



Justice and Peace

Autumn 2026

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This strange year the leaves are falling very early and
as we walk under trees and
through woods our feet
crunch on dead leaves and, as
I write, this it is only August.

Some say 'a false Autumn' but the whole
year has been false ... too much rain in the

Winter followed by excessive Summer
heat. Climate change has been

predicted for some time but most of
us are not really prepared. The Season
of Creation offers a chance for us all to

pray, reflect and act on this. Churches of
all denominations are encouraged to get involved.
The great destroyer our beautiful world is war. Again
this not just a Christian concern but affects us all and
we can work with anyone who will work with us on this
too. The NJPN conference at Swanwick becomes more
and more ecumenical each year. It is pleasing that
Mouthpeace is now being circulated widely and being
digital we have no real idea of who reads it. Welcome
to you all wherever you are.



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The articles in MouthPeace are the views of the individual contributors or organisations concerned and do not necessarily reflect those of the National Justice and Peace Network and of the Dioceses of Lancaster, Liverpool and Shrewsbury



NATIONAL JUSTICE AND PEACE NETWORK

Monday 14th September - 7.30pm to 9pm Post Conference Catch-Up (online) Following the successful JUST TALK Conference at Swanwick in July, all are welcome to join and discuss what we heard, see what we have been doing, and generally talk about this year's event. Reports of conference on pages 5, 6 and 7.

Wednesday 23rd September - 7.30pm to 8.30pm - NJPN Annual General Meeting (online). Whether you are a member or not, you are more than welcome to join. It is a good way to find out the plans, the activities and hopes for the year ahead. N.B. If anything comes to the vote, non members will not be counted.

Booking details for these events will be sent out shortly to members. Or for more information contact admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk

For next year's Diary!! Friday 23rd - Sunday 25th July 2027 NJPN 49th Annual Conference: Being Human. Living Solidarity in a New Age of Empire: The Global Challenge of AI Booking details will be sent out in January if you have elected to stay on our mailing list.

THE WORD DAY OF PRAYER FOR CREATION September 1st

"They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks" (Is 2:4) is the theme of Pope Leo XIV's Message for the day. This highlights the connection between armed conflict and environmental degradation. Such degradation constitutes both a serious violation of our duty to care for creation, as well as a long-term threat to the lives of hundreds of millions of people. The now widespread awareness of the impact of war on natural resources has not led to the creation of adequate institutions or to responsible decisions aimed at preventing conflicts and resolving disputes peacefully. The title — a passage in which Isaiah prophesies the transformation of weapons into agricultural tools — is an explicit invitation to prioritize development and sustainability over violence and destruction.



Following from this special day **THE SEASON OF CREATION** has developed into an extended month of ecumenical observances until Sunday October 4th The Feast of St Francis of Assisi which this year marks 800 years since St Francis died.

The Biblical text for the Season of Creation this year is drawn from Ezekiel 47: 1- 12, which portrays God's life-giving water flowing from the temple of God. The river grows deeper and deeper restoring barren land, reviving waters, and sustaining flourishing ecosystems. The vision invites human responsibility. Recognising ecological damage, embracing interconnectedness, we are called to immerse ourselves in the water, and actively to safeguard and work for the renewal of creation so that environmental healing and human well-being may flourish together. The symbol also encourages us to immerse ourselves in the tears of creation, that is to allow our hearts to be touched by those suffering particularly from environmental degradation, as well as the suffering of all creation. <https://seasonofcreation.org/>

Many of you may be having some celebration during this season. The churches in Macclesfield for over 10 years now have TOGETHER planned various events which are open to all local people. See their programme on page 13

Reports on: Northern Dioceses Environmental Group visit to Laudato Si' centre in Salford pages 7 & 8, Care for Creation Day at Boarbank pages 9.



WORLD WEEK FOR PEACE IN PALESTINE AND ISRAEL (WWPPI) 20-26th September 2026

This annual World Council of Churches event is held during the third week of September. The week is an encouragement to all of us to pray and act for all those who face the challenges of the war in Gaza and the occupation of Palestine and for all those who work for peace and justice. This year the focus is on protecting children. "Behold, children are a gift from the Lord." Psalms 127:3. Children are lost in the war or left without parents; children are traumatised and afraid. Yet they are the beloved of God and the most vulnerable in conflicts. Find out more [here](#)

Much more about Palestine and Israel on page 3 Pax Christi and CAFOD and page 11 British Palestine Project

On June 22nd 2026 the Just Peace coalition launched the Time to Act campaign, bringing together churches and Christian organisation in

UK to respond to the urgent calls from Christian communities across Palestine and Israel. These are living through devastating violence, loss and injustice and have called on the global church to respond not with silence or despair, but with courage, compassion and action.

The Just Peace coalition has 18 members already including Pax Christi England and Wales, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Quakers in Britain. Together they are inviting individuals, churches and communities to join the Time to Act campaign and commit to working and praying for a just peace for all who call the Holy Land home.

Join the campaign by signing to show your support on <https://justpeacecoalition.com/>

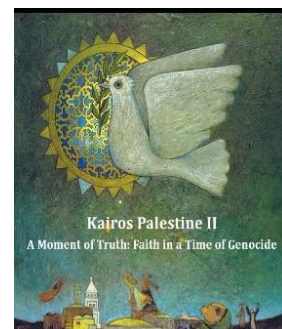
TAYBEH, the last Christian town in the West Bank, has been declared a closed military zone by the Israeli army.

Bishop James Curry, the lead bishop on the Holy Land, for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales comments, "The problem of settler intimidation is a very real one. When I visited the village as part of the Holy Land Coordination in January, the community reported ongoing attacks and intimidation, a growing number of checkpoints and endless financial pressures. Families were leaving because they simply could not see how they could raise their children in safety and security."

Read full statement [here](#)

KAIROS II was published in 2025 in response to the devastating ongoing crisis and genocide in Gaza and the West Bank, the Kairos II document is an urgent, faith-filled cry from Palestinian Christian leaders. It calls the global Church to move past empty rhetoric and step into active, costly solidarity.

Kairos 1 (2009): Read [here](#) Kairos 2 (2025): Read [here](#) You can order a print copy of Kairos 2: <https://sabeel-kairos-uk.sumupstore.com/products>



END SETTLEMENT TRADE

Following the Angelus on Sunday August 16th, Pope Leo once again called for an end "to the repeated acts of violence against the Palestinian population of the West Bank." One of the greatest obstacles to building peace is the ongoing expansion of illegal settlements across occupied Palestinian territory. As settlements expand, Palestinian families are driven from their homes, often amid repeated violent attacks, and are forced to watch while settlers take over. The result is widespread poverty and suffering. That is why we are calling on the new Trade Secretary, Jonathan Reynolds, to ban trade with settlements, including ending the import of produce grown on illegally occupied land.

CAFOD works closely with Palestinian and Israeli human rights organisations who during August have been supporting families under siege by settlers in the village of Qusra in the West Bank. Sadly, this is just one example of a broader pattern of violence.

Foreign trade with settlements sustains the occupation and contributes to the humanitarian crisis in the region. These settlements have long been recognised as illegal under international law, a position recognised by successive British Governments. Despite this recognition, every year produce from these illegal settlements, from boxes of dates to bottles of wine, is sold in shops around the world, including here in Britain.

Our government must act to prevent the import of all goods and services from illegally occupied Palestinian land. Several countries, including Spain and Ireland have already taken steps to ban trade with illegal settlements.

Together, we can send a clear message that we want our government to root Britain's trade policy in respect for international law and human rights. Read more about the campaign and send write to the new Trade Secretary, Johnathan Reynolds MP. <https://action.cafod.org.uk/page/196290/action/1?>

NB This year's Harvest Family Fast Day is on Friday 2 October 2026. See page 13



This year we're asking you to **Do it Fair - for People, for Planet and for Fair Pay**. We're calling for a new law that makes sure businesses are held responsible for unfair pay and exploitation in their supply chains. No company should profit from poverty wages or hide the real human cost behind everyday products.

Too many global businesses still benefit from low pay and unsafe conditions, and voluntary promises haven't fixed it. We need rules that require every company to take responsibility for the people who grow and

make their products, because fair pay shouldn't be optional.

Together, we can demand a level playing field. Together, we can push for laws that protect workers' rights and ensure fair pay across supply chains. Together, we can Do it Fair. Please sign the petition to the UK government.

<https://action.fairtrade.org.uk/page/186243/petition/1?>

HOMELESSNESS SUNDAY 2026

OCTOBER 4

Theme this year 'Community Cohesion'



Homelessness Sunday is held annually on the Sunday before World Homeless Day, and is hosted by the ecumenical charity Housing Justice. The aim is to raise awareness of the issues surrounding homelessness among churches and their congregations by asking churches to run their own Homelessness Sunday Service, either on 4 October or on a more convenient date.

The Chair of Trustees for Housing Justice and the CEO of Church Urban Fund, Rt Rev Rob Wickham, said: "In an age when there is much talk of hatred, division and distrust of the unknown, we must remember that love and welcome for the alien and stranger are key to the Christian narrative, and an understanding of God's Kingdom. Our calling is to build an inclusive community for everyone, and not just those who look or sound like me."

Get the free resources for Homelessness Sunday. These include intergenerational service resources, prayers, hymns and a reflection from Bishop Rob. <https://housingjustice.org.uk/donate-or-get-involved/homelessness-sunday>

On Sunday 4 October, from 9 am, there will be a pre-recorded Homelessness Sunday service available on the Church of England 'Church Online' channel. <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/church-online>

World Homelessness Day October 10th <https://www.worldhomelessday.org/>



CHURCH ACTION ON POVERTY SUNDAY 2026 OCTOBER 18

The theme this year is A Just Church – Food, Faith and Fellowship

On Church Action on Poverty Sunday, we give, act and pray together in our churches around the UK. We know that by doing so we can help to bring about a more just and compassionate society, where everyone can live life to the full, freed from poverty.

More than 75 churches took part during 2025. Thank you all! Could your church be involved this year?

<https://church-poverty.org.uk/food-faith-fellowship-stories/>

Sign up for resources <https://give.church-poverty.org.uk/page/182451/subscribe/1?>

• Church Action on Poverty is a national ecumenical Christian social justice charity, committed to tackling poverty in the UK. Since 1982 we have worked in partnership with churches, and with people in poverty themselves, to tackle the root causes of poverty. We put gospel values of justice and compassion into practice. We know that the real experts on poverty are the people who live with it. Our work is driven by their insights and experiences. We help them to make their voices heard. We speak truth to power, campaigning nationally and locally for policies that will loosen the grip of poverty on people's lives. Find out more <https://church-poverty.org.uk/who-we-are/>

Their office is at : Shared Space Initiative, Ground floor, Oakland House, Talbot Road, Old Trafford, Manchester M16 0PQ

Latest homelessness statistics in England from Ministry of Housing , Communities and Local Government.

- 134,210 households lived in temporary accommodation as of December 2025, marking a 5.0% increase from the previous year
- 176,130 children were without a permanent home living in temporary accommodation
- 43,040 households (about 1 in 3) were placed in temporary accommodation outside of their local home area.

Rough Sleeping

- 4,793 people were recorded sleeping rough on a single autumn night in 2025, representing a 56% increase compared to three years prior
- 733 women were identified among single-night rough sleeping counts, an 8% increase from the prior year
- 8,010 estimated individuals slept rough at some point across the month of December 2025.

Council Support Duties

- 33,630 households applied and were owed a prevention duty as they faced imminent risk of homelessness
- 42,640 households were initially assessed as actively homeless and owed a relief duty by local authorities.



JUST TALK - National Justice & Peace Conference at Swanwick 24 -26th July

Joan Sharples writes: 'Dialogue is not a tactic or tool, but it's a way of life - a journey of the heart that transforms everyone involved, the one who listens and the one who speaks.'

These words of Pope Leo XIV, on display in the Prayer Room, encapsulate my experience of this year's National Justice and Peace Conference, 'Just Talk', which invited its participants into a process of 'deep and patient listening, reflection and response'.

When asked, in the opening session, 'What breaks your heart in the world today?', there was no shortage of answers. People shared their pain at the divisions in our world; the unfair distribution of wealth; the dehumanisation of immigrants and other minorities; the rapid growth of AI; the lack of public space to allow protest to be heard...

Brian O'Toole, Director of the Presentation Interprovincial Justice Desk, articulated the lack of confidence felt by many in holding difficult conversations with those who have different opinions; whether that be across the Christmas dinner table or across political, cultural and social divides.

In the remainder of the weekend, speakers told stories - good news stories - of relationships that had crossed boundaries, that had in Liz Archibald's phrase 'mixed up the wrong people'. Liz described how concern over a detention centre brought together people from different faith communities.

Two young men from Northern Ireland, from different sides of the religious divide, reflected on how their perceptions and relationships with 'the other side' had changed over the years. Chairing that session, Sir John Battle mused that their presence together as speakers on the stage at a J&P conference would have been impossible twenty years ago.

Workshops on Saturday covered a range of issues.

Fay Pretty from PeaceJam UK spoke of her work developing critical thinking with young people aged 5-30 and Michael Thompson from Tyne & Wear Citizens shared his experience of engaging fruitfully with all shades of politicians.

Brian O'Toole explored the impact of social media, fast moving news cycles, algorithms and artificial intelligence. Azan Hasan from the J&P Research project in Newcastle led a workshop on Resilience and Dialogue in Conflict Zones.

Peter McDonagh and Joselyn Taylor led a fascinating group on 'Deaf Awareness: The Beauty of God's Word in Sign Language'. They spoke about the history of Sign Language - until the 1970s people were encouraged to lip-read rather than use sign language - but in fact this does not work very well. Most Deaf people can only understand about 30 per cent through lip-reading.

There were also workshops on interfaith dialogue, militarism, racism and an OutoftheBox workshop.

Just Fair stalls in the sports hall represented 24 charities, campaign groups and religious orders - offering information and goods: books and cards - there was a chance to stock up on olive wood carvings, dates and olive oil from the Holy Land.

There was a Quiet Prayer Space and many of us explored the beautiful gardens.

On Saturday after Mass which was accompanied by the wonderful music group and supper, there was a Ceilidh in the main hall accompanied by Drop of a Hat.

By the end of the conference, I felt more confident, more able to 'speak love from the heart' and take the risky step of talking to those whose views might differ to mine, finding what we share in common and making connections which might enhance relationships and bring a better world into being.

First published in ICN on Aug 5th, 2026 see <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/55595>

Read also a report of the conference by Brian O' Toole <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/55652>

The talks that the speakers have agreed to being available are on YouTube through this link

<https://www.youtube.com/@nationaljusticeandpeacenet928>



Left to right
Paul Morrison,
Liz Archibald,
Billy Vaughan,
Quakers in Britain,
Anne Peacey NJPN
Brian O' Toole NJPN
John Battle, former MP,

Right: Pax Christi Group



Marian Thompson writes: When the conference was planned Andy Burnham, then Mayor of Greater Manchester had agreed to come and talk. But a lot can happen in a few months! So the main speaker on Saturday morning was Billy Vaughan taking as his theme

DIALOGUE, FREESPEECH AND THE RIGHT TO PEACEFUL PROTEST

Billy introduced himself as coming from County Donegal where he was brought up Catholic. He now considered himself 'spiritual – sometimes using the term Quaker adjacent'. Billy is the Public Affairs Officer with the Quakers in Britain, a job he has had for the past three years.

During his talk he reminded us that since their formation in the 17th century, Quakers have been led to bear witness and take action against unjust laws and practices. Quaker faith means listening in their silent worship meetings for the will of God and seeking to follow it in words and actions. This may involve protest which for Quakers is a nonviolent activity because all Quaker activity is nonviolent – it is rooted in love and compassion. Billy expressed concern that today it was being said that free speech is the opposite of protest. Free speech is portrayed as intellectual and polite whereas protest is disruptive 'noise' that gets in the way of sensible dialogue. But we must reject this. Protest is speech. It is the ultimate embodiment of free speech. We learn from history that quiet dialogue is not always sufficient. The abolitionists, the suffragettes, the anti-apartheid movement and the peace campaigners at Greenham Common and Faslane used public witness to open doors that power had closed.

Billy is concerned that various recent Acts of Parliament passed by both the Conservative and Labour governments (2022, 2023 and 2026) are eroding our right to assembly and public dissent. He described some of the recent experiences with the police entering the Westminster Quaker Meeting House. He felt we were slipping into a state of creeping repression which needs to be opposed.

So how can Quakers in Britain do this? How can they work with others across churches and networks today who share the same aims? His Public Affairs work has 3 focuses.

1. Within Parliament: lobbying alongside Liberty UK, Amnesty International and the Palestine Solidarity Campaign; briefing peers and MPs; challenging draconian amendments and pushing back against broad police powers that threaten civil liberties
2. Standing firm protecting our places of worship and those of other faiths as places for moral discernment and sanctuary and community discussion refusing to let fear and intimidation dictate how our buildings are used.
3. Collecting testimonies from Quakers who had bravely gone to demonstrate their beliefs in an increasingly hostile public space. These testimonies were presented earlier this year to Parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights. Billy described the variety of ways in which people had been prevented from protesting peacefully. He said going through these testimonies made him extremely sad and angry and was the most difficult thing he had done in the last 3 years. He described some of them to us. For instance, two elderly Quakers on mobility scooters were arrested in Parliament Square for sitting quietly with cardboard placards saying 'I support Palestine' written on them. He was pleased that his group had been able to present these testimonies to the MPs who had made the hostile laws.

Billy concluded by suggesting that if we want to build a culture of genuine dialogue we must defend the right of people to speak in ways that directly challenge the status quo. 'We do not defend protest because we agree with every single tactic or every single slogan. We defend protest because a society that criminalises nonviolent dissent is a society that has given up on dialogue altogether. As Pope Leo reminded us last year "Dialogue is a journey of the heart". ' Billy hoped through their Quaker advocacy work they could show that protest was also a journey of the heart. 'This requires us to believe that the other person has something valuable to say and that truth is greater than any institution or government that tries to get the way of that truth Let us remember that when we stand peacefully in the street, when we hold a candle in a vigil, when we raise our voices for justice, we are not breaking the dialogue. We are bringing it precisely to those who need to hear it most. '

Full talk <https://youtu.be/wuKsnRGV8bs>

There then followed a Q & A session. <https://youtu.be/TO-4eehx09Q>

NORTHERN DIOCESES ENVIRONMENT GROUP VISIT TO THE LAUDATO SI' CENTRE IN SALFORD DIOCESE



Northern Dioceses' Environment Group

Members of the Northern Dioceses Environment Group gathered for the annual in-person meeting held on Friday 19th June at the Laudato Si' centre, Wardley Hall, Salford.

The meeting reflected the purpose of the centre, 'A statement of hope – rooted in the belief we can make a difference' and opened with prayers and quiet reflection led by Emily Cahill, the Environment and

Learning Officer who will lead us for much of the day.



Laudato Si' Centre

DIOCESE OF SALFORD

The vision and operating model is rooted in the belief that we can all make a difference through the actions we take in response to the cry of the earth and cry of the people so powerfully expressed by Pope Francis in his letter 'Laudato Si' – Care for Our Common Home'.

In response to the call of Pope Francis the Centre began life in 2019 and has welcomed over 9,000 visitors to this impressive place of education offering a model for parishes, schools and the wider community to follow and emulate.



Emily took us on a tour of the Laudato Si' Centre – its poly-tunnels, flower and vegetable beds, fruit trees, woodlands and outdoor classroom explaining the centre's ambitious mission to put into practice our Faith and look after the environment and the poor of our world.

In the afternoon we spent time sharing our 'hopes' and 'fears' and looking towards the need for collective action if we are to be agents for change. We looked at a set of resources on Salvation and Creation Care for a short parish course



developed by Dr Finlay Malcolm, a theologian at Manchester University, as part of his work with Salford Diocese the last 3 years. He has developed 3 sessions each 90mins long on themes of Communion, Reconciliation, and Redemption. Full materials – leaders' notes, participant notes, short videos, etc can be downloaded and freely used from Formation and Training Resources - Salvation and Creation Care - Research Explorer The University of Manchester see [here](#)

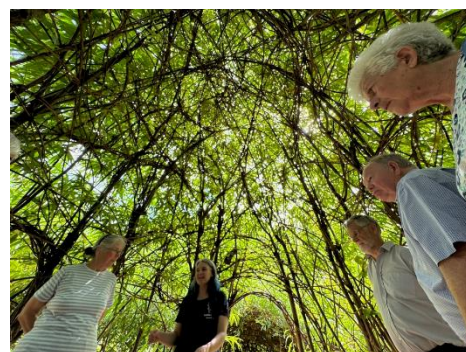
There are also some excellent resources for parishes from the

Laudati Si Centre's own website:

<https://laudatosicentre.org.uk/parish/parish-resources/>

We concluded this part of the day with an input on engaging school children on the issues of plastic waste and also the forthcoming Cop 31.

Before Mass we were invited to take our time in quiet reflection through a Woodland Walk moving slowly, noticing the woodland, using our senses and hearing the sound of the forest. We were invited to look and feel the beauty of God's creation in the design of what God has created.



We ended the visit with Mgr. Paul Smith who celebrated Mass with the group in the woodland area under the canopy of a donated parachute strung between the trees in case it rained. A

perfect way to conclude a wonderful day appreciating nature!

One member summed up the day, 'It was great we could meet together in Salford on Friday. Thank you for coming. I found it a brilliant day, informative and reflective; and came away with lots of ideas to share more widely. And very many thanks to Emily and Mgr Paul for all their time, and enthusiasm'.

Mark Wiggin and Paul Kelly

For the Diary : Future meetings of the Northern Dioceses Environmental group on Zoom

Monday 14th September 6:30pm a reflective evening for the Season of Creation – joint meeting with the Southern Dioceses Environment Network.

Tuesday 10th November 6:30pm NDEG meeting – Environmental Developments at Ladywell Shrine (near Preston) with Dr Stephen Garsed . If you would like to join either of these please contact:

climate.ndeg@gmail.com

As climate change accelerates, our shared responsibility becomes clearer. Türkiye is honoured to host COP31 in Antalya at a pivotal moment to move from negotiation to implementation. We invite all Parties to strengthen cooperation and turn commitments into concrete action.

Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN President of the Republic of Türkiye Political Leadership for Global Climate Action
<https://cop31.tr/> <https://unfccc.int/cop31/the-road-to-antalya>

CARE FOR CREATION DAY AT BOARBANK

In the middle of the heatwave we experienced a beautiful temperate day on Saturday, July 18th, perfect weather for



a meeting at Boarbank Hall in Cumbria, organised by the Lancaster Diocesan Environmental Group. The purpose of the meeting was to encourage every parish in our diocese to find a representative willing to communicate with the group from time to time, to keep them informed on any local parish-based environmental news. So far these connections have not been made, in spite of various appeals, but that has not deterred the group.

We know that the care for our common home is a moral imperative for our times, especially for us as Catholic Christians, inspired and motivated as we have been and are by Pope Francis, through his encyclical LAUDATO SI, his Apostolic Exhortation LAUDATE DEUM and the developments that have followed.

In the morning, we began with a celebration of the Mass for the Care of Creation together with the community at Boarbank. Then Sister Margaret Atkins guided us through a fascinating exploration of how the Catholic Catechism provides a wealth of connections between our faith and the mystery of Creation. Drawing on specific paragraphs in the Catechism she focused on: Who is God? What does it mean to be created? What it means to be human and what we are called to be. How should we interrelate with creation and how should we worship?



After lunch we met outside for a tour of the garden and grounds where Sister Margaret showed us the different ways in which they are being adapted and tended to ensure ecological diversity. We then had an

opportunity to share any examples or any information we might have of how care of the environment is happening in our local areas. For example, we learnt that Churches Together in Cumbria have made a Faith Covenant and the care of creation is very much a matter of concern amongst them.



Fran Wygladala from the Diocesan Education Service spoke of how our schools are committed to a climate action plan and she will be linking up with Sue Grubic, the Diocesan Faith and Justice worker, who has been asked by the Bishop to visit schools to inform and encourage environmental action. We all agreed on the importance of school and parish working together on these matters. It was also heartening to know how some have engaged with CAFOD to earn the Live Simply Award and other CAFOD inspired initiatives.

Altogether it was a day that gave encouragement and inspiration to everyone present because we were resourced spiritually, learnt from each other and challenged to action. We left indebted to the community at Boarbank for offering us their wonderful hospitality and the beauty of their surroundings, where care for creation certainly abounds.
 Philomena Grimley SHCJ

MASS FOR THE CARE OF CREATION

On July 3, 2025 it was announced that Pope Leo XIV has introduced into the Roman Missal a special Mass for the Care of Creation (Missa pro custodia creationis). This marked two meaningful anniversaries: the 10th anniversary of Laudato Si', written by the late Pope Francis, and the 800th anniversary of The Canticle of the Creatures by Saint Francis. It was the first time the Church formally includes a liturgical prayer focused on creation as part of its public worship. But this moment was about more than a new set of prayers. It represents a bold spiritual milestone — a clear sign that caring for our common home is not merely an environmental issue, but a deeply moral and faith-centered calling. More details :

<https://laudatosimovement.org/news/celebrate-creation-with-the-churchs-new-mass-for-the-care-of-creation/>

SIGNING A FAITH COVENANT



Westmorland and Furness Council has signed a Faith Covenant with local faith communities, marking a significant step in partnership working across the area. The covenant was signed at Kendal Town Hall on 1 July, bringing together representatives from faith groups, council leaders and partner organisations, including HM Lord-Lieutenant of Cumbria, the High Sheriff of Cumbria and NHS Chaplains. Attendees were welcomed by Council Leader, Councillor Jonathan Brook, and Chief Executive, Miranda Cannon. Representatives spoke about what the covenant means to them before

presenting an item to represent their community or organisation.

Faith communities already play a vital role locally, supporting inclusion and community cohesion, providing practical help and safe spaces for people, and contributing an estimated £1.67 million in financial value to the area.

The Faith Covenant is a shared commitment to work together in open, respectful and practical ways. It also highlights a joint commitment to protecting the right to freely practice religion and to helping ensure people can live without fear of intimidation. It sets out principles for collaboration, supporting inclusive services and building stronger relationships across communities.

The Faith Covenant is part of a national initiative encouraging partnership working between local authorities and faith communities, with more than 30 councils across the UK already signed up. The Westmorland and Furness covenant has been co-developed since early 2025 through the Faith Covenant Partnership, bringing together local faith communities and partners from across the public, voluntary and community sectors.

Councillor Helen Chaffey, Cabinet Member for Communities, Customer Services, Culture and Communications, said: "Faith communities already make a valuable contribution to our society in Westmorland and Furness. The Faith Covenant is a joint commitment between the local council and faith groups to work together on priorities that are important to all members of society, irrespective of whether they practice a faith or not. These priorities include youth work, climate and nature action and strengthening community cohesion by improving understanding between local people of different faiths and beliefs."

Councillor Tony Callister, Labour Group Shadow Portfolio Holder for Communities, Customer Services, Culture and Communications, said: "Faith groups play an important role in supporting people and bringing communities together across Westmorland and Furness. This covenant provides a clear framework for building on that work and strengthening partnerships with the council and other organisations.

"It's important that everyone feels able to practice their beliefs and take part in community life with confidence and this agreement is a positive step in supporting that."

(Continued on page 11)

Rev Jonny Gios MA, Churches Together in Cumbria, said: "The signing of the Faith Covenant is an important milestone for our area. Faith communities have long played a vital role in supporting people and strengthening community life across Westmorland and Furness.

"This covenant recognises that contribution and provides a stronger foundation for partnership working between faith groups, public services and the voluntary sector. By working together with trust and understanding, we can better support those most in need and help create communities where everyone feels they belong."

Taken from Westmorland and Furness Council website.

You can find out more about the Westmorland and Furness Faith Covenant [here](#)



**PEACE WITH JUSTICE, SECURITY AND EQUAL RIGHTS FOR
ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS**

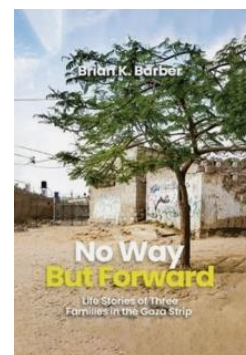
<https://britainpalestineproject.org/>

NO WAY BUT FORWARD: Life Stories of Three Families in the Gaza Strip.

Professor Brian K. Barber has spent decades visiting Gaza and getting to know very personally three ordinary families. In this book he describes their lived experiences over thirty years, including the devastating period following 7 October 2023. Drawing on three decades of friendship and research, he explores their resourcefulness, dignity and determination amid displacement and devastating loss. The book is available in print and as an e book.

Professor Brian K. Barber joins us to discuss his powerful account of the three families and describes how he came to write the book .

You can hear Prof Barber talking about the book on
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mhaa2xZINBE>



Thursday 24 September 2026

3:00pm (UK time)

Online (Zoom)

Dr Anne Irfan will explore the history and politics of Palestinian displacement from 1948 to the present day, examining the evolution of the Palestinian refugee experience, the role of the international refugee system, and what it means to understand the Nakba not simply as a historical event, but as an ongoing reality .

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_EpfWW_MSRWWtyMU88qXEg#/registration

53 COUNTRIES ADDED TO BURMA CAMPAIGN UK'S DIRTY LIST

The Burmese military has one of the worst human rights records in the world, oppressing the people of Burma for decades, whilst at the same time creating a corrupt, nepotistic crony dominated economy. This has enriched senior members of the military and their allies whilst at the same time devastating the economy and development in Burma.



Since the 2021 coup, more than 100,000 people have been killed in conflict; there are more than 14,000 political prisoners and the Burmese military has deliberately targeted civilians to terrorise and create a humanitarian crisis, with around 5 million people internally displaced and hundreds of thousands more fleeing the country.

The Burmese military largely depend on airpower for their survival, and deliberately target hospitals, schools and civilian villages. This year they began to switch tactics, shifting to multiple aircraft carrying out attacks and using deadly 'double tap' attacks to target responders.

"It is inexplicable that so many companies appear unconcerned that they are providing assistance to a military which on average kills a child every 29 hours," said Mark Farmer of the Burma Campaign.

Continued page 12

The Dirty List names international companies directly or indirectly helping to finance, arm or equip the Burmese military. It also includes international companies involved in projects linked to human rights violations or environmental destruction. 53 Companies have recently been added to the 'Dirty List'. These include: Halliburton, SLV (formerly Schlumberger), Fortinet, CISCO, Oracle, Space X, and Microsoft. The total number of companies on the 'Dirty List' is now 228. See the full list <https://burmacampaign.org.uk/take-action/dirty-list/>

Please write to the new Foreign Secretary, Ed Miliband, calling on him to take action to support the people of Burma and take stronger action against the Burmese military.

Suggestions for your letter [here](#)

RED AND WHITE POPPIES

Marian Thompson writes:

Does it shock you to think that large amounts of black plastic are left around the UK every November? In every town and village British Legion poppy wreaths are laid on Remembrance Sunday. These are made of non-degradable black plastic and are eventually cleared away and I suppose go into landfill. When this was raised as a matter of concern five years ago at Marple Churches Together meeting it was readily agreed that instead of buying a plastic wreath we should try to do something different. We approached the British Legion expressing our concern and were informed many others had already approached them about this and they were looking into it. The result the next year was paper poppies for purchase. These have now almost replaced the individual plastic poppies of the past. But the wreaths are still made of black plastic.

Our Quaker Friends drew our attention to the white paper poppies made by the Peace Pledge Union. So now we buy some red paper poppies, some white poppies giving a donation to each organisation and we make our own wreath.



2024



2025

THE PEACE PLEDGE UNION

The white poppy has been worn in the run-up to Remembrance Day for over ninety years, as a symbol of remembrance and peace. They are worn every year by thousands of people across the UK and beyond. They were first produced in 1933 in the aftermath of the First World War, by members of the Co-operative Women's Guild. Many of these women had lost family and friends in the First World War. They wanted to hold on to the key message of Remembrance Day, 'never again'.

White poppies stand for three things.

1. Remembrance of ALL victims of war, including both civilians and members of the armed forces. We remember people of all nationalities. We remember those killed in wars happening now, as well as in the past. We also remember those who are often excluded from the mainstream, such as refugees and victims of colonial conflicts.
2. Challenging war and militarism, as well as any attempt to glorify or celebrate war. White poppies encourage us to question the way war is normalised and justified. They remind us of the need to resist war and its causes today.
3. A commitment to peace and to seeking nonviolent solutions to conflict. By drawing attention to the devastating human cost of war, white poppies highlight the urgency of our ongoing struggle for peace.

More details www.ppu.org.uk



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Tuesday 1st September 6.30 pm Prayer Service at Macclesfield Riverside Park. Meet at the Visitor Centre Beechwood Mews SK10 2SL

Friday 11th September 7.30 pm People's Emergency Briefing on the climate and nature crisis. Film followed by discussion All welcome St Michael's Church Market Place SK10 1D

Tuesday 18th September 7.45 pm Workshop 'Calling a wounded earth home' Explaining what kind of people we might need to become to live life in its fullness in a time of climate breakdown. St Alban's Parish Centre, Chester Road SK11 8DJ

Friday 18th September 5 – 9 pm Feeding bellies not bins! Cooking with surplus food. Come along to prepare, cook and eat a shared meal made from surplus food. Booking preferred 01625 421 984 at St Michael's Church Market Place SK10 1DY

Wednesday 23rd September Laudato Si' Centre 9.15 am – 2.30 pm Visit the Diocese of Salford's eco hub for environmental learning, wellbeing and spirituality with a walled vegetable garden and woodlands. Transport provided, (see report of another group's visit in June this year on page 7 and 8)

Friday October 1st 4 – 7 pm Apple pressing - come and have a go! Drop in at Scoop and Scales Roe Street Macclesfield SK11 6UT

Sunday 4th October 4 pm St Francis' Feast Day 800th anniversary of his death. To close and thank God for the Season of Creation. Refreshments afterwards. St Michael's Church Market Place SK10 1DY



For full daily calendar of events scan QR code or see on the St Alban's Church website:
<https://www.stalbanmacc.org.uk/season-of-creation>

or contact: Bernadette Bailey justiceandpeacemacc@gmail.com

CAFOD HARVEST FAST DAY 2026 October 2nd

This year the focus is on northern Zimbabwe, where drought has left communities facing severe food and water shortages. Twelve-year-old Tayla told us she often arrived at school hungry and tired after fetching water for her family. Without enough to eat and drink, she struggled to concentrate and feared she would fall behind in her studies.

<https://cafod.org.uk/fundraise/parishes/support-harvest-family-fast-day-in-your-parish>



EDITOR : THANKYOU TO THE FOLLOWING HELPFUL WEBSITES:

National Justice and Peace Network <https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/>

Independent Catholic News <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/>

NW NJPN Bulletin produced by Anne O'Connor <https://www.justice-and-peace.org.uk/category/njpn-north-west/>
The Columbans <https://columbans.co.uk/>

Copydate for Winter Mouthpeace November 20th 2026

DIARY Autumn 2026

SEPTEMBER

- 1 World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation see Page 2
- 1 – 4 October Season of Creation page 2
- 10 Thursday Merseyside Pax Christi meeting at Quaker Meeting House, 22, School Lane Liverpool L1 3BT. 2 pm
sheilacogley@yahoo.co.uk
- 14 Monday A reflective evening for the Season of Creation 6:30pm – on zoom joint meeting with the Southern Dioceses Environment Network. to join contact: climate.ndeg@gmail.com page 8
- 14 Post Conference catch up NJPN 7.30 – 9 pm on zoom p.2
- 20 -26 World Week of Peace in Palestine and Israel page 2
- 21 – October 4 Fairtrade Fortnight Page 4
- 23 NJPN AGM 7.30 – 8.30 pm on zoom Page 2
- 24 Ongoing Nabka on zoom 3 pm page 10

OCTOBER

- 2 CAFOD Harvest Fast Day
- 1st-6th/8th Re-Creation! Reenergize your commitment to living your faith in hope in a world of ecological challenges. Talks, fun, conversations, art, liturgy, gardening, walks. All welcome. For more information or booking, email margaret@boarbankhall.org.uk. Website: www.boarbankhall.org.uk 4 Sunday Feast of St Francis - end of Season of Creation Celebration service 4 pm St Michael's Macclesfield Refreshments after see page 4 Homelessness Sunday page 4
- 8 Thursday Merseyside Pax Christi meeting at Quaker Meeting House, 22, School Lane Liverpool L1 3BT. 2 pm
sheilacogley@yahoo.co.uk
- 18 Church Action on Poverty Sunday page 4
- 20 – 26 World Week for Peace in Palestine -Israel Focus this year on children page 3
- 23 Wednesday - 7.30pm to 8.30pm - NJPN Annual General Meeting (online) -

NOVEMBER

- 9 – 26 COP 31 Atalaya Turkey
- 10 Tuesday 6:30pm NDEG meeting – Environmental Developments at Ladyewell Shrine (near Preston) with Dr Stephen Garsed . on zoom page 8
- 14 Remembrance Sunday Red and White poppies see page 11
- 12 Thursday Merseyside Pax Christi meeting at Quaker Meeting House, 22, School Lane Liverpool L1 3BT. 2pm
sheilacogley@yahoo.co.uk

DECEMBER

- 4 -6/7 Hope in Health Boarbank Hall For all who support or care for anyone who is sick, professionals and others. For more information or booking, email margaret@boarbankhall.org.uk. Website: www.boarbankhall.org.uk
- 10 Thursday Merseyside Pax Christi meeting at Quaker Meeting House, 22, School Lane Liverpool L1 3BT.. 2 pm
sheilacogley@yahoo.co.uk

Very Advance Notice NJPN Conference 2027 23 – 25 July Being Human Living Solidarity in New Age of Empire: The Global Challenge of AI