir

Razia Aziz, Interfaith Minister( below left)

Mayor of Brighton Councillor Denise Cobb receives the IFCG Directory from Charlotte Gravestock, secretary IFCG (below right)



At the end of the service IFCG Secretary, Charlotte Gravestock, presented the Mayor with a bound copy of the IFCG Directory of Faith Communities in Brighton & Hove. This had been researched and prepared by IFCG member, Peter Sharrock, together with colleagues from the Chaplaincy Team at the Royal Sussex County Hospital.

The Mayor was delighted with this gift and said what a valuable resource it would be for the Council and others in the city.

# Climate Change Conference

## report from Sahajatarā

### Some random answers to some random questions posed at the Interfaith Climate Change Conference, November 2013

What are people really concerned about?

Where will we get our ENERGY from? (hence fracking polarises opinions)

Could we become the first city where the Faith communities take the lead on climate change ?

Could we produce a statement that faith groups can sign up to.

Could ask all our faith groups 'should faith groups put sustainability at the top of their agenda ?

How do we present it theologically?

Do people believe in the power of prayer? of meditation ?

Is this something unique faith communities have to offer the world?

How do we manage the balance between spiritual practice and worldly action?

If climate change equals suffering, do faith communities have a duty to try prevent it ?

**Start with the personal – raise your own consciousness**

**Being loud and proud about being people of faith in a secular city.**

**The Bible doesn't mention climate change. Nor did the Buddha.**

**Talk to people**

**Take practical action – including lobbying and campaigning**

**Consider “Spiritual means for change – the often undervalued power of prayer, meditation and reflection to affect change and other spiritual practice such as chanting**

Do send in any blog articles for our blog at <http://ifaocc.blogspot.co.uk>  
with love Sahajatra

# Meditation: A Useful Path to Spiritual Connection

Interfaith ministers operate between different faiths, and sometimes bring people back to a personal faith that they might have given up on, which can be a useful service to the community.

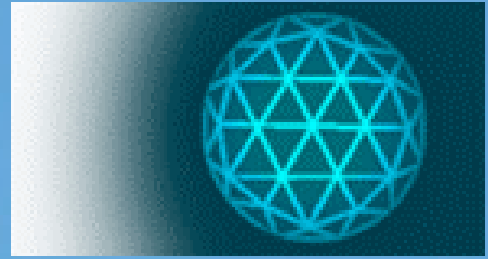
One of the ways of doing this is through meditation. I run a meditation group once a month at the Cornerstone Centre, which is completely non-denominational, but it definitely puts people into a place of thinking about their own spiritual path, past or present. True to the spirit of my training, I tend to lean towards a spiritual path according to the season and the month, so in December one of the meditations was based on the idea of the Christian advent calendar, and the journey of self-discovery, made possible by opening windows on the soul. In January I shall begin the year with a variation on the famous Metta prayer of Loving Kindness, which is a Buddhist based process, and is particularly deep and inspirational.

It was after I had done a guided meditation for women at the Brighton Breast Cancer Support Group that somebody came up to me and told me that she had previously been a regular user of the meditation facilities at the Brighton Brahma Kumaris. Understandably I asked her why she had stopped... and she never answered the question, but simply said joyfully... "of course, what a wonderful idea... I shall go back there again... Thank you for reminding me!"

At the moment I am reading a good book about Jewish Meditation by Aryeh Kaplan, which is very comprehensive. It covers the topics of states of consciousness, mantras, contemplation and visualisation. It is an excellent volume. All faiths have different ways of meditating, which vary greatly. My preferred route is using visualisation to guide meditators into a place of personal self-discovery, but there are so many paths, each one resonating to a greater or lesser degree with those that follow this inspired practice.

*Reverend Anthea Ballam (interfaith minister)*

The meditation group is held on the second Wednesday of the month  
all are welcome  
7.15 to 9.15pm  
Adelaide Room.  
Cornerstone Centre  
Adjacent to St John the Baptist Church  
Church Road  
Hove



**BRIGHTON & HOVE  
INTERFAITH CONTACT GROUP  
INVITES YOU TO**

# **FAITHS DAY**



**On Sunday, February 9th,  
2014, 2pm to 5.30pm at  
The Friends Meeting House,  
Ship Street, Brighton BN1 1AF  
Meet people from different  
faith communities in Brighton  
& Hove and join us for a talk  
and refreshments.**

**Faiths Day incorporates our  
AGM and includes a talk on  
Jewish Tradition by Rabbi Dr  
Andrea Zanardo of Brighton  
& Hove Reform Synagogue.**





# Brighton Hove IFCG diary for 2014

You are welcome to all of these events

AGM and Faiths Day

2.00 - 5.30pm Sunday 9 February

Friends Meeting House

Ship Street

Brighton

You are warmly invited to Brighton and Hove IFCG Faiths Day including our AGM

The guest speaker is Rabbi Dr. Andrea Zanardo from Brighton & Hove Reform Synagogue. Dr Zanardo will be speaking about Jewish tradition and its relevance for today.

Following last years successful change of format of the AGM we are again incorporating Brighton & Hove Faiths Day. This will be another opportunity for local faith groups to come together and set up small displays of information and offering dialogue and information to each other as well as the general public.

Tea, coffee and cakes will be served, if you can donate a cake please bring one with you. Experience says that there can never be too too much cake

Singers Wanted

As well as the business side of the afternoon the Interfaith Choir will again be singing. If you wish to join with this choir with singers from all faiths please feel free come to the rehearsal led by Razia Aziz, musician and interfaith minister.

7.30pm

Thursday 6 February

Hove Methodist Church

Portland Road

Hove

The Brighton & Hove Inter-Faith Contact Group (IFCG) exists as a resource for contact and dialogue between the many faith communities & traditions in the Brighton & Hove area. It is our aim to help build and maintain good relations, and greater understanding between us.

IFCG Chair - Mokshini Grant  
chair@interfaithcontactgroup.com

IFCG Secretary - admin@interfaithcontactgroup.com

Please contact the IFCG Secretary with any requests, offers or ideas for additional inter-faith related meetings.

Keep up to date with more of our events and IFCG Newsletter at our website

This Newsletter is edited by Tony Tree and all contributions are welcome.

.....if you have attended anything of an interfaith nature, spiritual thoughts or reflections or you can publicise your own faith community's events if you wish - send to anthonyjtree@gmail.com

We now have a brief, practical code of conduct for IFCG meetings on our website ([www.interfaithcontactgroup.com](http://www.interfaithcontactgroup.com))CG

## Have you Considered Membership?

Individual IFCG Membership is currently £10 per year from AGM 2014 to AGM 2015

Members must reside, work and/or attend a faith/tradition in the Brighton & Hove area; and must agree with the Constitution of the IFCG

Please send your cheque payable to IFCG together with your name, address, phone number, email address and the name & address of your faith/tradition to:

B & H Interfaith Contact Group  
c/o Community Base  
113 Queens Road  
Brighton  
BN1 3XG

[www.interfaithcontactgroup.com](http://www.interfaithcontactgroup.com)

