

Faith in The Future



28 February, 7 March & 28 March 2011

Oldway Mansion, Paignton

The first two sessions commenced with six representatives from different faiths and beliefs introducing the topics. The audience, inspired by these presentations, formed small discussion groups to explore the issues from their own perspectives. The groups' key reflections were finally shared with the whole audience.

Participants said,

'It is always important and beneficial to listen to different views.' *'The evening was highly productive because it made us realise that we have to get together to clear our differences and work towards peace and harmony for all future generations of all faiths.'*



'There is more that unites us than divides us.'

'We need people to think for themselves and understand their own religions.'



'This was my first experience of inter-faith and I enjoyed meeting the diversity of faiths. I realised we all want the same.'

'A rare opportunity for intelligent and considered discussion.'

'It brought me into contact with many other faiths and was well organised, with a beautiful, loving atmosphere.'



'This evening has given me many and varied thoughts to ponder.'

'The evening gave me a better understanding of different faiths and helped me to address some searching questions.'

Torbay Inter-Faith Forum

- TIFF (Torbay Inter-Faith Forum) was established in 1982.
- It aims to bring together people of all faiths and beliefs in friendly dialogue and mutual respect.
- Following on from 2010's Inter-Faith Week 's successful 'Festival of Faiths', TIFF organised the Series 'Faith in the Future'. Three sessions highlighted contemporary Faith issues:
- 'God or No God - that is the Question!' explored the increasing division between religion and atheism.
- 'Facing Contemporary Challenges to Faith' raised concerns that Faiths need to address.
- 'Faith in the Future' focused on the faith of young people in Devon.



Speakers for 'God or No God...'

'Excellent speakers giving their differing ideas, was thought-provoking.'

'The communication and communion of spirit were valued.'

Below: Jan Mughrabi, one of the Founders of TIFF, chaired the Session.





Representatives brought the thoughts of their small discussion groups to share with the full audience. Lively exchanges had taken place.

Comments included:

'We are excited that, as human beings, we are on a journey of mystery and spiritual adventure.' *'Uncertainty is possibly a more important quality in our lives than certainty. We each need to face our uncertainty and pursue understanding and deeper, more authentic faith.'*

A Buddhist monk joined in the discussions. 'Barriers need to be broken down so that people are united to face the problems confronting humanity at large. Interfaith meetings can achieve this objective.'



'A true sense of unity was present amongst young people.'

The whole Series has been fantastic! It was all excellent!!'

'The interaction produced more understanding of other faiths.'

'How well the young people have spoken – with confidence, clarity of thought and enthusiasm. Quite a beautiful and very full evening. Good food too!'



Jess Herman sang Hebrew songs, accompanied by her guitar. Some audience participation was greatly enjoyed.

'The whole event was very inspiring and the young people offered a great hope for the future.'

It Matters to Me - Youth Project

Clare Mortimore of Faithnetsouthwest organised the youth event showcasing some of the inspirational youth work happening in Devon and beyond. She was also responsible for the production of the DVD 'It Matters to Me' in which young people from 8 faiths and beliefs presented their faith and belief on film. It will be sent to all Devon schools as a classroom resource and was launched at this event.



Revd. Ian Johnson, Deputy Chair of Devon Faith and Belief Forum, welcomed everyone to the third and final session devoted to youth.

'The evening was a lovely mix of music, talk and inspiration.'

'It was wonderful to see so many young people of different faiths and cultures who have obviously been inspired by this DVD project to do all they can to foster peace between religions which we hope will lead to 'peace between nations.' (Hans Kung)

'How good it is to share thoughts with other faiths. It gave me the opportunity to clarify my and others' misunderstandings.'

'I was encouraged by the insight and commitment of the young people and their belief that they really can effect change and create a better world.'

Jasdeep Singh Degun, a 19 year old Sikh from Leeds, was co-founder of United Faiths, the youth faith forum for Yorkshire and Humberside. He challenged Devon youth to break down misconceptions and prejudices about their faiths at every opportunity. Jasdeep is a member of the South Asian Youth Orchestra and he improvised on Raag

Yaman with his sitar to the audience's delight.



God or No God

Facing Contemporary Challenges to Faith

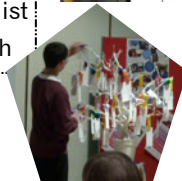
Faith in The Future

Session 1 - Speakers

Kay Hughes - Baha'ai
 Revd. Ian Blyde - Christian
 Dr Jatindra Saha - Hindu
 Ann Mitchell - Humanist
 Dr Kevin Dixon - Humanist
 Robin Kanarek - Jew

Session 2 - Speakers

Jonathan Marshall - Buddhist
 Revd. Alison Beever - Christian
 Dr Yahya Mubashar - Muslim
 Bob Lovett - Quaker
 Margaret Preece - Spiritualist
 Heather Savini - Inter-Faith



Ala Elhoudiri, a Muslim from Torquay co-chaired the event with Claire Farley of LiNX Christian Youth Trust. They rose to the challenge of this new experience most effectively.

Antony Hamilton decorated The Tree of Hope.

Session 3 Vegetarian Supper

Plymouth Centre for Faiths & Cultural Diversity's Youth Work - Jonathan Marshall

Jewish Songs - Jess Herman - Totnes Jewish Community
 My Musical & Interfaith Journey - Jasdeep Singh (Yorkshire & Humberside "United Faiths" and Sitar Player)

Our Journey and Our Vision for the Future - Marc Frank and Participants of Youth Project DVD (It Matters To Me)

'It Matters to Me" - Clare Mortimore: Faithnetsouthwest & DFBF

Methodist Youth Participation Strategy - Sharon Rowe: Project Manager for the Methodist Church in the South West

The Tree of Hope -TIFFY Members & Heather Savini



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