



PROGRESS ON THE JOURNEY TO 2030

By Joe Burns, Commission Member



As indicated last month, the Commission hosted a meeting of the Northern Dioceses' Environment Group on 08 June, at Wheeler Hall in Leeds. This is an open group of interested people from each of the Northern Dioceses, and they meet about 4 times a year.

Five out of the seven dioceses in the North were represented, along with several people from our own diocese.

The meeting opened with a reflection led by Paul Kelly, from St Mary & St Michael parish in Settle. He included a great short video. It's well worth taking a look – here is the link to it on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/vph2oLkb1qM>

'Let us Dream'

The major portion of the morning session was taken up with a workshop given by John Paul de Quay. John Paul works as a project manager for the Ecological Conversion Group. This charity was started after the pope published *Laudato Si* and is dedicated to inspiring action on care of creation (See their website for more details:

<https://theecg.org/>

2030 is the year by which we should be reaching net zero emissions. John Paul explained that the work of the Ecological Conversion Group is about working alongside people to answer two basic questions:

1. What will our communities look like once we have achieved net zero emissions?
2. How do we get to that position – what are the things that we need to do

With limited time he asked everyone to focus on the first question – in the style of Pope Francis's exhortation to '*Let us dream*'. So, in groups of 4 or 5, we were asked to come up with a drawing that would communicate the key aspects of our local community once net zero emissions were achieved. Some participants were a bit shy about drawing, but everyone had a go and became more enthusiastic as the workshop progressed.

At the end of the workshop, each group explained the different elements of their drawing, just in case it wasn't totally obvious (the tables I drew ended up looking more like jellyfish to me!).



One group talking about their picture and what it meant.



One of the pictures from the workshop.

What is happening in the Leeds area?

We started the afternoon with an input from Helen Hayden, Leeds J&P Commission member and Executive member of Leeds City Council with responsibility for the council's response to the Climate Emergency. Helen spoke with passion about the interconnectedness of Climate Change with other issues that people living in poverty experience. For example, how retrofitting some properties has enabled tenants to have their heating on more regularly. In one case the ambient temperature in a property prior to retrofitting was measured at 12C whereas after the work had been completed it was 18C. As one mother put it, this allowed her children to have a quiet space in their bedroom where they could comfortably sit and do their homework. So, not only did this

work reduce carbon emissions, it also directly reduced energy bills for the people involved. Longer term, being able to do homework in a suitable space means that educational outcomes will be improved for the children living in those properties.

The challenge with this is that the council had funds from central government to retrofit relatively few properties – and even then, the funds were provided in competition with other local authorities. To retrofit all the properties in Leeds that need it will require £6billion of funding. In terms of both action on Climate Change and the Government's 'levelling up' agenda this should be given much more priority.

Helen's input really brought to life the interconnectedness of action for Climate Change and action on poverty.

Where do we go from here?

During the final part of the afternoon session everyone reflected on the rest of the day to see if any ideas for action were emerging. There were several suggestions – some of them quite surprising.

One was to take benches out of churches! Not quite such a bonkers idea as it might sound. Pews create a very inflexible space – as anyone who has twisted round during Stations of the Cross or the Easter Vigil can testify. With chairs (and possibly some tables) liturgy can be more creatively imagined. More than that, with suitable screening for the sanctuary, the space can be used for non-liturgical purposes. We have some marvellous physical spaces but most of



them are really constrained in what we can do with them because of the way that they are ordered. As a consequence, they are used for only a few hours each week. We need to work with some imaginative architects so that most churches can be made into fully flexible spaces for both liturgical and community use.

It was noted that the last Bishop's Conference meeting at Hinsley Hall (November 2022) had discussed Climate Action, and everyone was looking forward to the publication of their deliberations about this. Looking ahead, 2025 will be the tenth anniversary of the publication of *Laudato Si*. The idea of holding a joint event with the Bishops from the Northern Dioceses was mooted. This could both celebrate the work done to date and review what the next steps were for all the northern dioceses to achieve net zero by 2030. Many suggested that this would be a great way to demonstrate synodality in action within the northern dioceses.

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RETROFIT ACTION
FOR TOMORROW

One of the attendees at the NDEG meeting was Deb Adler from Retrofit action. She is part of RAFT – Retrofit Action for Tomorrow. It is an interesting organisation that we will feature in an article next month. They have provided retrofit plans for a number of churches and schools. Look them up if you want more information now:

<https://www.retrofitaction.org.uk/>

CAFOD NEEDS YOU!

By Angela Powell, CAFOD Leeds & Hallam

Could you be a CAFOD Schools Volunteer?

Wanted! Volunteers to help children/ students learn about the work of CAFOD.



Could you help your local school deliver assemblies and/ or workshops that encourage young people to put faith into action and help others?

It would require only a few hours of your time each term and you would be assisting your local community to work together for the Common Good.

No experience is necessary, full support and training will be given.

For more information, please contact Mrs Sharon Matthews at:

smatthews@cafod.org.uk

07748 514641

If volunteering isn't an option for you, then you can still help by passing on the word that we're recruiting volunteers! Please ask for this notice to be included in your next Parish bulletin!



REFUGEE WEEK 2023

By Matthew Maslen, Editor

This week (19th – 25th June), is Refugee Week. This year, the 25th Anniversary of Refugee Week, the theme is Compassion.



The organisers, Refugee Week UK, “invite you to celebrate what compassion looks like in action”. They call on us to draw on our experiences to help us to be compassionate “not just to ourselves and those in our immediate circle, but to all our human neighbours and our one shared home, planet earth”.



Back in 1998 Refugee Week was founded in response to the hostility faced by refugees in the media and society.

The week is intended as a festival “celebrating the contributions, creativity and

resilience of refugees and people seeking sanctuary”. Through art, culture, sport and education people are brought together to connect with and understand one another.

You can learn more about Refugee Week UK here:

<https://refugeeweek.org.uk/about/>

And more about their vision in their ‘Theory of Change’ here:

[https://refugeeweek.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Refugee Week Theory of Change 05-2.pdf](https://refugeeweek.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Refugee_Week_Theory_of_Change_05-2.pdf)

We have collated a (non-exhaustive) list of events happening around the area that you may be interested in.

You may have seen on our social media that the Leeds Church Institute is holding an exhibition during Refugee Week titled ‘Seeing Asylum Exhibition’. Unfortunately, the publication date for this issue is after the launch event which was held on Monday. The launch event included speakers such as Minister for Leeds, Reverend Paul Maybury and Dwayne Hutchinson, Faith and Radical Justice Lead for LCI. However, the exhibition is still open until Saturday 24th June so if you have a chance, head over to Leeds Minster and check it out!

Here’s a link to the LCI event page:



<https://lcileeds.org/eventbrite-event/refugee-week-seeing-asylum-exhibition/>

There are a range of events taking place during Refugee Week all across the Diocese.

These include the Leeds Refugee World Cup 2023 which will be held at Trinity Academy, Tore Rd, LS9 7QL on 24th from 10am – 4pm.

In Halifax, the exhibition 'Compassion' is open from 19th-24th in the Everybody Gallery in partnership with the St Augustine Centre.



In Keighley, at 6pm on 22nd June, Keighley Creative will host a Peace Meal at Keighley College. Here attendees are invited to “*enjoy a delicious meal provided by Bradford-based Syrian restaurant Bab Tooma, a performance of multilingual poetry by Nabeela Ahmed. Learn about Keighley College's work as a College of Sanctuary and see creative work by their ESOL Students.*”

For those of you who are based closer to Bradford, there are plenty of events happening in and around the city over the week. Highlights include:

The Art Exhibition at Trapezium Arts which is open to the public to view from 21st – 24th June.



'COMPASSION'

An exhibition of artwork from local schools for Refugee Week 2023.

PUBLIC VIEWINGS
at Trapezium Arts

Weds 21st June 11:30-1pm
Thurs 22nd June 11:30-1pm
Fri 23rd June 11:30-2:30pm
Saturday 24th June 3-6pm

And the 'Great Get Together' in Peel Park on 24th June from 12-3pm.

You can find the full list of events over the week happening in Bradford here:

<https://cdn.cityofsanctuary.org/uploads/sites/12/2023/06/Refugee-Week-2023-Programme-Final.pdf>



CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS' DAY

By Liz Firth Commission Member

15th May is International Conscientious Objectors Day. This year the J&P Commission, Pax Christi and the Leeds Palestinian Film Festival Committee jointly hosted an event to mark the day. Over 60 people joined us at Wheeler Hall in Leeds to listen to speakers, including Rev Clive Barratt, and to watch the film, *Objector*.



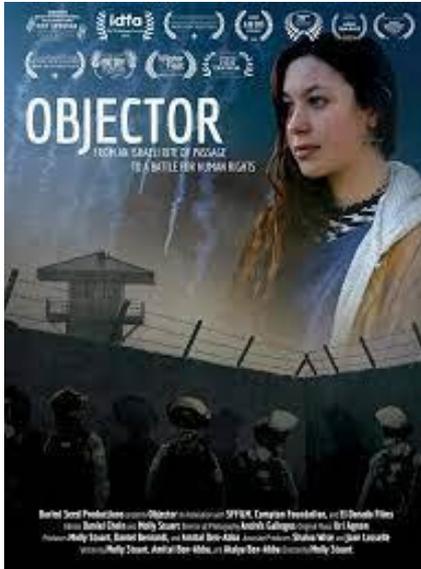
John Battle, Chair of J&P for the diocese, welcomed attendees to the event and noted how the issue of conscientiously objecting to bearing arms or any form of military conscription remains a relevant topic today in current conflict zones as much as it has in the past.

Rev Clive Barrett, author of *Subversive Peacemakers*, then spoke on the history of conscientious objection, with particular regard to local examples from Leeds, and shared stories of historical figures who have made a stand for their own religious or political beliefs, and the consequences endured by them as a result.

Attendees then watched a screening of the film '*Objector*'. The documentary film follows Atalya Ben Abba, a young Israeli woman, in the lead up to her mandatory period of military service at 18 in 2017. We follow the decision making of Atalya over a period of many months including interviews with her family, many of whom served in the Israeli military and who do not share her emerging political beliefs. Atalya is influenced by her older brother, Amitai who also refused to serve but on medical grounds. Atalya's own objection to military services was on the grounds of objection to the occupation of Palestinian territories and the Israeli government policies. The film follows her decision to refuse on the grounds of conscientious objection, a request refused by the Israeli Defence Forces' conscientious committee hearing, and her subsequent imprisonment and a little of what follows her release.

The film was directed by Molly Stuart, partner at the time of Atalya's brother, who is able to gain close access to Atalya's family and follow Atalya's moving visits to displaced Palestinians and watch as her family come to terms with her decision.

We were fortunate to be joined by Atalya via Zoom call for a live discussion following the film showing. She is now several years older, resident in Jerusalem still and now a full-time activist. Atalya responded thoughtfully to questions from the audience which ranged from how her relationship with her pro-Israeli Grandfather had been maintained to what hope she had for the future of Israel given the current Israeli government's political leanings.



Atalya spoke movingly about how she and other activists find strength from the solidarity shown by supporters around the world. She also shared how, whilst she is aware of the rejection of many fellow Israelis due to her political beliefs and actions, that she still finds a sense of belonging in Jerusalem and sees it as her home. She spoke of the challenge of the current Government and their treatment of the Palestinians, but believes that rather than losing hope, she and fellow activists are continuing to support the Palestinians despite the difficult circumstances currently found in Israel for those who do not support the current political regime.

Many thanks to all who organised and supported the event.

LCI FEATURE WORK OF CRAFTIVISTS

Leeds Craftivists 'Cost of Living Blanket' was created by the Craftivist community during winter 2022, and has been on tour around

the country. Each square of the blanket has been lovingly crafted by a Leeds resident to show their concern for the soaring cost of living, and the devastating impact of fossil fuel energy on our climate.



Anna Bland, Emma Temple with local MP Hilary Benn, and the blanket in the background

Anna Bland and Emma Temple are co-founders of the Leeds Craftivist movement. They invited local MP, Hilary Benn, to hear all about the campaign and discuss the project.

"We urged Hilary Benn, as our local representative in Parliament to take our message to the Prime Minister. We feel very strongly that the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor are one and the same, and we are called by our faith to take action for people and planet. We want to do all we can to raise the awareness that the cost of living crisis and climate destruction are interlinked, and the first step to solving them is asking for sustainable, reliable, and affordable energy."

What craftivism could you encourage in your church community?

For the full story, follow this link

<https://lcileeds.org/artist-of-the-month-leeds-craftivists/>



EVENTS

 Fri 21st Jul To Sun 23 Jul	<p>Sustainability? – Survival or Shutdown</p> <p>21st @6:30pm – 23rd @2pm @ The Hayes Conference Centre</p> <p>45th National Justice & Peace Network Conference. What is sustainability? It is always a lively event with a combination of keynote speakers and a range of workshops with a good craic around the bar in the evening. Also running during the weekend will be a ‘Just Fair’ with stalls from many organisations working around sustainability and other social justice issues.</p> <p>It’s not a cheap weekend (full cost is £225) though there are low income options as well. Use the button to download the application form. STILL TIME TO REGISTER</p> <p>https://www.leedsjp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-NJPN-conference-WEB-Booking-Form-2023-11-2.pdf</p>
 Sun 6th Aug	<p>Hiroshima Bombing Anniversary</p> <p>Sunday 6th August</p> <p>Look out for locally organised events that you could join</p>
 Wed 9th Aug	<p>Nagasaki Bombing Anniversary</p> <p>Wednesday 9th August</p> <p>Look out for locally organised events that you could join</p>
 Fri 01 Sep – Wed 04 Oct	<p>Season of Creation</p> <p><i>The newest Season of the Church’s year</i></p> <p>What will be happening in your church and parish community to celebrate this Season of the Church’s year? The theme for 2023 is ‘Let Justice & Peace Flow’ – so there must be some possibilities that come to mind about the interconnectedness of working for Climate Justice and working for justice more generally.</p> <p>If you need ideas then take a look at the Westminster Diocese J&P website: https://westminsterjusticeandpeace.org/season-of-creation-1st-september-4th-october/</p>
 Sat 9th Sep	<p>J&P Commission Planning Meeting</p> <p>9th September @10am - 2pm</p> <p>To review what we are doing and to sketch out where we go from here. How do we best use our limited resources of money and people’s time over the next couple of years?</p> <p>This meeting is intended for Commission members and some invited guests. However, if you are interested in coming along then please just email jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk and we will provide you with the details for attending.</p>

Please forward this email E-News onto anyone else who you think might be interested. Even better, get them to send us their email address so we can add them to our contact database. See our website for details of these and other events which may be of interest.