



Dear Friends

Welcome to YIG Monthly Newsletter for August 2022.

Thank you to everyone who attended, and more especially, those who took part in, our July meeting which at which we learned about the issues surrounding Mental Health and how an individual's Faith can impact on situations which challenge us in our daily lives. The discussions certainly highlighted the seriousness and breadth of this issue as told by people who have dealt with it first hand, and in their daily work life.

Sometimes it is easy to forget, or block out from our thoughts that we have just been through a global pandemic and that some people have suffered far more than others, through loneliness, poverty, ill health, lack of contact with peers, and many other stresses which have affected mental health. If we listen to the news regularly we are constantly reminded of issues such as war, climate change, and man's inhumanity to man, and this is even before we begin to deal with issues closer to home amongst our close family and friends.

There is no magic formula, no one answer given by any Faith that can entirely protect us, as was clearly presented by our wonderful guest speakers . So, for what it's worth I will share one piece of advice given to me by my mother. When something is worrying you, consider first whether it is a problem you can actually do something about. If you can, then do it. If there is nothing you can do at this particular moment in time, mentally wrap that thought up in a package, tie it up with string and put it on a shelf. In this way, the issue can be 'untied' and revisited **when** it is possible to address it and do something practical to help. There are always many packages on my shelf believe me, but Mum taught me that I can't deal with everything at once and to pick battles that I have some chance of winning, (And the odd prayer never comes amiss either!!)

Anne Castle

OUR AUGUST MEETING/VISIT WILL BE LIVE

At The Unitarian chapel - St Savioursgate

TUESDAY August 2nd 7.00 - 9.00 pm

We are going to have a **'Bring & share' vegetarian supper** so please bring a small amount of food to put on the sharing table if you are able to do so. Please do not worry if you can't bring anything to share as it is not essential and we would rather have you join us for the evening.

York Interfaith Group will provide drinks for the supper. The chapel will be open from 6.30pm for those bringing food or arriving early. The evening will include some short talks about Unitarians, the chapel and their work in the past and thoughts about the future. The visit will end by 9pm but people can leave earlier to catch any buses.

Please note that there is no parking at the chapel but there are various car parks nearby. The chapel is just behind Stonebow / Peasholme Green for those travelling by bus. The chapel is fully accessible on the ground floor which is where we will be all the time.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE EMAIL US AT:
YORKINTERFAITHGROUP@GMAIL.COM

Raksha Bandhan

11 August 2022



Raksha means to keep safe

Bandhan means tying a sacred thread or amulet on the wrist

This one-day festival, commemorating the love and affection of brothers and sisters, is celebrated on the full moon day in the Shraavana month of the lunar calendar (usually falls in August of the Gregorian calendar).

Traditionally, during the Raksha Bandhan festival, sisters tie Rakhi around their brothers' wrists, followed by the Aarti (prayer) and tilak (putting sacred colour on forehead). It is said and believed that tying a Rakhi gives a responsibility to the brothers to honour his religion and the duty to protect his sister. Brothers also give a gift to the sisters.

In ancient times Rakhi (a holy amulet) tying meant their needs of taking help and promises. People also tended to tie Rakhi to someone's wrist to keep them safe and protected from evil.

Nowadays, people also tie the sacred Raksha thread to close ones, friends, neighbours, soldiers, and to everyone standing by them through thick and thin.

Many thanks to Varsha for this article

FAITH 4 CLIMATE JUSTICE

Extract of message from Rev. Fletcher Harper (greenfaith.org) via Audrey Miller

“People of diverse faiths want their moral voices to be heard and the right decisions to be taken on climate justice. Government action has been inadequate. Our political leaders are not moving fast enough. **We must step up our efforts to bring environmental justice to all people and the living earth.**”

When we launched Faiths 4 Climate Justice 2022 last month, we planned for 2 weeks of climate actions. But due to the increasingly dire consequences of climate change being felt around the world, our righteous indignation is growing as governments, corporations, and big banks disrespect our beliefs and defile our shared home.

Considering the diverse needs of our interfaith coalition, we realized in conversation with grassroots leaders that two weeks is not enough to make ourselves clear and ensure people of all faiths worldwide can participate. **We need more time.**

Please join us on 11 / 12 August to hear about our plan to extend F4CJ from 2 weeks to 4 weeks, and how you and your organizations can get involved! Together, we will remember and deepen our theological commitments to climate justice and bold action, plan our actions, and learn from grassroots leaders from across the globe. The call will be held at two times, with translations available in Spanish, French, German, Bahasa, and Swahili. Choose the time zone and language below that works best for you!

Call #1: 11 August

8am New York / 2pm Paris / 7pm Jakarta

*This call will have live translation in Spanish, German, French, Swahili, and Bahasa Indonesia

REGISTER FOR CALL #1

Call #2: August 11 / 12

August 11 @ 5pm California/Tijuana

August 12 @ 10am Sydney

*This call will have live translation in Spanish

REGISTER FOR CALL #2 In solidarity and hope,

Rev. Fletcher Harper

York Racial Equality Network

Dear Friends, I hope you are all keeping well.

I just wanted to let you know what events we have coming up over the summer. These sessions are free and drop in sessions, no need to book. As the school holidays are coming up, you are very welcome to bring your children along, but parents/carers must supervise their own children and keep them safe, YREN cannot accept any responsibility for children at St Sampson's or outings.

27th July – we will be meeting for a picnic and games at Rowntree's Park – we will meet by the gates from the car park into the play park from 1pm onwards. YREN will be providing some snacks, but please feel free to bring your own picnic especially if you have any allergies.

3rd August – we will be pebble painting and doing sand jars in the annex at St Sampson's Centre 1pm-3pm.

10th August – No session

17th August – we will be doing the cat trail around York City Centre, please meet at 1pm outside St Sampson's Centre, maps will be provided.

24th August – we will be visiting York Minster, please meet at 1pm outside the Belfry Church next to the Minster, please bring proof of address to gain free entry.

31st August – please meet outside Museum Gardens at 1pm by the main gates on Museum Street, to visit the Yorkshire Museum, if you could please let me know if you are available for this session, so that I can purchase tickets, children are free.

7th September – to be confirmed

14th September – we will be visiting the Black Women, Ceramics & Contemporary Art exhibition at York Art Gallery, please let me know if you are available for this session, so that I can purchase tickets.

21st September – British Food Fortnight

28th September – Biggest Coffee morning

Oct – Black History Month

Best Wishes

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RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS AUGUST 2022



1 August (Monday) LAMMAS/LUGHNASADH Wiccan LUGHNASADH Pagan

Lughnasadh, otherwise called *Lammas*, is the time of the corn harvest, when Pagans reap those things they have sown and when they celebrate the fruits of the mystery of Nature. At Lughnasadh, Pagans give thanks for the bounty of the Goddess as Queen of the Land.



4 August (Thursday) HERD BOY AND WEAVING MAID FESTIVAL/QIXIJIE/CH'I HOU CHIEH Chinese

This Double Seven festival perpetuates an ancient folk tale of two stars, one on either side of the Heavenly River (the Milky Way). They are held to have been a herd boy and a heavenly weaving maid who had married but were separated when she returned to heaven. The lovers are allowed a reunion on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month when a flock of magpies form a bridge across the Heavenly River.



6 August (Saturday) THE TRANSFIGURATION Christian (Western churches)

This festival commemorates the occasion when Jesus went up a mountain with three of his disciples, Peter, James and John, who saw his face change and his clothes become dazzling white. They witnessed him in conversation with Moses and Elijah, and heard a voice saying, 'This is my own dear Son with whom I am pleased – listen to him'. For many Christians this confirms the divine nature of Jesus.



6 August (Saturday) – 15 August (Sunday) FRAVARDIGAN/MUKTAD Zoroastrian (Shahenshahi-Parsi)

In the Fravardigan festival the immortal souls, together with their *fravashis* (the guardian spirits of departed ancestors, half man/half bird), come to reside in the place of worship. Many Zoroastrians take time off to pray, recite the five *Gathas* and cleanse their houses. Daily samples of sacred food are tasted by them during the daily ceremonies.



7 August (Sunday) TISHA B'AV Jewish

Full day fast mourning the destruction of the first and second Temples in Jerusalem and other tragedies in Jewish history. The Book of Lamentations is read.



8 August (Monday) ASHURA (10th Muharram) Muslim

For Sunni Muslims Ashura is a minor fast observed by the Prophet. Shi'a Muslims recall a great tragedy that took place in AH 61 (680 CE). The Imam Husayn (son of Ali and Fatimah and therefore grandson of the Prophet) was attacked and killed at Karbala (now in Iraq) along with his family and followers by the troops of the Caliph Yazid.



11/12 August (Thursday/ Friday) RAKSHA BANDHAN Hindu

Raksha means 'protection' and *bandhan* means 'to tie'. Girls and married women in families of a north Indian background tie a *rakhi* (amulet) on the right wrists of their brothers, wishing them protection from evil influences of various kinds.



12 August (Friday) FESTIVAL OF HUNGRY GHOSTS/ ZHONGQIJIE / CHUNG CH'IU Chinese

Chinese Buddhist and ancestral festival, when paper objects for use in the spirit world are made and offered to aid those spirits who have no resting place or descendants. Large paper boats are made and burnt at temples to help spirits cross the sea of torment to Nirvana.



13 August (Saturday) - 15 August (Monday) O-BON Japanese [in Tokyo - for rest of Japan see 13 July]

A Japanese festival when the spirits of the departed are welcomed back home with feasting and dancing. Fires are often lit to illuminate their arrival and departure.



15/ 28 August (Monday/ Sunday) THE DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD Christian (Eastern Orthodox) [second date follows Julian calendar]

On this day, Eastern Orthodox Christians commemorate the passing of Mary, Mother of Christ, in the presence of the Apostles. The apostles buried Mary at Gethsemane, where Jesus had also been buried; but on the third day after the burial, when they were eating together, Mary appeared to them, saying "Rejoice". When the apostles went to the grave, her body was gone, leaving a sweet fragrance. This event conveys the idea of death as 'falling asleep' (this is what 'dormition' means), to be followed by eventual resurrection.



16 August (Tuesday) NAVROZE / NO RUZ Zoroastrian (Shenshai-Parsi)

New Year's Day on the Shenshai Calendar. By the twentieth century the Parsis of India had become the largest group in the world practising Zoroastrianism, and in the twenty first century over 95% of Zoroastrians in the UK are Parsis. Like their Indian counterparts, they celebrate two new years – giving more time for making merry!



18/19 August (Thursday/ Friday) JANMASHTAMI / KRISHNA JAYANTI Hindu

Birthday of Krishna. Many *Hindus* fast till midnight, the time of Krishna's birth. Those unable to fast will have some fruit and milk. In the temples Krishna is welcomed with singing, dancing and sweets. In some homes and temples an image of the new-born Krishna is put in a cradle. Krishna is a very popular avatar or incarnation of Vishnu and this festival is celebrated widely.



19 August (Friday) THE TRANSFIGURATION Christian (Eastern Orthodox - Julian calendar)

This festival commemorates the occasion when Jesus went up a mountain with three of his disciples, Peter, James and John, who saw his face change and his clothes become dazzling white. They witnessed him in conversation with Moses and Elijah, and heard a voice saying, 'This is my own dear Son with whom I am pleased – listen to him'. For many Christians this confirms the divine nature of Jesus.



21 August (Sunday) KHORDAD SAL Zoroastrian (Shahenshahi) [26 March (Monday) Zoroastrian (Iranian)]

Khordad Sal is the Birthday of Zarathushtra and falls on the sixth day after NoRuz. *Khordad* means perfection and the festival of Khordad Sal symbolically celebrates the birthday of Prophet Zarathushtra. It is customary on this day to visit the Fire Temple, to give thanks to Ahura Mazda for giving humanity the Prophet Zarathushtra, to participate in a *jashan* or thanksgiving ceremony, to listen to stories of the miraculous birth and life of Prophet Zarathushtra, and to share in a happy community meal, a drink and a dance.



23 August (Tuesday) to 30 August (Sunday) PARYUSHAN PARVA Jain

These are eight days of purification, devoted to study, prayer, meditation and fasting, and ending with a period of confession and forgiveness. Often monks will be invited to give teachings from the Jain scriptures. Paryushana means 'to stay in one place', which signifies a time of reflection and repentance. Originally the practice was monastic for the most part.



30/ 31 August (Tuesday/ Wednesday) GANESH CHATURTHI Birthday of Ganesh Hindu

This is a Hindu festival in honour of Ganesh, the god of good fortune and new beginnings. He was the elephant headed son of Lord Shiva and Parvati, and is often referred to as Ganupati. Celebrations conclude with the immersion in water of the image of Ganesh.

The Yorkshire Integration Festival 2022 is coming to Millennium Square in Leeds on 24 September and will celebrate the integration of refugees, and all our communities in Yorkshire and Humber.

Event details

When Saturday 24 September

Where Millennium Square, Leeds

The **Yorkshire Integration Festival 2022** is coming to Millennium Square in Leeds on **24 September** and will celebrate the integration of refugees, and all our communities in Yorkshire and Humber. The programme will be released in the coming months.

events@migrationyorkshire.org.uk

Our current Committee comprises:

Chair: Avtar S Matharu

Vice Chair: Dee Boyle

Treasurer: Daryoush Mazloum

Secretary: Penny Coppin-Siddall

Newsletter Editor: Anne Castle

Christian Faith Representative: Sister Patricia Harriss

Hindu Faith Representative: Dr Varsha Gulati

Jewish Faith Representatives Sharon Tagger and Adrian Tellwright

Muslim Faith Representative and Press and Publicity: Dr Rasha Ibrahim

As Chair, I continue to value your membership as York Interfaith Group continues to grow as a community.

Your feedback is very important us. We constantly try to improve our service so that we can best support your needs and those of your faith. You can contact and/or follow us via:

Facebook—York Interfaith group

Instagram— @yorkinterfaith

Twitter—@Yorkinterfaith

email yorkinterfaithgroup@gmail.com

If you would like to contribute an article or advertise an event, please email yorkinterfaithgroup@gmail.com Items by August 16th to guarantee inclusion please.

Anne Castle, Newsletter Editor and Committee Member

Avtar Matharu, Chair, YIG