



Stronger Together

Herts Inter Faith conference

'Stronger Together'
Herts Inter Faith
conference



3 March 2020, 10:30 – 16:00

Registration from 10:00

The Focolare Centre for Unity, 69 Parkway, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 6JG

About the conference:

Welcome to 'Stronger Together' - Herts Inter Faith conference. This conference is a joint initiative between Herts Inter Faith Forum and Hertfordshire County Council.

Hertfordshire has a rich and diverse set of faith communities with two thirds of the population stating a religion. According to the 2011 census, 58% of Hertfordshire's residents describe themselves as Christian, 2.75 % as Muslim, 2 % as Jewish, 2% as Hindu, 0.5% as Buddhist and 0.45% as Sikh and with 26% stating they do not follow any religion.

This conference is an opportunity to hear from a spectrum of views and to gain a further understanding of how communities can work together to meet some of our challenges we face in Hertfordshire.

The Herts Inter Faith Forum brings together inter faith groups across Hertfordshire. The Forum seeks to share and promote best practice and works with all communities to encourage better community cohesion.

Hertfordshire County Council is committed to achieving equality of opportunity and we value and recognise the significant contribution made by all communities.

Conference chairs:

Conference chair

Reynold Rosenberg, Herts Inter Faith Forum

Session chairs

AM – Jehangir Sarosh OBE, Religions for Peace

PM – Anuradha Sharma, Herts Inter Faith Forum

Faith panel includes:

Rt Revd Richard Atkinson OBE,

The Bishop of Bedford – Diocese of St Albans

Rabbi Alan Garber, Shenley United Jewish Community

Imam Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra, Visiting Imam to the University of Leicester and De Montfort University

Conference overview

10:00 Conference registration

10:30 Conference begins

12:40 Vegetarian buffet lunch

15:45 Networking break – tea/coffee

16:00 Conference closes

Conference organisers contact email:

equalities@hertfordshire.gov.uk

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Agenda 3 March 2020, 1000 – 1600 hours

- 1000 hours** Registration and coffee
- 1030 hours** Welcome by the conference chair
Reynold Rosenberg, Chair, Herts Inter Faith Forum
- 1040 hours** Hertfordshire Picture
Robert Voss CBE, Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire
- 1055 hours** AM session chair
Jehangir Sarosh OBE, Executive Director, Religions for Peace
- Speakers:**
- Rt Revd Richard Atkinson OBE**
The Bishop of Bedford – Diocese of St Albans
- Rabbi Alan Garber**
Shenley United Jewish Community
- Imam Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra**
Visiting Imam to the University of Leicester and De Montfort University
- 1200 hours** Panel Q&As
- 1230 hours** How can interfaith co-operation assist learning in schools
Wendy Lidgate, Whisper Inter Faith Schools Project
- 1240 hours** Lunch
- 1320 hours** PM session chair
Anuradha Sharma, Herts Inter Faith Forum
- How inter faith dialogue enables better community cohesion
Sarah Beazley, High Sheriff of Hertfordshire

- 1330 hours** Workshops
- Workshop co-lead **1 Environment and sustainable development in Hertfordshire**
Don de Silva, University Buddhist Chaplain & Mentor (CPD) Adviser, Religions for Peace UK
- Workshop co-lead **David Thorogood**, Environmental Sustainability Co-ordinator, Herts Sustainability Forum
- Workshop lead **2 Challenging prejudice & extremism**
Chris Treadwell, Chief Inspector, Herts Constabulary
- Workshop scribe **Faizal Hakim**, Equality & Diversity Manager, Hertfordshire County Council
- Workshop lead **3 Health, Wellbeing & Faith**
Jim McManus, Director of Public Health, Hertfordshire County Council
- Workshop scribe **Richard Leslie**, Herts Inter Faith Forum
- Workshop lead **4 Exploring life opportunities for all**
Jeremy Simmons, FaithAction
- Workshop scribe **Martin Smith**, FaithAction
- 1415 hours** Repeat of workshops
- 1500 hours** Raising awareness of resources
Helen Gray, Foundation Director, Hertfordshire Community Foundation
- 1510 hours** Inter Faith and Inclusion, a Hertfordshire County Council perspective
Cllr Bob Deering, Deputy Executive Member, Hertfordshire County Council
- 1520 hours** Summary of workshops – **Faizal Hakim and Reynold Rosenberg**
- 1545 hours** Closing remarks - **Faizal Hakim and Reynold Rosenberg**
Coffee & networking
- 1600 hours** Close

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Robert Voss CBE

Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire

Robert has keen interest in interfaith relations and has established an Inter Faith panel within the Lieutenancy.

Robert was awarded a CBE "for services to British Industry and voluntary work in the UK" in the New Year's Honours List of 2014 and was appointed Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire by The Queen in 2017—a position he will hold until 2028. Robert graduated in Management Science from Manchester University and The Manchester Business School in 1975 and went on to spend 40 years in the commodity business trading internationally in over 65 countries—running his own company for the last 28 years.

Robert has a keen interest in young entrepreneurs and has been a judge and mentor for Young Enterprise for a number of years. He has also established and run a Young Entrepreneurs Challenge and more recently his own highly successful Lord-Lieutenants Entrepreneurs Challenge at The Herts County Show as well as investing in a number of young companies. He has been a regular judge of The National Business Awards since 2006 and has acted as a consultant, mentor and non-exec to a number of companies.

In January 2020, The Queen sanctioned Robert being honoured as a Commander in the Order of St John (CStJ). He is Patron and President of a number of local and national charities and is active in Holocaust education. Robert and his wife Celia have 3 children and 2 grandchildren and have lived in Hertfordshire for over 30 years and his hobbies include most sports—especially Golf, Cricket, Cycling, Rugby and Soccer as well as Travel, Music and Family.



Sarah Beazley

High Sheriff of Hertfordshire

Sarah became High Sheriff of Hertfordshire in April 2019 and during her year in office she is working to help build stronger communities of all sorts.

She is supporting interfaith and integration work throughout Hertfordshire, both formal dialogue and grassroots engagement, and believes that faith leaders and groups have an essential part to play in a whole community approach to tackling social and criminal justice challenges.

Sarah was born and brought up in Hertfordshire. She has a MA in Law from the University of Oxford and a PGCE from the University of Hertfordshire. She is a qualified solicitor who has worked in the City, in industry and for Cambridge University colleges. She is also a qualified teacher and has worked as a volunteer in local schools and in museum education in Hertford and Cambridge. She has studied History of Art and Creative Writing at Cambridge University Institute of Continuing Education and spent a year studying Jewish Muslim relations at the Woolf Institute.

Sarah does voluntary work in bereavement support and for the Hertfordshire Community Foundation. She is also a school governor with particular responsibility for safeguarding and wellbeing.



Cllr Bob Deering

Hertfordshire County Council

Bob Deering is the Hertfordshire county councillor for the St Andrew's Division of Hertford, and also the Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance and Resource.

Away from his role as a councillor Bob is a solicitor specialising in international shipping and dispute resolution. As a result, Bob has spent his lifetime career dealing with people of all races, religion and background on a global basis. Bob has travelled very extensively and lived and worked in the Middle East for several years in the early 2000's. Bob has seen at first hand the richness and diversity of the different cultures, religions and faiths around the world and the benefits that arise when we come together to understand and respect the differences.

Hertfordshire is increasingly diverse which is much to be valued. Hertfordshire County Council which Bob represents today, is committed to equality of opportunity, respect and inclusion for all.



Jehangir Sarosh, OBE Religions for Peace

Jehangir is a Zoroastrian – is currently also the Executive Director of Religions for Peace UK chapter, and a Co-President of the World Council of Religions for Peace.

He served as the President of Religions for Peace Europe for 10 years and helped establish the European Interfaith Youth Network and the European Women of Faith Network.

Jehangir is a founding member of the European Council of Religious Leaders – Religions for Peace, and served as its Co-Moderator from its inception, and then as Secretary General. His passion is to see all faiths and none working together for all that is good.

He says, "I love and enjoy life with my wonderful children and the beautiful wife. Jehangir will be chairing our Faith Leaders' panel, Stronger Together Herts Inter Faith conference.



Reynold Rosenberg Chair, Herts Inter Faith Forum

Reynold spent 50 years as an engineer in electronics for satellites and Test and Measurement.

On retirement, he joined the board of the local Synagogue and eventually became Chair. In this position, he was contacted by the local Inter Faith Group and introduced Judaism to the group. Eventually he became chair of the group. He encouraged all faiths to give an evening talk on their faith and then, as a team gave talks on life events: Birth, Initiation, marriage and death seen from a variety of faiths. He established monthly evening talks to maintain interfaith presence in the community. They organise events on National Inter Faith Week and on community days.

Following the closing of the East of England Faith Council, he was asked to set up a forum for the Hertfordshire Inter Faith Groups of which has been Chair for the last four years. The Forum brings together inter faith groups across the county and presents the opportunity to compare performance and share best practices. The Herts Inter Faith Forum seeks to help establish newer groups and provide a communication link to and from the county, featuring speakers on issues of importance to the county.



Anuradha Sharma Herts Inter Faith Forum

Anuradha is passionate about inter faith relations and has been an active member of the Stevenage Inter Faith Group since its inception and took on the responsibility as a chair for four years.

Anuradha is a volunteer for Whisper Inter Faith Schools project and visited many schools to raise awareness of inter faith learning and its benefits. Anuradha sits on the Herts Inter Faith Forum committee.

Anuradha founded the Stevenage based Indian Cultural Society which she ran for 10 years until 2011. Anuradha recently completed her A levels in Sanskrit from Cambridge International and now runs free online classes.

Anuradha moved to the UK from India where she had completed her M. Tech in Materials Technology and M.Sc. Physics. Since moving to the UK, Anuradha did a Degree in Software Engineering and mainly worked in the IT industry as a Software Developer and now is a Certified Project Manager (PRINCE 2, Agile and Scrum Master).



Bishop Richard Atkinson, OBE

Richard was consecrated Bishop of Bedford in 2012.

He came to Bedford from Leicester where he was the Archdeacon. Prior to that he was Vicar of Rotherham and Team Rector of the Manor Team in Sheffield. For five years he was an honorary staff member of Ripon College, Cuddesdon, where some years earlier he had trained for the ministry.

Richard has a passion for the Church's mission in the world. This includes building strong inter-religious relationships. He has recently completed a five-year term as Co-Chair of the Inter Faith Network UK. He was the founder Chair of the St Philip's Centre for Study and Engagement in Multi Faith Society in Leicester; achieved an MA in Interreligious Relations; and is a Trustee of Near Neighbours. Richard is currently Chair of the Eastern Region Ministry Course that trains women and men for ordained and lay ministry; a Governor of the University of Bedfordshire; Chair of the St Albans Diocesan Board of Education; and a Trustee of both the Luton Roma Trust and the Just Finance Foundation. In 2002 he was awarded an OBE for services to employment in Rotherham.

Richard is married to Helen who is a Pro-Vice Chancellor at Cranfield University.



Imam Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra

Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra serves as a scholar and imam in Leicester and is a visiting Imam to the University of Leicester and De Montfort University.

He is a member of the World Faiths Advisory Group at the University of Leicester and is the Muslim Chaplain to Canary Wharf in London. Shaykh Mogra has been trained in classical theology and the traditional sciences of Islam. He holds religious credentials from Darul Uloom Al-Arabiyyah Al-Islamiyyah, Bury, U.K. as well as advanced theological qualifications from the Al-Azhar University in Cairo. In addition, he has undertaken a postgraduate degree at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Shaykh Mogra has been at the forefront in deepening inter faith and community relations in the UK and around the world.

He is a member of the Christian Muslim Forum, Religions for Peace UK, the European Council of Religious Leaders, the World Congress of Imams and Rabbis for Peace, and sits on the Advisory Board of the Three Faiths Forum. He is also a Faculty member at St. George's College in Jerusalem.

Shaykh Mogra is a Student Mentor and Chaplain at both Ebrahim College and Cambridge Muslim College. In 2016, he received the Hubert Walter Award for Reconciliation and Interfaith Cooperation from the Archbishop of Canterbury "for his sustained contribution to understanding between the Abrahamic faiths". He has edited and contributed to a number of Religious Education textbooks and written a teachers' handbook on Islam.



Rabbi Alan Garber

Rabbi of the Shenley United Jewish Community since 2013.

Originally from Kenton, Middlesex. A graduate from Leeds University. Married to Tanya, blessed with 5 children. Received rabbinical ordination in Gateshead 2008.

First position as a rabbi was in Leeds as the University Jewish Chaplain serving over 1000 Jewish university students in the Yorkshire region.

Then moved to Sydney, Australia for three years as the Associate Rabbi of the Great Synagogue.

As well as being the rabbi for Shenley United Jewish Community, Rabbi Garber serves as a pastoral support rabbi for the Borehamwood and Radlett communities and is the Jewish Chaplain to Watford General Hospital.

Rabbi Garber is also studying toward post graduate diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy. Enjoys outdoor pursuits and keeping fit. Has climbed Mt Blanc; run the London Marathon and completed the Sydney City to Surf fun run four times.



Wendy Lidgate
WHISPER project

**How interfaith visitors have been making a difference in schools
Experiences from the WHISPER project.**

Wendy will be sharing her interfaith experiences from faith visitors meeting children in RE lessons in over 25 local primary schools in the past 3 years.

Wendy is a Theology graduate from Cambridge university and has post graduate certificate in Managing Major Projects from Middlesex university and a Certificate in Interfaith from London Interfaith Centre. Wendy worked as a project manager in industry for 25 years, and has been employed in Christian community work and interfaith for the last eight years. She is also a Methodist Local Preacher.

Wendy currently chairs the Welwyn Hatfield Inter Faith Group.



Helen Gray
Hertfordshire
Community
Foundation

**Helen joined Hertfordshire Community Foundation in September 2017 as
HCF's fourth Foundation Director having worked previously in both the
charitable and corporate sectors.**

Prior to joining HCF Helen worked for St Albans Cathedral where she managed a multimillion pound capital fundraising appeal after which she was promoted to Head of Operations. Her earlier career includes business development roles at both CMS Cameron McKenna (a top ten city law firm) and Baker Tilly (a national accountancy firm) where she was a Regional Business Development Manager.

Helen has lived in the county for over 15 years and currently lives in St Albans with her husband and two energetic boys. In her spare time she enjoys playing the piano.

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Environment and sustainable development in Hertfordshire



Don de Silva
Religions for Peace

Don de Silva is an environmentalist, writer and now a university Buddhist chaplain.

A former senior official of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), he has direct experience of the way concern about the way environmental concerns have turned into a global movement. At UNEP, he was responsible for global media strategies, which created awareness about issues, such as sustainable development and climate change. He was involved in organising key world environmental summits and helped to establish several inter-governmental environmental treaties. As part of his work as a Buddhist chaplain, he is committed to creating awareness about what Faith can offer to tackle Sustainable Development and Climate Change.



David Thorogood
Herts Sustainability
Forum

David's background is in environmental science and ecology.

He has worked in the public sector for over 30 years, first in London and currently for East Herts Council. David has experience of developing a wide range of environmental and sustainability projects from leading the first large scale urban habitat translocation in the UK to current projects on renewable energy, air quality electric vehicle infrastructure, energy efficiency and carbon reduction. He is an experienced facilitator and is particularly keen on unlocking the benefits of working in partnership with community and third sector organisations to deliver carbon reduction.

In his spare time David enjoys walking and is a Director Trustee of a large multi-leisure trust in London.

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Challenging prejudice & extremism



**Chief Inspector
Chris Treadwell**
Hertfordshire Constabulary

Chris joined Hertfordshire Constabulary in 2003 where he was posted to North Herts and Stevenage.

In 2006 Chris was successful in applying to join the Trainee Investigator programme where in 2007 he was confirmed as a Detective Constable. Chris spent 2 years working on various different crime teams dealing with a range of different crimes from Burglary to Serious Violence.

In 2008 Chris was promoted to Sergeant returning to front line policing at Stevenage for a 2nd time. Over the next 4 years Chris held a number of Police Sergeant and Detective Sergeant posts, then 2012 Chris was successful in his application to join the Joint Child Protection Investigation Team (JCPIT) as a Detective Sergeant working alongside Social Workers co-located at Police Headquarters in Welwyn Garden City. In 2015 Chris was promoted to Detective Inspector and placed in charge of JCPIT and Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) for some of the most serious crimes involving children in the County. In 2017 Chris then took charge of the Local Crime Unit (LCU) at Stevenage where he was the SIO for many complex and serious crimes including County Line drug offences.

In 2018 Chris was made a Chief Inspector within Crime Reduction and Community Safety where Chris leads on a number of portfolios for the Constabulary, including Hate Crime, Stop and Search, Crime Prevention, Crime by Design, Neighbourhood Watch, PREVENT, Chaplains Service, Business Crime and other initiatives.



Faizal Hakim
Hertfordshire County Council

Faizal has worked in the field of diversity for a number of years. Between 2003-2009, he worked at Operation Black Vote, an anti-racist lobby group that spans a number of areas including voter registration, lobbying politicians, mentoring schemes and political leadership programmes.

He was the principal writer for the Understanding Power citizenship tool-kit, which was endorsed by the Department of Education and used for Key Stage 3 & 4 Citizenship education. He also managed the MP Shadowing scheme and worked on a number of registration drives in UK.

Faizal also project managed the inception of the Herts Equality Council in 2010- an organisation that exists to bring together diverse views and opinions within Hertfordshire. He has worked in Southwark Council for a number years where he worked in the corporate division and managed the political office. He was also nominated by the US embassy to partake in their International Visitor Leadership Programme, where he spent 3 months in the USA and continues to have advise on Muslim relations in the UK.

Faizal is currently the Equality and Diversity Manager for Hertfordshire County Council. He has been in post since May 2019 and is currently working on the development of the County's new Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

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Health, wellbeing & faith



Prof Jim McManus
Hertfordshire County
Council

Jim McManus is Director of Public Health for Hertfordshire County Council and Vice-President of the Association of Directors of Public Health.

He is the Faith Diversity Champion for the County Council's Diversity Board.

Jim is a Chartered Psychologist and Chartered Scientist with degrees in Theology, Psychology and Public health. He is President of the Guild of Health and St Raphael, a Member of the FaithAction national advisory council and an adviser on health to the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales

In 2011 he was awarded the Good Samaritan Medal for excellence in healthcare by Pope Benedict XVI, the highest honour for health the Vatican can award (previous holders of the medal include Sir Andrew Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin).

Jim will be leading the workshop – Health, Wellbeing and Faith and will explore how can faith groups contribute to promote health and wellbeing in society.



Richard Leslie
Herts Inter Faith Forum

Revd Richard Leslie is a Canon Emeritus of St Albans Cathedral, having served from 1979 as an assistant minister in Redbourn and Newport Pagnell (Oxford Diocese) and then as Team Vicar in the Anglican Parish of Elstree & Borehamwood for 18 years.

He now lives in retirement with his wife Jenny in Hemel Hempstead assisting in the parish church there and in the surrounding parishes as requested.

During his time in Elstree & Borehamwood he helped establish and continues to support the Hertsme Forum of Faith bringing together representatives of the local Christian & Jewish communities as well as Muslims and Jains and the Krishna Consciousness community at Bhaktivedanta Manor. Its primary purpose is to represent the faith communities to local government and to take a place on the Local Strategic Partnership – Hertsme Together. Our quarterly meetings have taken us to visit each other's places of worship and learn about our respective faith and customs as well as community cohesion issues emanating from the borough council. He also attends the meetings of Hertfordshire Interfaith Network for Hertsme and Dacorum interfaith groups.

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Exploring life opportunities for all



Jeremy Simmons
Faith Action

Jeremy Simmons is Policy and Programme Officer at FaithAction.

In this role he aims to raise the voice of faith in policy making and gather evidence of local faith-based solutions. He leads on FaithAction's programme work with the Department of Health and Social Care, Public Health England and NHS England, as well as the APPG for Faith and Society.



Martin Smith
Faith Action

Martin Smith has extensive experience of faith-based service delivery, having worked for FaithAction and its parent organisation Lifeline Projects for several years in roles including Project Manager, Project Delivery Officer and Data and Technical Support Officer.

His background is IT Management, holding an MCSE, ITIL foundation cert and Prince 2 project management qualifications. Martin currently works as the Senior Hub Co-Ordinator on the Creative English Project.

Jeremy Simmons and Martin Smith will be co-running the workshop 'Exploring life opportunities for all' and explore ways in which faith communities can have equal opportunities and access, if not, why not and how do faith groups work to counter inequality in their community and in wider society?

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Directions to the centre

Please [click here](#) to view directions via public transport.

The closest train station is [Welwyn Garden City](#) which is approximately half a mile from the venue.

The station is served by [Great Northern, Thameslink](#) service.

Link to the RAC route planner:
<https://www.rac.co.uk/route-planner/>

Parking

Please be advised that parking for the Focolare Centre is limited so you will need to park nearby rather than in the centre itself, parking charges may be involved. Please see nearby parking facilities on the map.

Parking map

<https://en.parkopedia.co.uk/parking/welwyn-garden-city/?arriving=202002121130&leaving=202002121330>

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