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# UNITED FOR PEACE

## London's Communities United Against Extremism

A Service with readings interspersed with silent reflection  
and beautiful music



**Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

**6.30pm for 7.00pm-9.30pm**

**The Clothworkers' Company, Clothworkers' Hall, Dunster Court,  
Mincing Lane, London, EC3R 7AH**

**This is an initiative of The Oxford Foundation delivered in partnership with:  
The Secretary for Inter Religious Affairs to the Archbishop of Canterbury,  
The Al-Khoei Foundation and The Clothworkers' Company**



Photo by Hugo Burnand.



CLARENCE HOUSE

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish so much that I could be with you today because I greatly welcome this Service and its vital message that we should all unite for peace against the voices of extremism.

Throughout my life I have worked for greater understanding between our different faiths and cultures. I have longed that we might together cherish the ancient wisdom and riches of our different traditions.

So, it gives me the greatest pleasure to know that you are coming together and finding in your different sacred texts a common desire to make peace in the world.

As we all know, there is always a danger that some may take a text out of its context and use it to attack others of a different faith or of no faith. Your example today of coming together in London and sharing your hopes for peace helps to keep us safe from those forces of extremism.

We can all of us unite under the banner "Love your neighbour as yourself." This is a command to love those who are different from us with the same love that we love ourselves and our own religion.

I am delighted that the Clothworkers' Company are helping the Oxford Foundation. Your gathering together in their Hall is like the weaving of a tapestry. Their motto for nearly 600 years has been, "My trust is in God alone."

It is my hope that your prayers today and this Service will lead to that "Peace which passeth all human understanding."



THE PRIME MINISTER



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

I am pleased to provide a message for the United for Peace: London's Communities United Against Extremism service.

One of the greatest threats we face in society today is the scourge of extremism from those who wish to divide us. What we are fighting, with regard to all forms of extremism, is a particular ideology. It is an extreme doctrine characterised by violent and divisive narratives.

Tackling extremism is not something the Government can do alone. The United for Peace: London's Communities United Against Extremism service in London demonstrates that when people of all faiths and backgrounds come together, we are stronger in our fight against extremism.

I commend the efforts of United for Peace, who, through hard work and dedication, unite the diverse communities of the United Kingdom. Together, by affirming the values of love, respect, peace and compassion, we can challenge extremism in all its forms.

29 April 2019

**Sir Nicholas Pearson, Bt.**  
**Patron, The Oxford Foundation**

I want to thank all those who have shown an interest in the work of the Oxford Foundation and also I wish particularly to thank those who volunteer their time and good will. To all of you who come today to celebrate our determination to be unified in the face of sometime extreme provocation I also give our sincere welcome and thanks. We really do mean to show that these islands are not called the United Kingdom for nothing!

In these pages you will find, from many diverse sources, a constant and underlying call for peace and tolerance in the face of the extremist currents that buffet our world. These currents can so easily push us into extreme positions ourselves and it is this we need to guard against.

While we can never concede to the aims or the principles of violence, we need also to understand how and from where this arises. It is one of the aims of the Oxford Foundation to do this by working with young men and women who, out of the ground of their own situations, find themselves angry, alienated and revengeful towards both their own families and the country at large.

By identifying these cases early we hope to be able to allow these young men and women to air their grievances in a secure and creative manner which may, in time, allow them to re-join the ranks of all who strive to add something to this truly wonderful country in which we are all lucky to live.

Thank you for your support and please continue to give us all the help you can.

**Sayed Abdul Saheb Al-Khoei, Secretary-General, Al-Khoei Foundation**

The religion of Islam teaches that the mankind was created on the basis of diversity. The Holy Quran states: "And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the difference of your languages and colours. Lo! herein indeed are portents for men of knowledge".

Indeed, the extremists misinterpret the text and attempt to forcefully implement their false doctrine on all but Allah says: "And if thy Lord had willed, He verily would have made mankind one nation, yet they cease not differing".

The values taught by Prophet Muhammad and the Imams are respect, fairness and love for all. When a group of Muslims waged war against the caliphate of Imam Ali, he rejected to call them disbelievers and referred to them as "brothers" who rebelled. Similarly, in dealings with non-Muslims, Ali reminds Malik, the newly-appointed governor of Egypt, that "People are of two kinds, either your brothers in faith or your equals in humanity".

Turbulent times like these require all of us to stand united in face of extremism and violence. Through engagement, constructive dialogue and education, we have always sought to increase understanding and embrace one another. We must show sincerity and build trust. I hope our prayers will bring peace and through the shared values of human dignity, equality and love, we win over the extremist ideology.

**Rt Hon The Lord Mayor, Alderman Peter Estlin  
The Lord Mayor of the City of London**

I wish this initiative every success, at a time when people across the world could not value peace more highly. Bringing together a wide range of faiths and views, to develop a better understanding of each other, and thus how to share our world, has never been more relevant. Working through the City of London Corporation, this is something that I am addressing in my Mayoral year, working with younger generations in a multi faith forum. Given our role with 'the Square Mile' and all its businesses, I am also conscious of the importance of peace and stability, for the commerce and trade on which our common prosperity rests.

**Alex Nelson, Chair, Clothworkers' Foundation**

The Clothworkers' Foundation was founded in 1977 and co-ordinates the charitable giving activity on behalf of the Company. The grants which we distribute around the whole of the United Kingdom equates to about £6m annually, and our Main Grants programme focuses on disadvantage in nine programme areas, including particular strands of interest in helping disadvantaged minority communities and young people. I am therefore delighted that the Oxford Foundation has chosen to come to Clothworkers' Hall here in the City of London for this evening's event. It is not a religious venue, but it has been a place of dialogue and fellowship for 500 years. I am pleased to attend personally in support of young people and minority communities, and the contribution they make to British society. I do hope our guests enjoy the evening.

**Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster and President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales**

As a disciple of Jesus Christ, I am deeply conscious of the lack of peace and mutual respect between people that so often surfaces in our society. My discipleship and faith insists on the dignity of every person, a dignity given by God and never to be obliterated by exploitation, anger or hate. Indeed, Jesus Christ, whom I hold to be the Word of God made present in our human flesh, made of himself a selfless offering, in life and in death, by which hatred, anger and every form of sin is overcome. It is this victory that we have just celebrated in the Feast of Easter. It is a victory symbolised in the lighted candle carried into our churches at Easter, a light in the darkness of our world.

I pray:

May the light of our loving Heavenly Father, shining brightly and decisively in Christ, inspire our hearts to work for peace and mutual respect across this City and Nation. May God guide us to rid ourselves of all hatred. May our example lead others into the path of peace. Amen.



בס"ד

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### Message from the Chief Rabbi for the United for Peace Service 29th April 2019

More than at any time in recent memory we see the urgent need for unity, as those threatening to divide us feel emboldened to act on their hatred and prejudice. Across the UK, minorities are targeted with abuse, with rising hate crime becoming a chronic and poisonous phenomenon. Hate speech and invective are quickly becoming a violent reality.

I commend this initiative because it stands as a bulwark against those who peddle hate-filled rhetoric. Indeed, we must be 'United for Peace'. We must be united in our total opposition to those who seek to separate us. We must be united out of a sense of solidarity, not in spite of but rather *because* of our differences.

This is the only way to adequately address the challenge that extremism poses to our society, and to demonstrate that it has no place.

I wish the Oxford Foundation success in this important endeavour, as it helps to repair the damage caused by appalling intolerance.



**Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis**  
April 2019 • Nisan 5779





The Bishop of London

**UNITED FOR PEACE**  
**London's Communities United Against Extremism**

**Welcome by Master, Mr John Coombe-Tennant**  
**The Clothworkers' Company**

**Address by Imam Monawar Hussain, M.B.E., D.L.**  
**Founder, The Oxford Foundation**

The last few weeks have seen our capital city reeling. The news of violence on our streets and division in our government is relentless. Knife attacks have brought mourning and fear. Inconclusive Brexit debates have brought confusion and frustration. Life has been treated as cheap, while personal convictions trump the common good.

In the midst of this, the Church stands with the suffering and sympathises with the frustrated. As Christians we believe in Jesus Christ who knows what it is to feel tragic loss, personal rejection and political chaos. Just as He weeps with us, so we weep with others.

And yet we also offer a message of hope. The Christian story is, at root, a journey towards peace. It begins with humanity made in the image of God. Every member of the human race worthy of dignity and respect. Our world is one in which catching a glimpse of another human being in a crowd, is in some sense to catch a glimpse of the face of God. To take life because of a difference of opinion or to demean one another because of a political view, is a profound attack on God himself and the dignity of humanity.

In response to a God of peace, we seek to end hostilities in our communities. We fail daily, but also look forward to the day when the increase of the government and peace of Jesus will have no end.

*+ Sarah Mullally*

The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE

**UNITED FOR PEACE**  
**Readings, Silent Reflection and Beautiful Music**

**Christian Prayer led by The Revd Dr Richard Sudworth**  
**The Secretary for Inter Religious Affairs to the Archbishop of Canterbury**

Let us pray to God, the only Giver of peace to the Church and to the world.  
Make your Church an instrument of peace, teaching by word and example the way of reconciliation.

Bless those who are working in areas of conflict to bring people together in the name of Christ.  
Bring peace to all the places of strife and violence. Fill the hearts of those in authority with the true love of peace and the desire to work for harmony with those who seem to be their enemies.  
Bless the organisations that seek peace between the nations.

Give us peace in our homes, with our neighbours and in our places of work.  
Inspire us with the love for others which may spread through them to heal the wider problems of the world.

Have mercy on the victims of war and terrorism, the wounded, the refugees, those who have lost everything they had. Be with those who have no more hope and restore them to the fullness of life that is in you.

We make our prayers in the name of Christ, who has left his peace to his faithful people.

**Amen.**

**Mike Haines OBE, A Family Member's Response to Extremist violence**

**Mike's brother David Haines, a British humanitarian worker, was killed by the terrorist group calling itself 'IS'. We are grateful to Mike for joining us this evening.**

**The Grocers' and The Clothworkers' Choir**

**Make me a Channel for your Peace, based on the prayers from St Francis of Assisi**

Make me a channel of your peace:  
Where there is hatred, let me bring you love;  
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord  
And where there's doubt, true faith in you.

Make me a channel of your peace:  
Where there's despair in life let me bring hope;  
Where there is darkness, - only light,  
And where there's sadness, ever joy.

O Master, grant that I may never seek,  
So much to be consoled as to console,  
To be understood as to understand,  
To be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace.  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
In giving to all that we receive,  
And in dying that we're born to eternal life.

**John Rutter's 'The Lord Bless You and Keep you'**

The Lord bless you and keep you:  
The Lord make His face to shine upon you,  
To shine upon you and be gracious, and be gracious unto you  
The Lord bless you and keep you:  
The Lord make His face to shine upon you,  
To shine upon you and be gracious, and be gracious unto you  
The Lord lift up the light  
Of His countenance upon you,  
The Lord lift up the light  
Of His countenance upon you,  
And give you peace,  
And give you peace,  
And give you peace,  
And give you peace  
Amen  
Amen  
Amen  
Amen  
Amen  
Amen  
Amen

***A pause for silence and personal reflection***

**Jewish Prayer led by Rabbi Neil Janes, West London Synagogue**

**Responsive reading on Peace**

*(please respond with the sections in italics)*

May God reach out to you in tenderness, and give you peace. Great is peace, for the Priestly Benediction concludes with 'peace.'

*Great is peace, for it outweighs all other blessings*

Great is peace, for it is granted to those who repent, as it says,  
*'Peace, peace, to the far and the near, says the Eternal One'.*

Great is peace, for it is granted to those who learn Torah, as it says,

*'All your children shall be taught about God, and great shall be the peace of your children.'*

Great is peace, for the Messianic Age will begin with peace, as it says,  
*'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger of good tidings, who announces peace.'*

The whole Torah exists only to establish peace, as it says,  
*'Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace.'*

The world rests on three pillars: justice, truth and peace. That is, both peace between nations and between individuals.

*May it be Your will, O God, that war and bloodshed shall vanish from the earth, and that a great and glorious peace may reign forever in the world. Let every human being realise and understand the basic truth, that we have not been created for strife and discord, hatred and envy, but only that we shall come to know You to whom all praise is due for ever.*

In days to come .. they will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again train for war.

*But everyone shall sit under their vine and under their fig-tree and none shall make them afraid.*

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor ever again train for war.

[Extracted from 'Siddur Lev Chadash' pp 292-295].

**Chazan Jaclyn Chernett, Founder and Director of Studies  
European Academy for Jewish Liturgy**

Shalom, Salaam, Bring peace and love.

**Kevin Zheng**

Kevin has kindly taken time out from his studies to join us, for which we are most grateful. He will perform:

1. Britten - *Canto primo: Sostenuto e largamente* from Cello Suite No. 1, Op. 72
2. J.S. Bach - *Prelude* from Cello Suite No.2 in D minor, BWV 1008

***A pause for silence and personal reflection***

**Muslim Prayer led by Aliya Azam MBE, Al-Khoei Foundation**

In the name of God, the Infinitely Good, the Most Merciful  
Praise be to God. Oh my Lord You are the Most Kind, the Most Compassionate, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful of the Merciful.  
Oh my Lord, please bring peace where there is conflict and bloodshed.  
Oh my Lord, please bring healing where there is injury and pain.  
Oh my Lord, please bring reconciliation where there is division, hatred and enmity, between your creation in different parts of the world.  
Oh my Lord, please grant us as a community of communities, to be voices of peace, love and reconciliation for all creation.  
Oh my Lord, strengthen those who are working for peace, reconciliation and healing, wherever they may be in the world.  
Oh my Lord, bless this beautiful City with every blessing and make this event today an inspiration for others, to be voices of love and peace.  
Oh my Lord, grant us always to be united against the voices of hatred, division and violence.

***A traditional supplication repeated after prayer:***

O God, You are Peace, From you comes Peace,  
And to You returns Peace, Enliven us with Peace, Our Lord.  
Enter us into Paradise - the abode of peace.  
You are the Most Blessed, Our Lord,  
Most Exalted, Possessor of Glory and Nobility. O Most Merciful of the Merciful,  
Have Mercy upon us. Pardon us, O You, Who are the Most Generous.

**AMEEN.**

**Choirs of Al-Sadiq and Al-Zahra Schools, Together We can Change the World  
Written by Mark Shepard**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8  
I believe it's not too late  
Together we can change the world

Lay the puzzle pieces out  
Find out what it's all about  
Together we can change the world

\* Can't do it by myself  
So, I'm asking for your help  
Together we can change the world  
Sail past where it's been charted  
Roll your sleeves up, let's get started  
Together we can change the world  
Together we can change the world.  
With our hands and with our hearts  
We can dare to make a start  
Together we can change the world

What if we spoke with one voice  
Knowing that we have a choice  
Together we can change the world

--\*Can't do it by myself....

Change your mind and change your life  
Set aside the fear and strife  
Together we can change the world

When we open up our eyes  
Then we start to realise  
Together we can change the world

---\*Can't do it by myself...

---\*Can't do it by myself....

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

I believe it's not too late  
Together we can change the world

**Younis Ghulam-Nabi sings the Kalam of Hazrat Bulleh Shah [1680-1757].**

**Hazrat Bulleh Shah is a world renowned Muslim Sufi poet and Sufi Master from the Punjab. His message is universal, steeped in deep spirituality, love and he speaks to the human soul.**

Parh parh ilam hazaar kitaaban, apna aap na pareya  
You have read a thousand books and gained vast knowledge, But, you never read your own  
Self

Ja ja varda mandir masjid, mann apne vich na vareya  
You earnestly enter Mosques and Temples, But, you never entered your own heart

Larde rai ho naal shaitana, nai nafz apne naal lareya  
You fight with Satan, Oh human being, But, you never fought with the evil within your own Self

Pehle apne aap nu par, phir Mandir masjid var  
First read your own heart, then visit the Temples and Mosques

Jidoun nafs jave tera Mar, phir naal shaitana larr  
When you control your own Soul, then you can fight with the satan  
Chorus - Allahooo

Masjid dha de, mandar dha de, Dha de jo kuj dehenda  
Demolish the Mosque, demolish the Temple, Demolish whatever you can

Par kise da dil na dhaanvi, Rabb dilaan vich rehenda  
But, do not demolish any person's heart, For God dwells in hearts

Chorus - Allahooo

Rab te tere andar vasda, Vich Qur'an Ishare  
The Lord resides within you, As indicated in the Qur'an

Bulle Shah! Rab onu miisi, Jera Nafs apne nu mare  
Bulle Shah! He will find God, The one who loses his ego

Chorus - Allahooo

Dil jis se zinda hai, wo tamanna Tumhi to ho,  
That which is keeping my heart alive, that hope is just you

Hum jis mein bas rahay hain, wo dunya tumhi to ho  
That which we are living and existing in, that world is nothing but you

**Ahmad Nawaz, Survivor of the Peshawar School attack**

**Ahmad's brother Haris Nawaz and 131 of his fellow students with 17 members of staff, were killed by the Pakistani Taliban, on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014. We are most grateful to Ahmad Nawaz and his father Muhammad Nawaz Khan, for joining us this evening.**

*A pause for silence and personal reflection*

**Hindu Prayer led by Vijaybhai Hiran, Hindu Academy  
Gayatri Mantra**

ॐ भूर् भुवः स्वः ।  
तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं  
भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि ।  
धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ॥

Let us meditate on the glorious effulgence of the supreme being who has created the universe.  
May she enlighten our hearts and direct our understanding.

**Unity in diversity Mantra (Rig Veda 1:164:46)**

एकं सद्ब्रह्म बहुधा वदन्ति

Only One God exists eternally BUT wise persons call Him by Many Names.

**Elaboration**

The diversity of religious traditions among human societies reflects this simple but profound idea. Human beings pray to the Lord in whatever form they are most comfortable visualising

Him in. Hence tolerance for people with faiths other than your own is an essential part of being human.

### Short Prayer

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः

सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु

मा कश्चिद्दुःखभागभवेत् ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Oh Lord,

May all be happy.

May all be free from misery and sickness.

May all be in harmony and friendship and

may all be free from pain.

### Prayer for Peace

ॐ द्यौः शान्तिरन्तरिक्षं शान्तिः

पृथिवी शान्तिरापः शान्तिरोषधयः शान्तिः ।

वनस्पतयः शान्तिर्विश्वेदेवाः शान्तिर्ब्रह्म शान्तिः

सर्वं शान्तिः शान्तिरेव शान्तिः सा मा शान्तिरेधि ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

O Lord, Let there be peace in the Heavens; Peace in the Atmosphere;

Peace on Earth;

Let the waters be cooling, the herbs healing and the plants enhancing Life.

Let there be Harmony between, and peace for, all beings in the Universe.

With perfection in Knowledge let peace pervade everywhere.

May this Peace be within me as well!

Om Shaantih, Shaantih, Shaantih, Om (O, Peace; Peace; Peace)

### Zoroastrian Prayer led by Malcolm M Deboo, Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe

In the name of God, the Bountiful, the Bestower, the Merciful!

Now from this gathering may there arise always righteousness, power of holy man and woman and the Law of the Creator Ahura Mazda.

May the good, heroic and beneficent Fravashis (Guardian Spirits) of the righteous people bringing with them the means of holiness, as wide as the earth, as extensive as the oceans and as exalted as the sun, come in this abode. May the Fravashis fulfil the desires of the righteous people and increase their wealth and fame, for withstanding the wicked people especially those who misconstrue the holy words of the Creator.

May in this world obedience triumph over disobedience! May peace triumph over discord! May charity and generosity triumph over stinginess! May devotion and service triumph over contempt and apathy! May truth triumph over the lie and falsehood! May moral order and ethics triumph over chaos! May the glory giving comfort and ease, happiness, offspring, and innate wisdom never leave this house! May the long friendship of Ashihvagh which gives comfort and ease never leave this house!

Righteousness is the best good! It is happiness! Happiness is on to him who is righteous for the sake of the best righteousness.

### Sikh Prayer led by Bhai Sahib Mohinder Singh OBE KSG Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha

The whole world is suffering, engulfed in the flames of many destructive forces.

We plead to You God through Your mercy, please protect and save us.

No matter which door or sanctuary or place of worship we come from,

take us into Your fold and refuge.

Shelter and protect us.

(Guru Granth Sahib Ji, p.853)

### Amrit Kaur Lohia

Amrit Kaur Lohia is a singer-songwriter, Sarangi player and vocalist in genres of Punjabi folk, jazz and soul. She tours internationally as a musician, educator, youth worker and social entrepreneur. Recently named a BBC Music Introducing artist, her notable performances include UN General Assembly, TEDx and Glastonbury Festival. She is also a Global Youth Ambassador for TheirWorld. We are most grateful to her for performing this evening.

Amrit will sing a Sikh hymn from the Guru Granth Sahib in the musical raga of Maajh. Raga Maajh is the musical scale used in composition to express longing and a spiritual yearning for the beloved, the Divine.

Maajh, Fifth Mehla:

You are my father and my mother. You are my relation and my brother.

You are my Guardian everywhere so why fear any distress or anxiety? ||1||

By your Grace I have recognized you. You are my shelter and my honor.

Without you there is none other; the entire Universe is your playground. ||2||

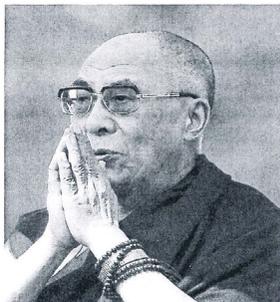
All beings and creatures are your creation. As it pleases you so you assign tasks to all.

All that happens is your doing; we can do nothing ourselves. ||3||

Meditating on the Naam, I have found great peace. Singing your praises, my mind is cooled and soothed.

By the Perfect Guru, congratulations are pouring in - Nanak has won on the arduous battlefield of life! ||4||24||31||

## *A Precious Human Life*



*Every day, think as you wake up -  
Today I am fortunate to have woken up,  
I am alive, I have a precious human life,  
I am not going to waste it,  
I am going to use  
All my energies to develop myself,  
To expand my heart out to others,  
To achieve enlightenment for  
The benefit of all beings.  
I am going to have kind  
Thoughts towards others,  
I am not going to get angry,  
Or think badly about others  
As much as I can.*

*HH the XIVth Dalai Lama*

### *Metta Sutta*

In order that I may be skilled in discerning what is good, in order that I may understand the path to peace,

Let me be able, upright, and straightforward, of good speech, gentle, and free from pride;

Let me be contented, easily satisfied, having few duties, living simply, of controlled senses, prudent, without pride and without attachment to nation, race, or other groups.

Let me not do the slightest thing for which the wise might rebuke me. Instead let me think:

“May all beings be well and safe, may they be at ease.  
Whatever living beings there may be, whether moving or still, without exception,  
whether large, great, middling, or small, whether tiny or substantial,  
Whether seen or unseen, whether living near or far,  
Born or unborn; may all beings be happy.  
Let none deceive or despise another anywhere.  
Let none wish harm to another, in anger or in hate.”

Just as a mother would guard her child, her only child, with her own life, even so let me cultivate a boundless mind for all beings in the world.

Let me cultivate a boundless love for all beings in the world, above, below, and across, unhindered, without ill will or enmity.

Standing, walking, seated, or lying down, free from torpor, let me as far as possible fix my attention on this recollection.

This, they say, is the divine life right here.

[Translated and adapted by Bodhipaksa].

### **Traditional Blessings Chanted in Pali, Monastics of Amaravati Buddhist Monastery**

#### **Robin Launder, Humanist Community**

It is a great thing that we are here today. A great thing that people of faith and people, like me, of no faith have come together to stand for peace. It is a testament to this country that we are able to do so, to be here today, to exercise this freedom. It couldn't happen everywhere. It doesn't happen everywhere. It is an expression, it itself, of the secular values that underpin our society. As a humanist, as a human being, I'm grateful for those values. We are a successful society: a successful multi-ethnic, multi-faith, multi-belief democracy, where every individual is valued, regardless of faith, belief, skin colour, ethnicity, language, age, gender and sexuality.

Of course, society is always a work in progress. Our values need protecting and promoting. Hence today. We must always be on the look out for people who want to peddle bigotry, hatred and violence, whether religious or political, and call it out. Name it and shame it. And every instance of it. We must never turn a blind eye, never walk on by, never pretend that we didn't hear something when we did. Silence in the presence of bigotry is an act of collusion. It lets hatred fester and grow.

The extremist, the hater, the bigot wants to create out groups, to say that this group should not be entitled to the rights that their own group enjoy. But that's not how rights work. Rights apply to everyone. They are universal.

We have no outsiders. We are all a part of this society. There is no us and them. Every individual in our society – regardless of faith, belief, skin colour, ethnicity, language, age, gender and sexuality – is born equal and free in dignity and rights. The extremist would disagree, but the extremist is wrong.

Today we stand united for peace. Tomorrow we will be back in our communities. Today is important, tomorrow no less so. For tomorrow, and the tomorrows that follow, we must continue to stand for peace, and continue to stand against extremism.

***A pause for silence and personal reflection***

#### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

**Sir Nicholas Pearson, Bt., Patron, The Oxford Foundation**

#### **A PLEDGE FOR PEACE**

**Led by Kaleem Hussain**

**The Oxford Foundation representative for the West Midlands and Buckinghamshire**

**[All stand, to be repeated with Kaleem Hussain]**

We have come together today as citizens of London and the United Kingdom.

We pledge to stand united  
against those who propagate hate and violence towards others.

We pledge to stand united  
against all forms of violent extremism.

We pledge to live by the values that are inherent within our traditions –  
values of compassion for the needy, love for the neighbour  
and respect for one another.

We pledge to do all we can  
To promote understanding, respect and mutual love for all.

***Please enjoy the refreshments and do make a point of introducing yourself to someone  
you do not know.***

## **MESSAGES OF SUPPORT AND PRAYERS**

### **Her Royal Highness Princess Badiya bint El Hassan**

The typical greeting used by Muslims all over the world is “Assalamu alaikum”, “Peace be upon you”; a greeting of peace that can be said to any and to all. Diversity is not just acknowledged and accepted but welcomed in Islam. We are not, nor should all be the same. To quote, the Holy Qur'an states: “O Human kind. God has created you from male and female and made you into diverse nations and tribes so that you may come to know each other. Verily the most honoured among you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you” (49:13) and also: “To each of you God has prescribed a Law and a Way. If God would have willed, He would have made you one community, but He wanted to test you through that which He has given you, so race to do good: you will all return to God and he will make clear to you the matters you differed about” (5:48). And the point of human diversity is emphasized in yet another Qur'anic verse with the command: “Vie, therefore with one another in doing good works” (2:148), a command to all and not just Muslims.

Cultural diversity and religious pluralism can inspire healthy competition between communities and nations and God enjoins us all to direct that competition towards Good. With this in mind, we can pray together for peace, in the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

### **The Baroness Neuberger, DBE Advisory Board, The Oxford Foundation**

The Oxford Foundation has brought together people of many faiths and none. It has stood for diversity, respect, tolerance, knowledge, education, fairness and justice. It has spoken out against horrors committed by those who do not share our values, and it has done all it can, in an age of intolerance, to change the music and to bring people together- to learn, to understand, to celebrate, to enjoy each other's company. Where would we be without the Oxford Foundation? I hate to think. May it flourish and grow its successes. In Judaism, we wish people "To 120" on their birthdays- the age Moses/Musa was when he died. So let us say "To 120" to the Oxford Foundation, and may it grow and prosper, and show us the right path for us all.

### **Revd Dr Marcus Braybrooke Joint-President of the World Congress of Faiths**

At a time of growing anti-Semitism and Islamophobia as well as divisive politics, the 'United for Peace' programme could not be more timely. The readings will, I am sure, make clear that the authentic teaching of all the world faiths urges people to be respectful of each other, to seek the welfare of the community, to make proper provision for those those who are unwell or feel marginalised and to join together to seek justice and peace and to treasure our beautiful Planet Earth. Silence and Music will encourage those present to discover, beyond words, a deeper unity in the presence of the One God.

May those who attend been inspired and in turn inspire others to seek a true harmony.

**Cllr Sanchia Alasia, Mayor for Barking and Dagenham**

I wish to express my support for the *United for Peace Service*. As someone who has experienced hate crime in the past, I know how deeply distressing this can be. I would encourage [those] who have experienced hate crime, to report it so that the police, local council and partner agencies are able to respond appropriately.

**Cllr Saray Karakus, Mayor of Enfield**

I am very proud to be Mayor of the London Borough of Enfield. It is a diverse, multi-cultural, vibrant community. As members of Enfield Council, we strive to work together to enamour our residents to live happily, safely and peacefully in unison.

**Cllr Dilip Patel, Mayor of Havering**

Thank you to the Oxford Foundation for making it possible for us to stand here today united for peace. It reminds us that it is more important than ever for our communities to come together and form a united front against extremism.

The threat posed by extreme violence is one that cannot be dealt with by any group alone. It requires a diverse multicultural response encouraging compassion and understanding. Initiatives like United for Peace promote this ideal, reminding us that our shared values are more important than ever before.

**Cllr Sally Littlejohn, Mayor of Waltham Forest**

In a world made smaller by technology, where we are all global neighbours, there can be no place for extremism in any form. In London, one of the world's most dynamic, diverse and welcoming cities, we can be proud of the cohesion that exists among its many communities.

However, we must be vigilant and work to ensure this cohesion is not undermined by hatred and division. That is why initiatives such as this are to be commended and as Mayor of the London Borough of Waltham Forest, I am pleased to be among those united against extremism.

**Cllr Ben Khosa, Mayor of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames**

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames is delighted to take part in this year's United for Peace event and wishes to express its full support for this superb initiative. We will be holding a similar event locally in our Borough. Best Wishes and thank you for holding this event.

**Gillian Merron, Chief Executive, Board of Deputies of British Jews**

Communities United Against Extremism is a vital project, because it really speaks to some of the most crucial issues facing our country – and our world - right now. The Jewish community has long been on the receiving end of extremist rhetoric and violence, and we carry our history with us. With this in mind, we stand firm in its opposition to all forms of extremism. Society should not tolerate the undermining of democracy, nor hatred, violence or abuse against women, the LGBT+ community or any individual, minority or group. These behaviours should be

robustly challenged and met with the full force of the law where appropriate. So, government and law-enforcement have an important responsibility to tackle extremism, but faith communities must play a role too. It cannot be left for Muslims alone to call out anti-Muslim extremism. It cannot be up to Jews alone to call out anti-Jewish extremism. Violence and hatred towards any community is a scourge on our society and an affront to the values of tolerance, diversity and equality that make Britain a great place to live, and a welcoming home to people of all faiths and ethnicities. For people of faith, there can only be one response – solidarity.

**Imam Qari Asim MBE  
Chairman, MINAB (Mosques & Imams National Advisory Board)**

All religions teach compassion, respect and understanding for fellow men and women. These concepts are timeless and can be found in all scriptures. When people of faiths and no-faiths unite to learn more about each other and to foster love and understanding, peace emanates from such endeavours.

Initiatives such as United for Peace are important as they promote the sacred tenants of compassion and respect and champion interfaith dialogue. It is through such acts of Standing Together and sharing our moments of joy and concerns that we can tackle the narratives of extremism and stand united for Peace against those who seek to divide us by driving a wedge between peoples, focusing on that which divides us rather than that which unites us.

United for Peace event helps us celebrate the rich heritage and diversity that we have in our country and deepens our understanding of each other through intercultural and Interfaith dialogue.

**Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner, Acting Director, Woolf Institute, University of Cambridge**

The Woolf Institute's vision is a world in which collaborative discussion and constructive engagement overcome prejudice and intolerance. The Institute combines teaching, scholarship and outreach, focusing on Jews, Christians and Muslims, to encourage tolerance and foster understanding between people of all beliefs. The primary aim of the Woolf Institute is to answer practical and theoretical questions concerning aspects of identity, culture and practice. We strive, in our research and outreach, to demonstrate how greater understanding of commonality and difference can inform and enhance the wider public good. Initiatives such as the United for Peace services share this goal and we wish all success to the London Communities service at the Clothworkers' Hall on 29th April 2019, as it brings people together from different faiths (and no-faith) to experience shared prayer.

**Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg, New North London Synagogue**

I write as the February sun shines through the branches of old apple trees in a venerable Kentish orchard, dispersing the mist above the frost-hardened grass. In my soul is thanksgiving for the privilege of life, this gift of awareness in a world full of wonder.

Trees, birds, animals, people, all creation alive at this moment, we are entrusted to each other at this critical hour on the journey of our planet.

May neither fear, greed, ignorance, heedlessness, heartlessness nor lack of imagination misguide us into hurting, fighting and destroying each other. May our different ways to God educate and enrich our spirit so that, even as we follow our own path, we find companionship and inspiration from others who follow theirs.

May our humanity not make us arrogant, as if we owned creation. Rather, may the sensitivities and vulnerability of our hearts deepen our consciousness, so that we recognise with humility our fellowship and interdependence with all existence.

Together, may we be moved to love life more deeply. May we be inspired to serve the God of life by working, each with our unique gifts, insight and energy, for the good of all living beings.

#### **Dr. Jane Clements, Founder, FODIP (The Forum for Discussion of Israel and Palestine)**

FODIP (The Forum for Discussion of Israel and Palestine) was founded on the belief that only by exploring difficult issues together, as communities of faith, can we bring about positive outcomes for UK society. Our work with inspirational young people in particular has shown us that the courage which our faith traditions inspire can combat the negativity and isolation which lead others to extremism. We therefore wholeheartedly welcome this initiative of the Oxford Foundation, delivered in partnership with the Secretary for Inter Religious Affairs to the Archbishop of Canterbury and The Al-Khoei Foundation, demonstrating that so much connects us in our common search for peace and understanding.

#### **Professor Francis Davis, Professor of Religion, Communities and Public Policy University of Birmingham**

I have broken bread with new refugee arrivals and those in fear of traffickers in London's Catholic congregations to the South of the river, shared dinner in and next to the city's mosques in the East, and been welcomed by synagogues for the striking remembrance of Yom HaShoah in the North. To the West Anglican parishes and Hindu friends have made me welcome: The unity that can be found in silence and the fellowship that unites us through hospitality are powerful symbols and practices that remind again and again that our great British cities are built on cultures of mercy, justice and service that would be denuded were those cities to lose any of the communities which do so much to sustain those ethics no matter what we might read in the national media.

#### **Kristiane Backer, Author, From MTV to Mecca**

Awakening our awareness for the Divine or the Higher Power in everything and everyone leads to inner peace and peaceful behaviour towards one and all.

#### **Kaleem Hussain, The Oxford Foundation Representative for West Midlands & Buckinghamshire**

The Christchurch terrorist mosque attacks epitomised the most inhumane aspects of our human dimension whereby worshippers were brutally massacred in the house of God for which they frequent to pray, find solace, peace and tranquillity. The after effects of this vile act have also

been felt in the city of Birmingham where Five mosques have been vandalised by protagonist who no doubt ascribe to the same xenophobic and racist vitriol that the Christchurch terrorist adhered to. We have also witnessed a considerable spike in anti-Muslim hate crimes post Christchurch in the UK as reported by independent hate crime monitoring groups.

As people of faith and none, there are universal harmonious values of mutual respect, love and humanity that bind the human family together and we should not be cowed by the flames of fire that extremists from whatever persuasion seek to espouse through their exclusionary, insular and *othering* discourse. It is paramount at this critical time that the harmonious values are indeed imbued within our human spirit, psyche and embodied in practice.

It is indeed timely that the London's Communities United Against Extremism Service is taking place in capital city having previously been held successfully in Oxford, Buckinghamshire and Birmingham. It is of utmost importance at this pivotal moment in the United Kingdom's constitutional and social history that the core values of mutual respect, love, peace, compassion and common understanding are not only shared but promoted in our society to repel the values of hatred and division. It is also of critical importance that people of all faiths and none come together to show their solidarity for the United for Peace: Communities United Against Extremism Service – a national initiative.

It is through the good people of this world raising their voice and showing solidarity via their worship, oratory, written and practical prowess around the core values that bind us together demonstrating how they are united for peace and united against extremism that the scourge of hatred and violent extremism can be diluted amongst our midst.

The 18<sup>th</sup> century philosopher Edmund Burke famously stated:

*“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing”*

It is paramount for the good people to *“do something”* positive to dim the flames of hatred.

#### **Sheikh Mohammed al-Hilli, Noor Trust, UK**

At times of difficulty, where innocent lives are lost and where hatred and racism is espoused, some may fall into states of negativity and loss of hope. Collectively as human beings, we must come together with the unified spirit of hope and positivity, seeking upliftment through love, respect, understanding and ultimately remembrance of God. We should be inspired by teachings that call for peace and harmony. In the words of Ali, the cousin of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and family): "People are of two kinds: Either your brother in faith or equal in humanity." The cohesion, togetherness, the ability to by-pass difference and the attachment to the Power of God gives us all the much-needed optimism and positive outlook for a brighter future.

#### **Michael V Sternberg QC KCFO, Chair of Trustees Sir Sigmund Sternberg Charitable Foundation**

The Trustees of the Sir Sigmund Sternberg Charitable Foundation wish the event and the project every success in its important work. As its founder, the late Sir Sigmund Sternberg often

observed, *“More things are wrought by lighting a candle in a dark universe than this world dreams of.”* No better sentiment may be used to describe what you are doing.

### **Dr Desmond Biddulph CBE, President, The Buddhist Society**

'Holding onto anger is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die.' [The Buddha].  
**Canon Gilly Myers, Precentor, Southwark Cathedral**

The community in and around Southwark Cathedral has experienced at first-hand what extremist actions can do. The attack on London Bridge on 3 June 2017 was not just an attack on innocent people but upon the values of a diverse and vibrant community. Yet we remain committed to witnessing to inclusion not exclusion, to love not hate, to light not darkness. We believe that this reflects the nature of the God in whom we believe and who in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ shows the depths of divine love for humanity. We stand with all those who would witness to another way of living which will see extremism challenged and the values of love, peace, compassion and understanding transform our living.

### **The Rt Revd Jonathan Clark, Bishop of Croydon**

I write this as the world is still reeling from the terrible events in Christchurch, New Zealand. People of all faiths and none were and are devastated by the terrible and senseless murder of innocent men, women and children at prayer. Nothing can make us more aware of how essential it is that we seek peace, and that we do so in unity. Seeking peace is not merely a passive desire. Jesus said, 'Blessed are the peacemakers'. We create peace by building relationships, by celebrating our diversity and by challenging prejudice. So it is of the essence of making peace that we do so together with those who look, speak or worship differently from ourselves. Desiring peace while remaining in our own comfortable bubble is not peace-making at all.

When we venture out, though, from our own culture or faith community, we enter a space in which we all have something to give, and very much more to receive. As we gather in London today, and whenever people of goodwill come together across our world, we are all enriched by one another. It is an honour to be one of the representatives of the Christian faith in this context. I pray that God may bless us all in celebrating our diversity and in building peace.

### **Diocese of Southwark**

The Bishop of Southwark, The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun on behalf of the whole Diocese of Southwark, affirms that we stand together with all people of goodwill to oppose those who wish harm to others so that we can bring light to our troubled world and continue to commit ourselves to work together for the common good.

### **Redbridge Faith Forum**

Redbridge Faith Forum is delighted that three faith representatives are attending the "United for Peace: London's Communities United Against Extremism" Service this evening and to have been asked to submit this message for inclusion in the service booklet.

Redbridge Faith Forum is a registered charity (1118675) with a board of trustees drawn from seven different faiths operating in the London Borough of Redbridge. The Forum promotes respect, co-operation and understanding by providing opportunities for members of different faith communities to meet to gain mutual understanding.

Trustees, members and friends of Redbridge Faith Forum were shocked and saddened by the devastating attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand on Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019. We condemn this cowardly attack - all our religions exalt the sanctity of human life and there is no justification for such an atrocity. We will not tolerate hate and division; the actions of those who seek to spread hatred within our community will not succeed.

Redbridge Faith Forum calls for all Londoners to:

1. stand together to be part of the long-term preventative solution to reach out across differences and divides of all kinds
2. to continue to be vigilant to work together for peace, compassion, understanding and hope.

### **Mohamed Omer, Board Member – External Affairs Gardens of Peace Muslim Cemetery**

In these troubled times, the only way we can achieve community cohesion and strength is to be united and stand firm against any form of hatred.

People will carry out outrageous acts in the name of a religion, culture or hatred, we as a united community should not only condemn those acts but show total resolve and commitment and not allow these acts to cause any friction or division within our society.

If we stay united and work under the common belief that we are all God's creation and therefore brothers and sisters in humanity, with a common purpose of being a good human being and all that it entails.

I would like to applaud the initiative by the Oxford foundation and in particular brother Monawar for this great event.

### **The Revd Nadim Nassar, Founder & Executive Director, Awareness Foundation**

Solving the challenge of diversity would be an enormous step forward for all nations, to build a better and more peaceful world. It is everyone's responsibility to stand up against the few who try to divide us and abuse the gift of diversity for political and worldly ends. Peace comes directly from the culture of God – which is the culture of peace.

### **David Dangoor DL, Chair, The Lord-Lieutenant's Council on Faith**

Imam Monawar Hussain has long been an effective campaigner for religious tolerance and valuing our diversity. His United for Peace initiative emphasises the core values widely shared by all of us. These remind us how much, with our different backgrounds, we are able to enrich each other's lives.

### **The Ven. Luke Miller, The Archdeacon of London**

The Christian Scriptures teach us that "the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law." Humanity can only truly flourish when together we form communities. People of Faith are able to form communities with each other because we share a common understanding of our dependence upon what is Greater than ourselves. Through this dependence we become more fully human and free: as Jesus said, 'My service is perfect freedom.' Extremism, hate and violence not only divide us from each other, but diminish and enslave those who perpetrate them. May we all be led to the blessings described as the Fruits of the Spirit and so be made free.

### **The Very Revd Dr David Ison, Dean of St Paul's Cathedral**

London as a city has been a place of diversity and refuge for hundreds of years, drawing people from all corners of the world. A French Protestant chapel becomes a synagogue and then a mosque, as populations ebb and flow. At its best, the city has enabled strangers to become neighbours and friends, and encouraged mutual respect for different faith and culture. And in these present times, when difference tends towards division, and insecurity breeds identity politics and extremism, we must reaffirm and demonstrate that faith in the compassion of God gives us the security not to feel threatened, and to welcome 'the other' as a sister or brother who shares our common humanity and the capacity to receive and give love. Jesus said, 'The measure you give will be the measure you receive'; so we seek to treat one another with the generosity with which we wish to be treated. May God bless this time together, as we pray that our lives together may be blessed.

### **Rabbi Danny Rich, Senior Rabbi & Chief Executive of Liberal Judaism**

The priestly blessing, found in Numbers and often called the threefold benediction, fundamentally asks the Eternal One for things we might all wish for ourselves: to be blessed and protected, dealt with kindly and graciously, and to be granted peace. The word *shalom*, most commonly translated as peace, comes from a root meaning *wholeness*, or *completion* and in the bible is used to refer to the well-being of others (Genesis 43:27), to treaties (1 Kings 5:12), and in prayer for the well-being of cities or nations (Jeremiah 29:7).

Peace in Jewish thinking is much more than the absence of violence; shalom is a harmonious inter-relationship between God, humans, and all of creation that gives rise to an environment where wholeness and well-being flourish. Whilst we may ask God for assistance, it is incumbent upon us to do the human part of the task, even if we cannot personally finish it, and that is why it is an honour to offer my support to the "United for Peace" initiative and unite with dozens of like-minded others committed to the creation of a more peaceful world.

### **Olivia Marks-Woldman, Chief Executive, Holocaust Memorial Day Trust**

We come together at a time when the world often feels fragile and vulnerable. Here in the UK, we see unacceptable levels of hostility, abuse and hate directed towards people because of their religion, race, sexual orientation, gender or disability.

Around the world, we watch in horror as the desperate situation faced by the Rohingya people in Myanmar continues, with communities persecuted because of their identity and forced to flee their homes.

Both at home and around the world, extreme actions grow from prejudices, fears and ignorance. Whilst it sometimes feels tempting to despair in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges, we must work together, get to know our neighbours better and come together across backgrounds to challenge extremism.

Yet, in recent years as the level of hatred and division has increased, more people than ever before are coming together to mark Holocaust Memorial Day (27 January). At thousands of meaningful activities, people from all backgrounds learn more about the past and take action to create a safer future.

I personally take great strength from the diversity of thousands of activities which take place, knowing that at each one participants learn more, empathise more and do more.

There is clear hope for a future free from hostility and extremism – when we choose to work together.

### **Dr Iqtidar Cheema, Director Institute for Leadership and Community Development Member United Nations Global Steering Committee on Prevention of Genocide and Atrocity Crimes**

Throughout history, violent extremism has surfaced in different forms in every country and culture. It poses an existential global threat. Terrorist incidents leave distress and fear in their wake. But they also threaten the global economy, rolling back development gains and making trade more expensive. The rise of violent extremism has become a global challenge. Around the world, groups or movements increasingly reject the ties that bind all of us across religious, national, racial, and class divides. Populist, Islamophobic and xenophobic movements are demonising migrants and other minorities in the name of protecting their own identities, while religious extremists are denying humanity not only to those of different faiths, but even to those of their own faith who do not share their convictions. Violent extremism has also become a generational struggle. With more than half the world's population under 30, violent extremism counts a disproportionate number of young people amongst its victims or perpetrators.

Extremism is a complex and emotive issue, as is how best to tackle it. There are obstacles to preventing extremism at all levels. We know the danger posed by those who choose to harm others in pursuit of their goals is stark: the recent terrorist attacks in Christchurch remind us of this. There needs to be a collective effort to prevent vulnerable individuals from being drawn into extremist activity.

Strategies in response to violent extremism need to be focused on individuals and communities at risk. The choice of how activities are sequenced and prioritised needs to be determined by the way in which extremism manifests in different contexts.

Education is a key vehicle for engagement because, very simply, this is the way to reach more vulnerable young people, most efficiently. Education can build resilience, which in turn is related to resistance to violent extremism.

**Chazan (Cantor) Jaclyn Chernett**  
**Founder and Director of Studies, European Academy for Jewish**

People of all faiths or none at all want to sleep and wake in safety together with their loved ones. Prejudice and hatred are on the increase in our troubled world and it is of vital importance now to spread love and not hate!

The great Rabbi and Philosopher, Abraham Joshua Heschel, wrote: "There is a longing for peace in the hearts of man. But peace is not the same as the absence of war. Peace among men depends upon a relationship of reverence for each other. Reverence for man means reverence for man's freedom. God has a stake in the life of man - of every man."

As we join together with people of all faiths or none, we share a common language – the language of music that rides above words. It gives life-breath to those who open their hearts to it, to share a common yearning for peace, love and always hope.

**Baroness Berridge of the Vale of Catmose**

Joining together across communities is such a valuable thing to do and is often under appreciated. I am sorry that I am not able to join you at your service of readings, music and silent reflection. May you be mightily blessed as you spend this time together.

**Younis Ghulam-Nabi Haqqani**  
**Founder, Ghulam-E-Nabi Productions**

Islam is a religion revealed to mankind with the intention of presenting a peaceful life where the infinite compassion and mercy of God manifests on earth. God calls all people to live by the moral values He sets so that compassion, mercy, peace and love can be experienced all over the world.

O You who believe! Enter absolutely into peace (Islam). Do not follow in the footsteps of satan. He is an outright enemy to you." (Holy Quran: 2, 208)

In the verse above, Islam fundamentally calls for peace and fosters a life in absolute sincerity and honesty before God. Therefore, it is vitally important for an individual to believe in God with his own will and aspiration, and observe God's commands and advice through personal conscientious contentment.

The Quran provides an environment where people can fully enjoy freedom of thought and freedom of religion and allows people to live by the faith and values they believe in. According to Islam, everyone has the right to live freely by his beliefs, whatever they may be. Anyone who wants to support a church, a synagogue or a mosque must be free to do so. In this sense, freedom of religion, or freedom of belief, is one of the basic tenets of Islam. There is always freedom of religion wherever the moral values of the Qur'an prevail.

**Dr Kulwant Singh Jhita, Chair, Sikh Gurdawaras Council, Kent**

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa  
Pure at Heart are Your Creation

Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh  
Victory be yours my Lord, Waheguru

I share this message with you on behalf of the Sikh faith community. It is the most honourable and commendable action to unite all faith communities and factions of religious practice to voice their concerns against any and all form of extremist ideology and actions.

The Oxford Foundation and the *United for Peace* initiative holding this particular event together is most commendable in paving the way to greater understanding and respect for one another as well as condemning the activities of extremism. I share with you the teachings of THE HOLY SIRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI.

"We must with faith place all our trust in the Supreme God. Sharing the love respecting all God's creation, where this is conducted with total submission and compassion will without fail bring peace."

Gurubani provides wisdom and solace to all mankind and the troubled humanity as a virtue of truthful living. The Almighty has created man with the highest intellect and placed in his path 5 obstacles. Lust, Anger, greed, hunger and ego. The Lord has prescribed the way of life and control by laws to diversify routes and obstruction. The truth is man errs due to inner weakness and is easily distracted by the energies of the 5 vices, hence falters from the target and so loses the lawful direction.

The Scriptures give us all a directive to follow – 'Truth is the highest virtue but higher still is truthful living.'

**A SHORT PRAYER:**

Oh Heavenly Father, Lord God of the Universe. By Your Grace bless all that have gathered here today, thy unworthy supplicants standing before thee in humility. By Your Mercy hear our prayers and grant peace in every heart and soul in the universe, shower us with thy Blessings for universal brotherhood, thank you Oh wonderful Lord.

'Peace be upon all that rejoice in thy Name. Bole' so Nihaal, Sat Siri Akaal.'

**Peter Sanders**

Peace is the most important thing we need today, but before we have peace we have to first be able to imagine peace within ourselves. Then when we are peaceful, it will radiate out from ourselves to others.

**Rt Revd Richard Atkinson OBE and Jatinder Singh Birdi  
Co-Chairs, the Inter Faith Network for the UK**

Terrorism and extremism have as an aim the creation of a climate of fear and uncertainty. Sometimes they wear the mask of religion, claiming a justification in religious teaching. This is rejected in the strongest terms by faith communities. As the Inter Faith Network's code, Building Good Relations with People of Different Faiths and Beliefs, says, "We have a great deal to learn from one another which can enrich us without undermining our own identities. Together, listening and responding with openness and respect, we can move forward to work in ways that acknowledge genuine differences but build on shared hopes and values."

The values of respect, love, peace, compassion, and understanding at the heart of this important United for Peace event are ones which are central to harmonious and coexistence in our shared society.

