

Interfaith Scotland

Magazine Autumn 2026: Issue 46
www.interfaithscotland.org



Interfaith
Scotland

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Making a Difference through Dialogue

Message from the Interim Director

Welcome to the 46th edition of our Interfaith Scotland magazine. As always it is heartening to read all the positive stories of interfaith activities taking place across Scotland.



Frances Hume, Interim Director
as of December 2025

We are living in challenging times with increased polarisation and hate speech. At a meeting that I attended recently on countering hate-based narratives in the media and social media, someone shared a quote from a community group in Derry, Northern Ireland: "Do not underestimate the work it takes for nothing bad to happen." The group has been bringing local communities together since the start of the Troubles.

Recent events have brought home to us that we cannot be complacent in Scotland. Our interfaith activities are more important than ever. Up and down the country I have witnessed the powerful impact that fostering positive human connection can have at a community level. From the 'You, Me and a Cup of Tea' community cohesion event in Aberdeen to Interfaith Scotland's event for Refugee Festival in Perth, activities bringing our communities

together can form a bedrock of solidarity and support when those who wish to divide us lash out. It is so important that we counter the negative rhetoric and continue to share and tell a positive story of hope.

Do please share our magazine with others. We have hard copies available at the office and the online version can be downloaded from our website.



Interfaith Scotland

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Annual Networking Seminar for Local Interfaith Groups

On 3 June, we hosted our annual networking seminar for local interfaith groups at our Dialogue and Training Centre in Glasgow. We heard inspiring updates from interfaith groups across Scotland, sharing the activities and initiatives they had undertaken over the past year. It was a valuable opportunity to connect, exchange ideas and share good practice with one another.

The seminar also provided an opportunity for participants to discuss activities they might like to organise for Scottish Interfaith Week. The theme for 2026 is 'Wellbeing', inviting us to explore what it means to care for ourselves and others, while brainstorming ideas for events that groups can bring to their communities.

Our Development Officer, Nicola Maule, concluded the seminar with an interactive 'Beliefs in a Box' session, creating a space for reflection, conversation and connection. Working in small groups, participants chose a random object from a box – such as a shell, feather, bell or postcard – and used it as a prompt to share thoughts, experiences and beliefs. The activity encouraged participants to listen to different perspectives and reflect on how our beliefs can shape the way we see ourselves, others and the world around us.

It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with one another in a relaxed and creative way, while discovering new perspectives and building relationships across Scotland's interfaith community.



Staff and Board Away Day

We enjoyed an away day for our staff team and board members on 25 May at Sauchie Home Farm in rural Stirlingshire. The day provided an opportunity to reflect upon our successes and challenges over the last 18 months, and our key priorities for the future. We agreed that our work remains essential, offering a safe space for communities amid the current division and fear in society. We also welcomed our latest member of staff, Sydney Switzer, our new Education and Development Officer, who started in post in May.



Religious Leaders Meeting



On 8 June, Interfaith Scotland teamed up with the Edinburgh Interfaith Association (EIFA) to host a fruitful and productive day for Scotland's religious leaders. Members of the Scottish Religious Leaders Forum, for which Interfaith Scotland acts as secretariat, were invited by EIFA to join a special conference on religious leadership hosted at Edinburgh City Chambers in partnership with The Woolf Institute and the UK Commission

on Interfaith Relations.

Discussions centred on the ways in which international conflicts and increasingly polarised opinions can have a negative effect on social cohesion across the UK, the challenges that this creates for religious leaders, and identifying possible solutions.

After the morning conference, delegates were treated to a delicious lunch at Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation followed by an interesting

and informative tour of the synagogue by Rabbi David Rose. This included a visit to the beautiful Biblical gardens in the synagogue grounds. After the tour, members of the Scottish Religious Leaders Forum proceeded with their biannual meeting. Each member of the Forum gave an update on their faith communities' activities over the previous six months and some of the challenges faced by their communities.



Want to Start an Interfaith Book Club?

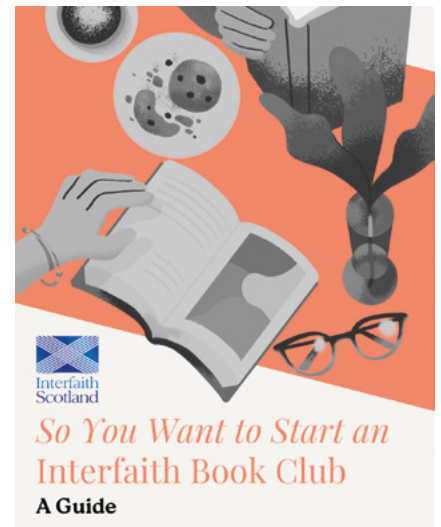
What if a book could be the starting point for a conversation between people of different faiths? Interfaith book clubs offer a simple but powerful way to bring people together. By reading, reflecting, and talking about books from a variety of religious and cultural perspectives, participants can build understanding, ask questions and discover both differences and common ground.

To help make these conversations easier to begin, we're excited to share our new resource, *So You Want to Start an Interfaith Book Club – A Guide*. Whether you're part of a faith community, a community organisation or simply a group of friends interested in learning from one another, the resource,

available on our website, provides ideas and guidance for getting started.

An interfaith book club doesn't need to be complicated. It can begin with a small group of people, a good book, and a willingness to listen. We hope this new resource will encourage more people and communities to take that first step and discover the possibilities that can emerge when we read together.

If you're based in Glasgow, there's already an opportunity to get involved! We have an Interfaith Scotland book club that meets every two months, where people from different faiths and backgrounds can come together, read, share ideas, and have meaningful conversations.



For upcoming dates, or to be kept informed about these future book club meetings, please email:

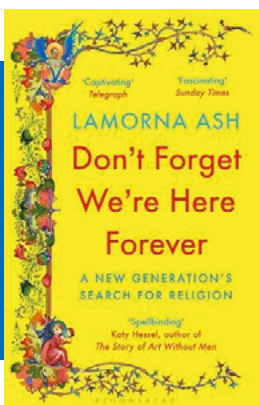
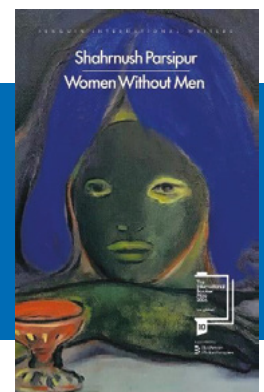
nicola@interfaithscotland.org. You can also keep an eye on our news and events posts on social media for updates.

Our Summer Reads...

Women Without Men by Shahrnush Parsipur

Women Without Men, by one of Iran's most influential writers, is a powerful and unforgettable work of magical realism exploring resilience, female freedom and the search for independence. It follows

the intertwined lives of five women from vastly different backgrounds, who through very different circumstances, find themselves living together in a lush garden on the outskirts of Tehran.



Don't Forget We're Here Forever by Lamorna Ash

In *Don't Forget We're Here Forever*, Lamorna Ash travels across Britain to meet a new generation grappling with Christianity and searching for meaning. Combining interviews with her own personal exploration of faith, she visits evangelical Christian youth festivals, Quaker meetings, a silent Jesuit retreat on the

Welsh coast and a monastic community in the Inner Hebrides.

Along the way, Ash explores what is drawing Gen Z towards Christianity and what their search for faith might reveal about our wider longing for connection, purpose and belonging.

“I was a little nervous when, with my friend Jamila, we met the others at Waterstones. The experience was so reassuring. Lots of laughter, some very penetrating observations which I found helpful, participants who were much better read than me and yet not overbearing. It was very enjoyable and I shall continue to read and hopefully attend future sessions.”

Alison Spurway



Interfaith Conversation Cafés

Interfaith Scotland aims to host Interfaith Conversation Cafés on different chosen topics throughout the year to encourage interfaith dialogue, awareness, and understanding by uniting people from different religious traditions, spiritual, or humanist beliefs in conversation over light refreshments. The conversation café will be a space where participants feel safe, fully engaged, and open to listening to and learning from each other.



On Thursday 9 July we hosted an Interfaith Conversation Café at 5 Charles Street in Inverness. This special event was planned by Interfaith Scotland, in collaboration with Inverness Interfaith Group, to explore the future of interfaith dialogue and engagement with local communities.

Approximately 25 attendees from

diverse faith and belief backgrounds had a fruitful engagement and interactive dialogue over an afternoon tea. The group also explored different ideas for events on the theme of 'wellbeing' as part of Scottish Interfaith Week 2026.

We received a heartfelt comment from a member of Inverness Interfaith

Group, Sila Collins-Walden: "It was a very inspiring day on Thursday; so many more people attended the café than expected. It was a delight to meet friends and to engage in conversation with everyone. I learnt much that day, and I believe it's vital that here in Inverness that we keep this very important work alive."



International Youth Leaders Conference in Berlin

Our Interim Director, Frances Hume, attended an international interfaith conference in Berlin from 16–19 June on the invitation of the Berlin Forum of Religions for their Metropolitan Regions Project. The conference was attended by interfaith youth workers from across Europe to share good practice. Frances gave a presentation on Interfaith Scotland's youth and schools work which was very well received.

As part of the programme, participants at the conference were invited to attend different places of worship throughout the city as part of a programme for primary and secondary school pupils. Frances visited 'The House of One', an exciting initiative to build a place of worship that will incorporate people of all faiths in the city.



Four Nations Meeting

Interfaith Scotland hosted the annual Four Nations Meeting at our office in Glasgow on 22 June. It was wonderful to welcome leaders of interfaith projects and interfaith organisations from across the UK.

We were joined by Edwin Graham from the Northern Ireland Interfaith Forum; Kate McColgan, Chair of the Interfaith Council for Wales; Carrie Alderton, CEO of the Faith and Belief

Forum and Warwick Hawkins from United Religions Initiative UK.

The annual meeting provides an opportunity to share good practice in interfaith dialogue and share advice and support in responding to the challenges we face in our work. We focused particularly on work in schools to challenge negative stereotypes of faiths, Interfaith Week and responding to increased polarisation in society.



Holy Isle Retreat

From 11–14 September, 26 people from all walks of life and a range of faith traditions came together for our annual interfaith retreat on the beautiful Holy Isle, just off the coast of Arran.

Leaving the mainland behind, we shared a wonderful few days of friendship, reflection, conversation and discovery. Surrounded by the peace and beauty of the island, there was time to pause, learn from one another and simply enjoy being together.

Our programme offered many different ways to explore faith, spirituality, creativity and community. Through our Dialogue and Journeys of Faith workshops, we shared stories and experiences of faith and belief, listening with curiosity to perspectives different from our own. We had a lovely reflective dialogue on Health and Wellbeing in different faith traditions. This has been created for Scottish Interfaith Week 2026 and can be found at www.scottishinterfaithweek/resources

A particular highlight was our pilgrimage walk across the island with resident nun Ani Palden. As we walked through the landscape, she shared insights into the history of Holy Isle and introduced us to Tibetan Buddhist deities painted on the rocks along the coastal path. The walk became both a physical and spiritual journey, connecting the landscape around us with the stories, readings and poems shared by the participants. We were also invited to experience a Chenrezig Puja that same evening, with Ani Palden explaining the meaning and



significance of the practice. It was a valuable opportunity to encounter Tibetan Buddhist prayer and ritual and to reflect together on the theme of compassion.

We had opportunities to explore creativity through an arts and crafts session and a singing workshop while our daily yoga and evening guided relaxation gave us moments to slow down and become more present.

Another contemplative activity we shared together was our Sound Map exercise. The intention was to develop our attention to where we are right now and cultivate attentive listening. We spend much of our lives looking at the world, but for this exercise we experienced the island through listening. We made a map – not of what we could see, but of what we could hear. Sitting quietly, we noticed the sounds of the landscape around us: birds, wind, water, footsteps, voices and moments of silence. It was a simple but powerful invitation to become

more attentive to the place and to one another. And, of course, there was plenty of time for joy and celebration. Our Culture Night was an evening of dancing, music, laughter and sharing.

Throughout the retreat, the island itself became an important part of our experience. Walking together, sharing meals, listening to one another, taking time for quiet reflection and enjoying the natural beauty around us created countless informal opportunities for connection.

Our retreat was a reminder that interfaith relationships are built not only through formal dialogue, but through shared experiences, good conversation, laughter, walks, quiet moments and the simple gift of spending time together.

It was a wonderful journey, made memorable by the warmth, openness and friendship of everyone who took part. We returned home refreshed, inspired and grateful for the connections we continue to build with one another.



INTERFAITH SCOTLAND NEWS



Holy Isle

Do you want to go somewhere
Where the ponies wander free?
A place of kindness, calm and honesty
A space just to be
Where love permeates the walls
And peace blows up from the sea?

That's good, us too
Welcome in

Does your soul ache for this world?
Seeing discord and deceit
Do you want to hand the hatred back?
Are you looking for the receipt?
A place of unity is offered
Where the material world stops at the shore

How wonderful, come on over
Welcome in

Does your faith encourage soul growth?
Does it lead you to want more?
Do you aspire to something better?
To leave the bigotry at the door
Does your heart believe in loving
And giving what you can?

Amazing! Us too
Welcome in

Do you want to find communion
With people who feel the same?
It matters not your path
What matters is your aim
Do you want to give to others
And seek a higher goal?

Bring that love with you
Welcome in

Do you question yourself often?
Feel an imperfect soul?
Then take heart you're not alone
We're all that stumbling foal
It's all in your intention
We all have a common goal

Put your feet up, take a rest
Welcome in

Do you feel the warmth of the sun
Or the bite of the bitter cold?
Do you want a better world
Where acceptance speaks out bold?
Where people of all walks of life
Gather to break the mould?

How beautiful Dear Traveller
Welcome in

Tracy Rowlett
Participant on Holy Isle Interfaith Retreat 2026

Scottish Interfaith Week 2026: Wellbeing



Scottish Interfaith Week is taking place from Sunday 8 November to Sunday 16 November 2026.

The theme for the festival this year is Wellbeing, with events exploring wellbeing in its many forms: spiritual, physical, mental and social. Think bike rides, shared meals, crafternoons, dancing, space to talk, gardening, meditation and much more.

We chose wellbeing for the theme because we are living in a time of social and political upheaval, where division and isolation threaten our

wellbeing both as individuals and as communities. We wanted to use Scottish Interfaith Week as an opportunity to ask what it looks like to sustain, nurture and uplift one another in these challenging times.

If you're planning an event, we invite you to explore what it means to care for ourselves and others. Events can be submitted via the Scottish Interfaith Week website.

In the spring we hosted meetings to talk to many of you about Scottish Interfaith Week and how to get involved. We held an online meeting with Members of Interfaith Scotland in May and together we brainstormed ideas for faith community events, such as tours of places of worship and shared meals, and we explored the barriers communities face when planning events.

In June we hosted a meeting for local interfaith group members at the Interfaith Scotland office in Glasgow. We discussed many things but Scottish Interfaith Week was a particularly lively topic and we were delighted to see ideas sparking for possible festival events.

Shortly after, we met with University Chaplains online to hear about the interfaith initiatives they're involved in and the challenges staff and

students are facing on campus. We also started cogs turning for potential Scottish Interfaith Week events co-hosted with student faith societies. We were joined by chaplains from the University of the Highlands & Islands, University of Aberdeen, University of St Andrews, University of Stirling, University of Strathclyde, Edinburgh Napier University, University of Edinburgh and University of Glasgow.

Connecting with Interfaith Scotland's Members, local interfaith group members and University Chaplains really inspired our team and we spent the summer designing resources to support those who want to host an event for the festival.

You can find specially tailored guides on the festival website for planning Scottish Interfaith Week events, engaging the media, promoting your event on social media, creating a book display, running a dialogue about health and wellbeing in faith traditions, facilitating a guided interfaith meditation, and taking part in our school competition as well as other classroom resources.

Resources will continue to be available on our website after the end of Scottish Interfaith Week. If you still have a question, don't hesitate to get in touch with us at:

info@scottishinterfaithweek.org

Find out more about Scottish Interfaith Week (8-15 November) at **www.scottishinterfaithweek.org**.



Let's celebrate
Scottish Interfaith Week
Come along to an event near you in November 2026



Wellbeing
Exploring what it means to care for ourselves and others in challenging times
www.scottishinterfaithweek.org

SIFW Scottish Interfaith Week

Follow us on  

In association with
Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation Charity Number: SC029486

Faces of Faith Exhibition

Could your venue host Faces of Faith? We're looking for organisations and spaces across Scotland to host this inspiring exhibition in 2027.



FACES OF FAITH

Through the beautiful images and stories of 16 people, an exhibition that explores the joys, challenges, and complexities of living as a person of faith in Scotland.



Interfaith
Scotland



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba



We have been touring the Faces of Faith exhibition around Scotland, a showcase of the nation's diversity and shared values. Through the beautiful images and stories of 16 people, we explore the joys, challenges, and complexities of living as a person of faith in Scotland, and the positive impact these communities have on a local, national, and international level. The exhibition has previously been

hosted at Ecovillage Findhorn, Scottish Storytelling Centre, Dundee Central Library, Glasgow University, Edinburgh University, Napier University, Robert Gordon's College, Borders General Hospital Chaplaincy Centre and Street Level Photoworks in Glasgow.

As we look ahead to 2027, we are inviting venues across Scotland to host the exhibition for anywhere between two weeks and two months. The Interfaith Scotland team will take

care of installing the exhibition and coordinating its transport, with a range of display options available to suit your space. We can also offer accompanying workshops for local schools, helping to bring the exhibition to life and deepen the experience for visitors.

Please contact Nicola for further information by emailing:

nicola@interfaithscotland.org



Refugee Festival Scotland Event: Celebrating Our Cultures

On Wednesday 17 June, Interfaith Scotland hosted a multicultural event as part of the Refugee Festival Scotland 2026, in collaboration with Community Link Worker, Perthshire Welfare Society and Perth and Kinross Council.

The 'Celebrating Our Cultures' event was held at the Civic Hall in Perth city centre, providing a creative and

welcoming space for local communities and New Scots to connect, share experiences, and build meaningful relationships. The multicultural celebration welcomed more than 120 attendees, who enjoyed a vibrant programme of food, tea tasting, live musical performances, and engaging conversations. The event also featured a variety of drop-in arts and crafts

workshops, including origami, stone and wood painting, bracelet making, and adult colouring, offering participants fun and creative opportunities to interact and learn from one another.

Scotland is a nation enriched by a diverse range of cultures, languages, religions, and traditions. This diversity is one of its greatest strengths and is something to be celebrated.



Our incredible volunteers from Scotland's diverse faith and belief communities were the heart and soul of this event. Their dedication, passion, and hard work were instrumental in making this event such a resounding success. According to the Scottish Refugee Council, 150 events were held throughout Scotland during Refugee Festival Scotland 2026. We are proud to have contributed to this collective effort, creating a valuable opportunity for communities to come together, celebrate diversity, and demonstrate

solidarity and support for people seeking sanctuary.

Megan Campbell, the Equalities Officer of the Perth & Kinross Council, commented, "As Scotland's only Council of Sanctuary, we were delighted to work in collaboration with Interfaith Scotland to facilitate their 'Celebrating Our Cultures' event in our local area. It was wonderful to bring people together from different backgrounds to share experiences, build connections and celebrate each other."



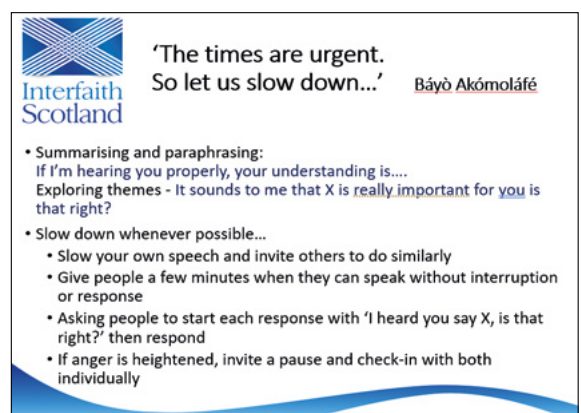
Managing Difficult Conversations Workshop

Tragically our world feels more divided and fractured than ever, with polarisation occurring over multiple topics, and at multiple levels of society. At the national, community and individual levels we observe division, blame and dehumanisation. The ability to fully hear each other is urgently needed, yet very few of us feel confident in navigating heated discussions. At Interfaith Scotland we have been supporting people of all faiths and philosophies to engage in dialogue for over 25 years, and while we would never say that it has become easy for us(!), we do have some helpful approaches to share.

So, when the Scottish Government put out calls for organisations to arrange events around the theme of 'community cohesion' we decided to offer a session on tools for managing difficult conversations. To design and deliver the session we were delighted to work alongside the Centre for Good Relations whose extensive experience is in applying civic mediation in some of the most fractured and divided contexts. In recent years they have worked on mediative interventions for marches, protests and demonstrations, including those outside accommodation for asylum seekers in Falkirk. One of their directors, Sam Tedcastle, co-facilitated the session with our Religious Equalities Training Officer, Jamie Spurway.

The session attracted participants from many backgrounds, including ministers, activists and those working in HR and equalities roles. Initially we explored the contexts in which participants find disagreement and conflict occurring for them, with many speaking to a sense that arguments among family, friends and colleagues are especially hard to manage. We then explored tools to support 'listening to understand, not just to reply' and discussed what we notice in others to discern how well they are listening when we speak. Sam and Jamie then shared a handful of approaches that can support people to understand each other better, even while they profoundly disagree. These techniques included:

paraphrasing and summarising what you are hearing; naming and building upon points of agreement; and distinguishing and exploring differences between a speaker's intention and the impact on the listener.



Due to high demand for the training, we are planning to offer it again. This three-hour session can be delivered to organisations and groups of participants. Get in touch with Jamie at: jamie@interfaithscotland.org if you would like to discuss it.

Scottish Teachers Association of RME's Festival of Learning 2026

We had an excellent time hosting a stall and presenting at the Scottish Teachers Association of RME's Festival of Learning in Glasgow on 16 May. The conference had an exciting selection of workshops and presentations for teachers to explore RME (Religious and Moral Education), and we were delighted to be welcomed back for a second year.

In our presentation for teachers we announced that we've received funding from Religions for Peace UK to expand our school visit programme over the

coming year. With their support we are able to offer programmes to schools across Scotland, with funding available to cover the cost of our speakers travelling to schools, including those in remote regions.

It was wonderful to meet so many teachers at the Festival of Learning looking to bring interfaith dialogue into schools across Scotland. Many of the teachers chatted to us about the success of last year's school competition for Scottish Interfaith Week and about our plans for this year.



Face to Faith Schools Engagement Programme

Here at Interfaith Scotland we're building up our schools programme, bringing volunteers from different faith backgrounds into primary and secondary schools across the country. We've received funding from Religions for Peace UK to expand these programmes to even more schools over the coming year, including schools in more remote areas. To support this work, we've hired a new Education and Development Officer. Sydney Switzer joined us in June, after years of supporting school

visits, educational and community engagement work across the Jewish community of Scotland. She's been hard at work setting up school visits and recruiting volunteers to lead the programme over the coming year.

While our school programme has been running since 2008, the funding from Religions for Peace has allowed us to recruit and train more volunteer speakers and deliver sessions at a minimum of 10 new schools between September 2026 and May 2027.

Can you host a visit for speakers at your school?

We are currently looking for both primary and secondary schools that would like to host a visit over the 2026-27 school year (free of charge). You can find out more about what we can offer in schools in the resources section of our website under 'youth and schools'. Schools interested in the programme should get in touch with:

sydney@interfaithscotland.org

Training for Volunteer Speakers in Schools

In August we led two volunteer training sessions - in Glasgow on 5 August and Dundee on 26 August, as well as several online training sessions, with over 40 volunteers trained and ready to lead sessions. Training was co-facilitated by Frances Hume, our Interim Director, as well as Sydney, and covered a variety of topics including

facilitation of interfaith dialogue, how to frame and share our stories, things to be aware of when working in schools and interfaith contexts and more.

Thanks so much to all of our dedicated volunteers for giving their time, energy, and stories to help foster understanding and respect in schools



this year.

We are still accepting new volunteers so if this is something you would be interested in, contact Sydney at: **sydney@interfaithscotland.org**

Schools Awards: Human Fraternity Conference

On 6 June over 2,000 students from Catholic schools all over Scotland gathered in the SECC, Glasgow to receive their Caritas Award in recognition of their charitable work over the course of their final year in school.

Among the recipients were a number of students from Holyrood and St. Roch's secondary schools in Glasgow, who in addition to their Caritas Awards were also receiving their certificates recognising their work in interreligious dialogue and activity.

As part of Scottish Interfaith Week in 2025, the students had taken part in a workshop organised by the Interreligious Dialogue Committee of the Catholic Church and the Ahl Al Bait Society – Scotland in which they learned about the Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together, which was signed by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad Al-Tayyeb.

As part of their Caritas work the students in both schools set about raising awareness of the rich religious diversity in their schools and promoted positive relations among students of different faiths.

Their efforts culminated in their presentations to the annual Human Fraternity Conference back in February. Since the theme of the conference was how we respond to migrants and refugees, both groups of students told us about their personal origin stories, introducing themselves and saying where they or their parents came from, beginning with countries close to



Scotland like Ireland but extending to Afghanistan, Nigeria, Poland, Algeria and beyond. They explained how events such as this commemoration of the Human Fraternity Document removed the likelihood of religious discrimination and how pupils "were proud of their diversity in their school". They ended their presentation by reminding the conference that "becoming a refugee is never a choice

but how we respond is".

The pictures show some of the students who took part in the programme with their certificates of recognition presented to them by Dr. Ahmed Khweir of Ahl Al Bait – Scotland and Joseph Sikora, Interfaith Officer for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Scotland.

Joseph Sikora

Schools Resources for Scottish Interfaith Week

The theme for Scottish Interfaith Week is 'Wellbeing' and we have created school resources for primary and secondary school pupils to explore this theme in the

classroom, looking at how faith can foster wellbeing from different faith perspectives. Topics include worship, singing, meditation, days of rest and fasting. We also have a school

competition on the theme of the week. You can find the teaching resources and news about the school competition for Scottish Interfaith Week 2026 at: www.scottishinterfaithweek.org

Aberdeen Interfaith Group News

A Day of Welcome, Reflection and Shared Faith in Huntly



Members of Aberdeen Interfaith Group visited the Mohanji Centre of Benevolence near Huntly for a day of hospitality, conversation and spiritual experience, discovering a place where welcome, reflection and ritual came together in a memorable way.

Set in the peaceful countryside near Huntly, the Mohanji Centre of Benevolence offered a warm and generous welcome to members of Aberdeen Interfaith Group, as they celebrated their three-year anniversary. From the moment the group arrived, there was a sense of openness and calm that made the visit feel both special and deeply personal. The setting itself, surrounded by nature and shaped as a place of reflection,

provided the perfect backdrop for a day centred on learning, friendship and shared spiritual curiosity.

One of the first highlights of the visit was the hospitality shown by the team at the centre. The group was welcomed warmly and invited to share lunch together, creating an opportunity not only to enjoy a meal but also to talk, connect and appreciate the spirit of kindness that shaped the day. Sharing food in such a peaceful setting became an expression of fellowship in itself, reflecting the interfaith values of respect, understanding and community.

A particularly memorable part of the visit came when the group joined a Zoom call linking people from around the world with Mohanji. This gave everyone present the chance to be part of a much wider spiritual community while still gathered together in Huntly. During the conversation, members were able to ask questions and listen to Mohanji's reflections on life, drawing from the wisdom he is known for sharing through his humanitarian and spiritual work. The experience brought a global dimension to the visit, reminding everyone that meaningful dialogue can reach across cultures and continents.

After the call, the visitors were shown around the foundation and given the

chance to experience more of the centre's spaces and atmosphere. The centre had recently been gifted two cows which were lovingly cared for and provided another wonderful welcome to our visit. The day then moved into a more ceremonial and participatory experience as the group joined one of the foundation's rituals. Walking around and blessing different parts of the foundation created a strong sense of shared intention and reverence. Afterwards, participants took part in a water ceremony, while also receiving blessings in return. For many, this was a moving and memorable moment that offered a deeper understanding of the practices and spiritual life of the community.

The visit to the Mohanji Centre of Benevolence was more than simply a day out. It was an opportunity for Aberdeen Interfaith Group to encounter another faith tradition through hospitality, conversation and direct experience. In a world where understanding across differences matters more than ever, the day in Huntly stood as a reminder that welcoming one another into sacred spaces can build lasting bridges of respect, learning and peace.

Gary Dean



Interfaith Walk in Duthie Park

On Saturday 23 May, members of our interfaith community gathered in Duthie Park for a reflective Interfaith Walk centred on the theme of forgiveness. Inspired by our January book review of *The Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World* by Desmond and Mpho Tutu, we spent the afternoon exploring the four steps of forgiveness through reflection and contributions from a variety of faith traditions.

We began our journey at the fountain, where participants were invited to find and carry a small natural object from the park. This object would serve as a symbol of the inner work we were about to undertake and of the burdens, hurts, and reflections we would carry throughout the walk.

From there, we made our way to the iron bridge for our first point of reflection: Telling the Story. Participants were encouraged to express a personal story of hurt or conflict through words, drawings, or a combination of both using paper and colouring pencils. As we reflected on the importance of honestly telling our stories, we were blessed with a thoughtful reflection from the Bahá'í Faith on the theme

of forgiveness, reminding us of the transformative power of compassion and understanding.

We then entered the second stage of the journey: Naming the Hurt. As we walked, participants were invited to consider the wounds, disappointments, and pains that continue to linger within us, before our third stop at the Temperance Fountain, where we explored the step of granting forgiveness. As we reflected together, many became aware of how much hurt we carry within ourselves and the weight it places upon our minds, hearts and bodies. The fourth stage of our journey brought us to the spiral mound. Here we heard a reading from the Qur'an as we reflected on the final step: Renewing or Releasing the Relationship or thought that has caused us pain. To symbolise this act of release, participants transformed their written reflections into paper aeroplanes and launched them from the top of the mound. Watching them take flight provided a powerful visual representation of letting go. Afterwards, the aeroplanes were collected and set aside to be ceremonially burned as an offering at a later date.



Before concluding our walk, we gathered beside the Winter Gardens for a final blessing from the Hindu tradition. This blessing encouraged us to carry forward the spirit of forgiveness, renewal, and peace into our daily lives.

The afternoon concluded with a gentle exploration of the Winter Gardens, where participants enjoyed the beauty and diversity of the plants, flowers, and trees. Surrounded by the richness of creation and the wisdom shared from different faith traditions, we left with a renewed appreciation of forgiveness as a path toward healing, understanding, and deeper connection with one another.

Gary Dean

You, Me and a Cup of Tea

On Sunday 28 June, St Andrew's Cathedral hosted a community cohesion event that brought together an extraordinary cross-section of Aberdeen's civic, charitable, cultural, and faith communities. What began as a simple invitation to gather became a joyful expression of what interfaith friendship and neighbourliness can look like in practice.

The event was shaped in partnership with Aberdeen City Council, the Salvation Army, Aberdeen Interfaith, the Melting Pot Collective Band, and a wide network of local churches and charities. Each partner brought its own gifts: music, welcome, food, storytelling, children's activities, and the quiet but essential work of building trust across communities.

Throughout the afternoon, New Scots and long-established Aberdonians mingled easily. Families enjoyed face-painting, art activities and shared

meals. The Melting Pot Collective Band filled Bon Accord with vibrant music that reflected the city's growing cultural diversity.

At its heart, Cathedral Sunday 2026 was a reminder that community cohesion is not an abstract policy goal but a lived experience, created whenever people choose to meet one another with generosity, curiosity, and respect. The event demonstrated how interfaith collaboration can help create spaces where newcomers feel seen, where long-term residents feel proud of their city, and where shared humanity becomes more visible than difference.

One of the volunteers at the event shared: "I had the honour of serving as a guest welcoming those attending, and it was a joy to meet people from different backgrounds, faiths and cultures coming together in a spirit of openness and respect... and to share in the celebration at St Andrews Cathedral



as it marked its 250th year made the occasion all the more meaningful."

As Scotland continues to welcome people from many nations and traditions, events like Cathedral Sunday show what is possible when we build community not only in words but in shared celebration.

Gary Dean

Action for a Better World: A Personal Experience

On 9 May I attended a gathering at the Varapunya Meditation Centre, a Buddhist sanctuary on the outskirts of Aberdeen. A dear friend had shared details of the event a few weeks earlier, and I was curious about the theme, "Action for a Better World".

The sanctuary was surrounded by a lush expanse of green space with maturing gardens and rolling hills in the distance with a firmly planted large Buddhist statue in the grounds. A small group had already gathered on a partial wrap-around decking in front of a newly built lodge.

I was warmly welcomed by the group and struck up a conversation with Gary, the Chair of Aberdeen Interfaith. As more people gathered, I witnessed firsthand the wide range of accents, a broad spectrum of ages and different backgrounds. I felt a strong sense of acceptance; this was a safe place. After formal introductions by one of the monks, we proceeded with a mindful silent walk through the adjoining woodland area, observing nature in all its abundance. I felt the heat of the sun, the expanse of the sky, and the comfort of those around me.

I struck up a conversation with a Sikh participant, who turned out to be from my hometown of Bradford. He also worked for the same oil service company I was contracted to. Whilst we kept the conversation around the energy industry and mutual work colleagues, there was a deeper mutual human connection that went beyond the superficial level. The type of understanding that would rarely, if ever, arise in a clinical office setting with the hum of tapping keyboards



and conversations where identities are governed by job titles.

Once we were settled back into the lodge, the monks proceeded with several meditation and chanting practices. The chanting was conducted in traditional Sanskrit. After the group meditation, we were subsequently guided through the practice of offering food to the monks, being informed that this was the last meal of the day for them. We were handed paper plates with rice and as each monk walked past in convoy, we spooned rice into their bowls. We were then naturally guided to another hall where an abundance of food was laid out for everyone.

As we queued for food, Gary once again asked me what brought me to the event. I candidly reflected that I had been on a healing journey for a number of years and that experiences around self-discovery had been spurred to understand others from a place of compassion and empathy. I learned

that Gary was also from Bradford and as an interfaith minister had been exploring aspects of other religions. I became increasingly intrigued by the work of Aberdeen Interfaith and the events they host.

The group offered a safe space for each of us to share our thoughts and feelings around the day's theme. I witnessed sharings from people representing different faiths and beliefs and observed first hand that acceptance and non-judgement is perhaps the strongest tool that we can offer each other. This was coupled with the mutual understanding that healing at the soul level is best served through community with the addition of heart-warming and nourishing food. My experience with Aberdeen Interfaith allowed me to embrace parts of myself through a conscious and lived human experience. Perhaps this phase of my life is further honing my journey towards wholeness.

Omar Iqbal



Borders Interfaith Group News

A Day of Friendship and Sharing

Borders Interfaith group organised a Meet, Greet and Share outdoor event and everyone was so excited to meet again and share different recipes from various parts of the world.

As World Environment Day has fallen on 5 June, we came up with an idea of keeping everything environmentally friendly and encouraged people who attended the event to bring their own water bottles, picnic mats, umbrellas and board games. With it being an outdoor event, a few friends managed to bring their dogs who were very happy to meet new paw friends.

The food was delicious, everyone made an effort to display their culinary talents and children and ladies played outdoor badminton to encourage the



ladies to join local badminton groups.

It was a fantastic day out with friends and we made new friends in the process. Everyone was looking forward

to the event and we are looking forward to more such events in the future.

Anitha Vallabhajousula



Inverness Interfaith Group

The Inverness Interfaith Group held its annual picnic on Saturday 1 August, with this year's gathering taking place in the beautiful Evanton Woods.

Although the rain stayed away, heavy clouds and the canopy of mature trees cast the picnic area in a rather atmospheric semi-darkness. Thankfully, the mood among the group was anything but gloomy, with plenty of good food, conversation and laughter.

After lunch, most of the group set off on a walk through the forest to the spectacular Black Rock Gorge. The combination of good company, beautiful surroundings and lively conversation made for a thoroughly enjoyable day.

Rolf Schmidt



Interfaith Glasgow

Glasgow 850 Interfaith Sponsored Walk



One of the most uplifting moments of Interfaith Glasgow's work this year was the Glasgow 850 Interfaith Sponsored Walk – a joyful public expression of solidarity, as people of many faiths and none walked side by side across the city in friendship and hope.

Taking place on 28 March, around 60 participants – old and young – from diverse backgrounds (Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist, Pagan, Shinto, spiritual, and non-religious) walked across Glasgow over the course of a whole day, visiting eight places of worship and raising over £15,000 while experiencing the city's rich religious and cultural diversity. Many of the walkers were new to Interfaith Glasgow,

attracted by the opportunity for real, intentional connection across difference – a contrast to online spaces so often shaped by echo chambers and division.

Beginning at St Andrew's Parish West on Bath Street, the group travelled around five miles, stopping at Kelvingrove Park for a Pagan reflection and blessing, the Hindu Mandir, Glasgow Buddhist Centre, St Aloysius RC Church, Garnethill Synagogue, Glasgow Central Mosque, and Glasgow Gurdwara, where the day ended with a shared langar meal.

At every stop, participants were met with warmth, generosity, and welcome. As one walker reflected, "The thread throughout all of it is just a message of love, and hope, and peace, and

togetherness". For many, the experience was both moving and memorable, "It felt like a big, big family all together". Others spoke of the rare opportunity to step inside places of worship they might never otherwise have visited, deepening understanding through conversation and shared experience, describing it as "so rewarding".

The day left a lasting impression, "The hospitality extended to the walkers at the different stops was unbelievable. I can't describe how uplifted I felt by this experience. ... to walk in solidarity with differences and feel respect for each other because of our collective humanity, was quite extraordinary". Participants valued the opportunity to "celebrate Glasgow in its best light", as one put it. "It's a light that we don't often get a chance to celebrate ... I'm just really happy to have been a part of it".

The walk received national recognition through an Early Day Motion tabled in the UK Parliament, highlighting its role in promoting interfaith understanding and community cohesion. Many participants felt it embodied the spirit of interfaith work in Glasgow – showing how relationships are built not only through dialogue, but by sharing space, stories, a few good laughs, and a commitment to the journey.



Interfaith Inverclyde

Celebrating Inverclyde's Diversity Through Sport and Faith



On the 25 May, Buddhists, Christians, Muslims and Hindus joined together for a day of sports, crafts and to enjoy each other's company.

Interfaith Inverclyde (interfaithinverclyde.org) who have been working to build strong community relationships since 2025 hosted the event and saw families from every corner of Inverclyde gather at Greenock Cricket Club. About 150 people attended, including Inverclyde Provost Drew McKenzie who attended with his family and participated in discussions. It was a great day with everyone ready for fun and genuine interfaith exchanges. Laughter resounded and amicable competition with our sports events became a joyful tribute to Inverclyde's diversity.

Muhammad Ahmad, co-chair of Interfaith Inverclyde described the sports day as an effective way to unite the community. He said, "We're trying to bring the community together, build bridges, and make friendships. We think the best way to do that is through sports. There is a gap between communities and we're trying to bring a positive impact to Inverclyde through sports". Participants of all ages played cricket, football and squash, with organisers encouraging open dialogue

and learning about each other's beliefs.

Members of Interfaith Scotland facilitated an Interfaith Dialogue session and workshops throughout the event. Frances Hume, Interim Director of Interfaith Scotland, described the event as very welcoming. She noted it provided an opportunity to, "Meet people as human beings first, beyond the impressions often found on social media". Frances added, "This is really a celebratory day. We're getting together for sports, arts and crafts, conversation, ice cream, and just having fun with our neighbours".

An interfaith sports day was a fantastic way to bring Inverclyde's

communities together, sparking friendships and building bridges between neighbours. Bryan Kerr, Minister of Kilmacolm Parish, said events like this help people find common ground. He pointed out that many people of faith meet challenges in the community, such as suspicion or even hostility. "On days like this we can get together and recognise that we all work for good, we all work for peace, we all believe in hope for the world and our community. That's what makes faith so important in whatever way we express our faith".

Catherine Murray



Faith and Belief (FaB): Dundee and Tayside

Dundee Get Together

Recent events in the news paint a bleak picture of hate and division in our communities. The Dundee Get Together in the city centre on 13 June was a most welcome antidote, and effectively sent a message to everyone that Dundee is a city that welcomes diversity, where all are welcome. Faith and Belief Dundee was proud to participate in the parade that preceded the gathering in the City Square, where the Lord Provost Bill Campbell announced that this would be the first of what was going to become an annual event in the city. The beautiful Discovery Embroidery, produced by so many hands for the launch of Scottish InterFaith Week in 2024, made a rare appearance and was viewed by hundreds of people.

FaB Dundee members also took part in the Refugee Festival Scotland Event, Celebrating Our Cultures in Perth. A very popular activity was Bracelet making, focussing on the Virtues as inspiration.

Carrie Varjandi



Edinburgh Women's Interfaith Group (EWIG)

A Pilgrimage Journey of Faith



2026 has been a very special year for the Edinburgh Women's Interfaith Group (EWIG) sisters. We decided to organise a holy pilgrimage around Edinburgh, finishing our journey at the Holy Isle of Iona.

We started our journey on 24 January at St James Church in Leith, where we received a blessing from the church minister, along with blessings from the Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh and Bahá'í faiths. Following this, on 30 January, EWIG sisters were invited to celebrate Tu B'Shvat with the Jewish community.

As our journey continued, on 5 March, we enjoyed an evening meal with Muslim sisters to celebrate Iftar and the opening of the fast and later, on 28 March, celebrated the annual meal with the Ahmadiyya Muslim community at Edinburgh Academy in Stockbridge, receiving blessings from the Islamic and Hindu faiths.

On 26 April, the group visited the Brahma Kumaris Centre in Edinburgh to take part in the annual peace ceremony, with interfaith dialogue and

World Peace Meditation. Then, on 24 May, EWIG sisters enjoyed an afternoon of spiritually uplifting Satsang at the Edinburgh Sikh Gurdwara, followed by interfaith dialogue.

As our pilgrimage continued, on Sunday 7 June, the Edinburgh Women's Interfaith Group visited a local synagogue. Sixteen women from a range of different faith backgrounds took part in the visit and received a very warm welcome from the Rabbi and his team. There was a wonderful tour of the synagogue, along with special blessings for the women. In keeping with the spirit of interfaith friendship, blessings were also shared from Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist and Islamic traditions, creating a beautiful expression of respect, unity and understanding between different faith communities.

One of the highlights of the visit was a guided tour of the Biblical Garden. The women were fascinated to learn about the different herbs and plants and their significance within Jewish tradition. Hearing about the spiritual,

cultural and historical connections associated with each herb made the garden a particularly meaningful part of the visit.

The afternoon continued with a delicious afternoon tea prepared and provided by the ladies. It was greatly appreciated by everyone and offered a wonderful opportunity to sit together, share conversations and strengthen new friendships.

Our pilgrimage then continued on 5 July, when we visited the Edinburgh Hindu Temple in Leith and took part in World Peace blessings from the Buddhist, Jain and Sikh faiths.

Finally, on 7 August, we visited the Holy Isle of Iona to complete our pilgrimage. At Iona Abbey, we held a World Peace service and received blessings from the Sikh, Hindu, Islamic, Bahá'í, Buddhist, Jewish and Christian faiths.

This journey was an absolutely spiritually uplifting and memorable experience for all the EWIG sisters.

Nila Joshi

Edinburgh Interfaith Association (EIFA)

Faith Leadership and Interfaith Dialogue in Edinburgh

The Edinburgh Interfaith Association (EIFA) was delighted to partner with the Woolf Institute and the UK Commission on Interfaith Relations for a conference on religious leadership, held at Edinburgh City Chambers on 8 June.

The fourth in the Commission's series on Faith Leadership, the conference brought together faith representatives from across Scotland to explore the role and expectations of faith leaders, the pressures they face, and the impact of international conflicts and political events on relationships within and between faith communities.

The event opened with remarks from EIFA Chief Executive Iain Stewart, who emphasised that the purpose was not to air grievances but to seek

practical solutions through dialogue. Following a welcome from Edinburgh Lord Provost Robert Aldridge, representatives from Edinburgh's Jewish, Muslim and Christian communities shared perspectives on their religious and cultural experiences in Edinburgh and Scotland.

Delegates from Baha'i, Christian, Pagan, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist communities then took part in facilitated discussion groups, considering how international conflicts and political differences have contributed to fractured relationships, affected wider social cohesion, and created challenges for faith leaders. The groups focused on identifying practical responses, with feedback shared with the wider conference.

The programme continued with

lunch, a tour and further discussion at Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, followed by consultations at the University of Edinburgh's New College with Professors Cormac MacAmhlaigh and Nick Bland.

While the conference provided an opportunity to establish a shared purpose across diverse faith communities, delegates were clear that its success should ultimately be measured by what happens next. There was a strong call for meaningful follow-up action based on the discussions and recommendations, ensuring that the conference leads to tangible progress rather than becoming another exercise without lasting impact.

Miranda Heggie



Women of Faith and Community

Finding Connection in Nature and Community

Over the summer, the group has enjoyed being outdoors. The annual picnic was held in a member's garden, which is a lovely setting for eating together - a bit wet but nevertheless greatly enjoyed.

In August, Satya Dunning (<https://steppingintolife.co.uk/about-satya>) led an event in the woods of Pollok Country Park, "AWEsome Woodlands - Ancestral Intelligence, returning to Nature and Awe" which was funded by Scottish Forestry's Woods for All Award. We connected with trees, expressed delight at a magical ring of mushrooms and sat in silence surrounded by birdsong. It was indeed awesome.

In September, three members took the long trek to the Holy Isle - train, boat, bus and ferry! The four-day event was under the auspices of Interfaith Scotland. It provided an opportunity to talk freely about different beliefs and share moments of meditation, respite and calm. We were warmly welcomed by the resident Buddhist community living on this very small island with its wild horses, goats and sheep. Magical.

We continue to meet on the first Monday of every month between 10.30am and 12.00pm at Unitarian House in Berkeley Street, G3 7DS. Our programme involves discussion of what unites us, with the opportunity to understand each other's thoughts and beliefs, while also visiting local places of interest.

For further information, to confirm dates or to join our mailing list please email:

womenoffaith@hotmail.co.uk
Alison Spurway



Brahma Kumaris Community News

Overcoming Overthinking

Sister Jayanti's visit to Scotland in June of this year brought a timely and uplifting message on Overcoming Overthinking to audiences in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

Sister Jayanti is the Additional Administrative Head of the Brahma Kumaris, the world's largest spiritual organisation led by women. With almost 60 years of meditation experience, she is widely respected as an international speaker and spiritual teacher, known for sharing deep spiritual wisdom in a clear, practical and compassionate way.

Across the three Scotland events, she described overthinking as a "modern

disease" — a habit of the mind that drains energy, creates anxiety and clouds clear decision-making. Her central message was simple but powerful: real change begins within. As she reminded audiences, "Everything begins inside and then extends outside".

The events were supported locally by long-time Brahma Kumaris meditation teachers: Sister Rose in Glasgow, Sister Kathryn in Edinburgh, and Sister Astrid in Aberdeen. Their presence helped create a welcoming space for reflection, conversation and shared learning in each city.

A key theme was reconnecting with



“Meditation is a way to get to know myself... to be able to build up my self-esteem...then to explore the possibility of the Divine.”

-Sister Jayanti



“If I can change the quality of my thinking, if I can raise the quality of my consciousness, I am able to bring it to a state whereby it's not affected by situations and my life becomes more purposeful, happier and more meaningful.”

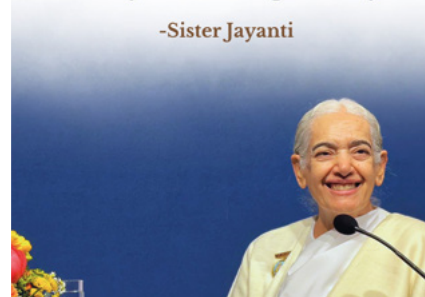
-Sister Jayanti



“The two real, big polluters are my ego and my desires

- They interfere with my ability to see things clearly.”

-Sister Jayanti



the inner self, beyond roles, labels and external pressures. When people lose touch with their spiritual identity, she explained, the mind becomes more vulnerable to stress, comparison and over-analysis.

Her practical suggestions were accessible to everyone: begin the day with a few moments of silence, pause before reacting, reduce digital noise,

reflect at the end of the day, and practise gratitude. These simple habits can help restore calm, clarity and emotional strength.

All three Scotland events were free to attend and welcomed people from many faith backgrounds as well as those with no formal faith tradition. The gatherings created a warm interfaith and community space for reflection on

peace, wellbeing and positive living.

For those who attended, Sister Jayanti's message offered more than advice on managing thoughts. It was an invitation to rediscover inner peace and bring that peace into everyday life, relationships and the wider world.

Sister Rose Goodenough

Kagyü Samye Dzong Edinburgh: Tibetan Buddhist Centre for World Peace & Health

2026 is proving to be a busy year for KSD Edinburgh, but in a good way! We've seen a noticeable increase in school visits to our Centre by The Shore in Leith, as well as an uptake of people generally from diverse faiths and backgrounds attending our weekly guided meditation sessions.

A recent notable event was Saga



Dawa, celebrated on the full moon of 31 May. As well as being the holy day marking The Buddha's Enlightenment and Pari Nirvana, it was also our Centre's 10th anniversary since opening in the beautiful, historic building that has become home. It was a wonderful day of joyful prayers and praises, followed by feasting and fruit punch, enjoyed by the Tibetan and Scottish communities coming together and culminating in a spot of Tibetan folk dancing in the courtyard by all those eager to learn.

Information and bookings for all future events will be available on our website at: edinburgh.samye.org

May all beings be happy.

Ani Rinchen



Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society (SABS): Community News

Bridging Communities Through Theatre



Through a powerful partnership with the Ridhayatullah Theatre team, SABS continues its success and brings the luminous history of the Prophet Muhammad and his Holy Household to the Edinburgh stage. Following the acclaimed debut of *Eternal Stance of Imam Hussain*, SABS hosted *The Loom Weaver*, a moving production illuminating the faith and resilience of the Prophet's beloved daughter, Sayyidah Fatimah Zahra. These groundbreaking events serve as vital platforms for Scottish interfaith engagement, proving that the universal values of the Holy Household - justice, compassion and human dignity - transcend cultural boundaries. By looking at the timeless legacy of the Prophet's family, SABS remains committed to building bridges, supporting the vulnerable, and fostering an inclusive Scotland for all.

Bridges of Peace

Marking a historic decade of interfaith solidarity, SABS continued its cherished tradition of visiting St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Edinburgh, during the Holy Month of Ramadhan. Joining the congregation in a spirit of fellowship, we explored the deep spiritual resonances between Ramadhan and Lent, uniting our hearts in sincere prayer for global peace and the alleviation of suffering. Against a backdrop of global challenges, Brother Kashan Sheikh and the Very Rev Provost John Conway offered special prayers for humanity. Brother Kashan prayed for healing for those facing oppression and fear, urging world leaders to choose dialogue over division, and emphasising that faith is a restorative force when we invoke the name of the same God. As we look to the future, we remain confident in this



enduring neighbourly relationship and look forward to continuing our shared journey of prayer, justice, and service

to the common good. May the Almighty grant success to all those who strive for true peace and unity.

FAITH COMMUNITY NEWS

Eid Ghadeer

Over 200 community members across generations joined us for a brilliant excursion to Blair Drummond Safari Park to mark Eid Ghadeer. The day was filled with excitement and wonderful company, offering a fantastic opportunity for families to connect and strengthen bonds. Occasions like this sit at the heart of our mission: creating spaces that build a lasting cohesion within our community. In the spirit of Eid Ghadeer - a celebration rooted in unity and companionship - this gathering also reminds us of the importance of extending that warmth outward, fostering friendship and harmony with our neighbours of all backgrounds in wider society.



Bute House, Edinburgh: Celebrating Eid and Muslim Community Unity



SABS was honoured to be represented by Co-Chair Iffy, Vice-Chair Kashan, and Strategic Engagements Director Ameer at the annual Eid Reception at Bute House. Hosted by the First Minister, the Rt. Hon. John Swinney, the gathering served as a powerful testament to the spirit of Eid al-Fitr, bringing together diverse voices to reflect on the vital partnership between the Scottish Government and the nation's multicultural communities. The evening beautifully demonstrated how cultural celebrations can build bridges of mutual understanding and reinforce an inclusive society where people of all backgrounds thrive together.

Inspiring Scotland's Youth Through Interfaith Dialogue

SABS representatives are proud to continue their participation in the impactful interfaith roadshows. These vital initiatives engage pupils across the country in meaningful conversations, encouraging young Scots to explore the richness of diverse faiths, celebrate shared human values, and build bridges of understanding. Our dedicated educators and teachers

continue to actively participate in and support these EIFA-led programmes, ensuring that classrooms remain vibrant spaces for cultural exchange. We are deeply grateful to the Edinburgh Interfaith Association for their leadership, vision, and enduring partnership in fostering unity, compassion, and harmony among the next generation of Scotland's youth.



Jewish Community News

The Scottish Geology Festival



The Scottish Geology Festival took place throughout the month of June 2026, and Jewish organisation Torah B'Teva hosted a session looking at rocks and geology within a faith-based context. On Tuesday 9 June, the director of Torah B'Teva, Sydney Switzer, welcomed participants at the Pollokshaws Community Hub in Glasgow's Southside for an engaging and thought-provoking session exploring the rich symbolism and stories of rocks within a range of faith and belief backgrounds. Examples included stones closer to home like the monoliths at Stonehenge and other stone circles, the pagan memorials at Dunino Den in Fife, and the more recent Christian memorial at Davaar Island in Kintyre, as well as sites further afield like the Western Wall in Jerusalem, central to the Jewish tradition, and its neighbouring Dome of the Rock, an important site within Islam.

The session introduced participants to a fascinating range of ancient Jewish stories and traditions, from the legendary shamir (a mythical creature said to cut through the stones needed for the building of the Temple), to the gemstones of the High Priest's

breastplate. We learnt about the stone pillow used by the patriarch Jacob when he dreamt his famous dream of angels ascending and descending a ladder to heaven, as well as about stone houses in Temple times being infected with a form of leprosy, as a way of indicating potential spiritual challenges of the inhabitants. These stories offered a starting point for wider conversations about the significance of rocks in different cultures and faiths.

The group of 15 attendees was highly engaged throughout, contributing thoughtful questions and lively discussion. Participants generously shared perspectives from their own faith and cultural backgrounds, highlighting the ways that stones feature in their own traditions and practices. Some also brought their existing geography knowledge into the conversation, creating an incredible opportunity to bring a celebration of faith traditions into a more secular topic.

Designed to be accessible regardless of prior knowledge of Judaism or geology, the session created a welcoming environment for learning and dialogue. Through the

shared exploration of stories, science, and lived experience, attendees discovered unexpected connections across traditions and disciplines, demonstrating how even the most ordinary elements of the natural world can inspire meaningful interfaith conversation.

The event was supported by the Scottish Geology Festival and exemplified how shared curiosity about the natural world can foster understanding, respectful dialogue, and deeper appreciation of the diverse ways communities find meaning in the world around them.

Torah B'Teva creates opportunities for nature-based and experiential Jewish learning and community building, making use of land-based skills such as foraging, fermenting, textile traditions and more to enhance Jewish ritual and tradition.

For more information on upcoming programmes and opportunities, follow them on Instagram @torahbteva, or contact Sydney at:

torahbteva@gmail.com.

Sydney Switzer

Sikh Community News

The Guru Nanak Gate



A beautiful celebration of creativity, faith and community has been taking shape in Glasgow through the work of the Nanak Creative Group, led by Manjit Kaur Jheeta.

Manjit, formerly Head of Biology

at Hutchesons' Grammar School, runs creative classes every week, bringing together women from diverse backgrounds, cultures and faith traditions. Over the past 12 months, this remarkable group has come together to hand-crochet an extraordinary piece of art – the Guru Nanak Gate.

At the heart of the design is Ek Onkar – Oneness, a central Sikh teaching expressing the belief that all of humanity shares one divine spark. The scale and detail of the finished piece are remarkable. The gate features more than 550 handmade flowers, along with around 800 leaves, butterflies and strawberries, as well as representations of the four miracles

associated with St Mungo of Glasgow. Every element represents hours of work, imagination and care.

Together, the individual crocheted pieces form a vibrant and colourful celebration of both Sikh heritage and the shared cultural landscape of the city. The Guru Nanak Gate is now displayed in the Glasgow Gurdwara prayer hall, where it can be enjoyed by the congregation and visitors alike.



Manjit Kaur Jheeta

Meeting Room for Hire

Are you looking for a suitable venue to hold your meetings and events?

Interfaith Scotland's Dialogue and Training Centre is now available for hire. The venue is situated on the first floor of a modern four-storey office building, which is well-lit, spacious, and accessible. Strategically located only one mile from Glasgow City Centre, our Dialogue and Training Centre is near several busy bus routes and within a 5-minute walk of Bridgeton train station. The maximum room capacity is 30, and we can accommodate custom layouts of chairs and tables. We offer a reduced rate to our Members, Local Interfaith Groups and Friends.

Features

The venue has free on-street parking and excellent transport links. The room includes:

- Wi-Fi broadband
- 58-inch wall-mounted large monitor with built-in speaker
- Electric catering urn
- Fridge and microwave
- Coat rack

Cost of venue hire

- Members rate: £15 per hour.
- Third and Public Sector rate: £20 per hour
- Standard rate: £25 per hour



For more information

Email: dialoguecentre@interfaithscotland.org for room booking enquiries.

Address

Dialogue and Training Centre, Brook Street Business Hub, First Floor, 1-10, 117 Brook Street, Glasgow G40 3AP



Interfaith Scotland

Making a Difference through Dialogue

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