

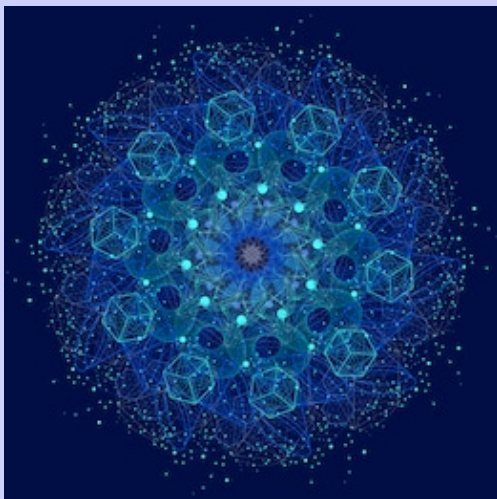
World Congress of Faiths News and Views

September 2020

YOUNGHUSBAND LECTURE

12TH NOVEMBER, 4:00PM, ONLINE

One Mystery, Two Stories – Science and Religion in Dialogue



WCF's much-valued Younghusband Lecture will be different this year, for two reasons. The first is that government rules on public events during this period of Covid-19 pandemic do not permit a physical gathering. Therefore, we are staging the Younghusband via the now familiar Zoom method. The reason for the afternoon rather than evening timing is that we have some contributions coming from times zones several hours ahead of the UK.

So the second reason for the difference this year is that we will be hearing from three contributors – from India, the United Arab Emirates, and the UK. Each will present for 20 minutes on the theme connected to Science and Religion, and then there will be 30 minutes for questions and discussion.

Register today:

www.tinyurl.com/wcf-yhl



World Congress of Faiths

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What is the WCF?

We are a community of individuals from different religious and ethical traditions, committed to learning from one another in a spirit of fellowship and trust. We work to increase spiritual understanding through co-operation and dialogue for the needs of society as a whole.

Younghusband Lecture 2020

The three speakers are:

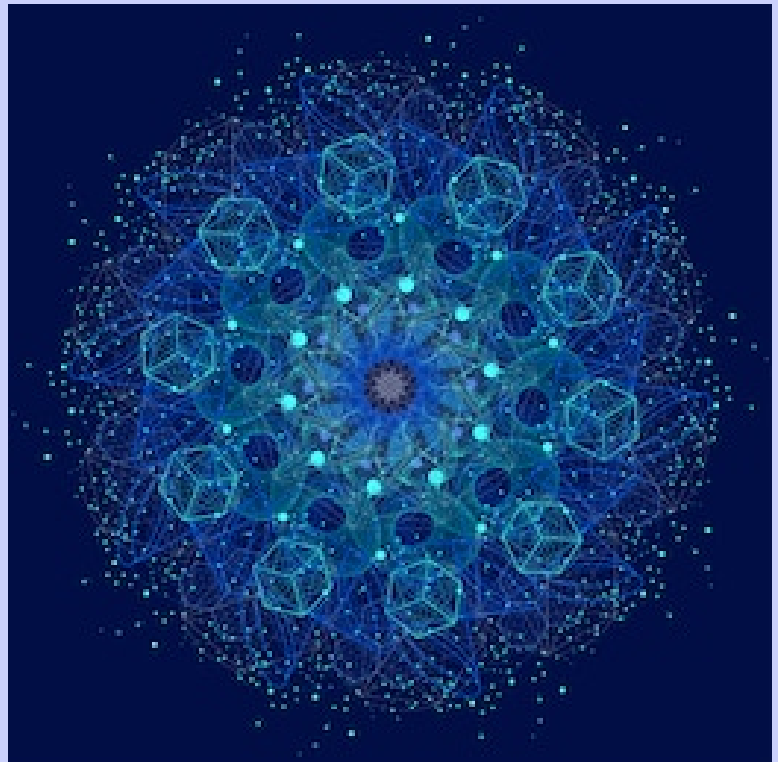
Prof. Nidhal Guessoum

(Muslim), Algerian
astrophysicist and professor at
the American University of
Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

Swami Medhananda (Hindu),

Assistant Professor and Head
of Department of Philosophy,
Ramakrishna Mission
Vivekananda Educational and
Research Institute, West
Bengal, India

Dr David Gosling (Christian),
Faculty of Divinity, University of
Cambridge



The speakers will each reflect their personal interests in the Science – Religion debates as well as address general issues.

The overall theme of Science and Religion embraces how the religious imagination relates to the working assumptions of scientists in their experimental investigations of life's processes as well as to the practical applications of the fruits of research and discovery.

This year's event promises to be not only a new venture for WCF but also an exciting journey into dialogue between traditions and with the amazing world of scientific achievements.

Register today:
www.tinyurl.com/wcf-yhl

There will be no charge, but we hope you will wish to contribute to WCF's work with a donation; please select the Donate button at the bottom of this webpage:

<http://www.worldfaiths.org/contact-us/>

Interfaith news - round up



Multi faith Remembrance services - call for information

A number of local inter faith bodies and faith groups hold — or help their local authority or others to organise — multi faith Remembrance services.

IFN is drawing together, in response to enquiries, some examples of such services to help inter faith bodies and local authorities who may be embarking on arranging one for the first time.

If your inter faith organisation – or faith community – has examples of multi faith Remembrance services or events it would be very helpful if you could share your experience and knowledge to help others. **Please reply by 16 September with the following information:**

1. The name of your organisation
2. Some brief information about the service or event that your organisation has held or has helped organise, including:
 - Was it a 'one-off' or do you hold it/help organise it every year?
 - Is it the main civic service, organised by the local authority?
 - How do you arrange participation?
 - Do you hold it linked to Inter Faith Week?
 - Do you have any pointers for others organising such an event or service?
3. If possible, a copy of the order of service or programme for the last such service you held/helped organise
4. If it is an event held with the local authority, the name of the relevant contact there if you have one.

Please do not hesitate to be in touch if you have any queries. **Please email your response to IFNet@interfaith.org.uk**

Interfaith news - round up



UK Freedom of Religion and Belief Forum

In July it was announced that a new UK Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB) Forum will be launched in September.

The setting up of the Forum was one of the recommendations in the report on the review carried out by the Bishop of Truro, the Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen, on Foreign and Commonwealth Office support for persecuted Christians, published last year.

The Forum, which is still gathering representation from civil-society organisations, NGOs, academic organisations, and the Government, will be responsible for raising awareness of religion-based restrictions, intolerance, and discrimination around the world; inform UK policy-making on FoRB and make recommendations for action; and be in liaison with the Prime Minister's Special Envoy on FoRB and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on FoRB.

Read more: <https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2020/10-july/news/uk/bishop-of-truro-tochair-new-freedom-of-religion-and-belief-forum>



Spiritual ecology and climate justice podcasts

The St Ethelburga's Centre has launched a new series of podcasts, in collaboration with The Future Is Beautiful, which "reaches for the place where spiritual ecology and climate justice meet. It explores the integration of spirituality with grounded action through the lives and leadership of people of colour."

The first episode is with black-latinx transdisciplinary artist, educator, and designer Brontë Velez and the second is with Rabiah Abdullah, traditional herbalist, activist and community healer.

<https://stethelburgas.org/watch-listen-read/>

Interfaith news - round up

Summary taken from the August 2020 IFN Bulletin with thanks:

COVID-19 and faith communities

One of the key roles of the Inter Faith Network for the UK is sharing information and good practice. Since the crisis began IFN has held monthly meetings of its Faith Communities Forum with a COVID-19 focus (see below) and been regularly sharing faith and inter faith responses on social media and sending regular updates by email to its member bodies.

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/social-media>

It has also created a special section on its website about faith and inter faith responses.

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/covid-19>

Most faith communities have issued guidance for their communities and are updating this on a regular basis. IFN has been collating a list of these on its website at

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/faith-communities-and-coronavirus>

Examples in regard to festivals include guidance from the Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board and the Muslim Council of Britain about Eid and from the Hindu Council UK for devotees marking Janmashtami.

Assistance to those in need

Faith-based initiatives have continued to play a very important part in supporting those in need as well as providing assistance and moral support to NHS and other key workers. These have included provision of food and personal protective equipment, visits, and special 'thank you' videos. Many examples of these can be seen at **<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/covid-19-acts-of-kindness-and-service>**

Access to food during COVID-19

On 22 July the British Red Cross published a report on 'Access to food in emergencies: learning from Covid-19' **<https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/we-speak-up-for-change/access-to-food-in-emergencies>**. BAME communities are mentioned in the report in the context of higher vulnerability and of need. Faith-based volunteering initiatives have been very prominent during the pandemic – including Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and other initiatives where there is overlap between faith and BAME communities - providing support to others.

The report makes particular mention of the issue of appropriateness of food package contents for people of different religions and beliefs, noting that "The British Red Cross believes that emergency food provision should be personalised. It should meet dietary and medical requirements, considering factors like religious beliefs, allergies, eating abilities or availability of cooking equipment" and "Food should be a central part of any humanitarian emergency response. Every person should have access to food that meets their dietary requirements and personal circumstances no matter who they are or where they live in an emergency."

Inter Faith Week: 8-15 November 2020



This year's Inter Faith Week www.interfaithweek.org takes place in England, Northern Ireland and Wales and aims to:

- Strengthen good inter faith relations at all levels
- Increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society
- Increase understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs

The Week begins each year on Remembrance Sunday to enable people of different backgrounds to remember together the service of soldiers and civilians of all faiths and beliefs and to reflect on peace. A dedicated page about this can be found at

<https://www.interfaithweek.org/resources/remembrance>

This year, because of COVID-19, Inter Faith Week will be predominantly virtual. Here are just a few ideas for Inter Faith Week activities in that context:

- Set up an 'Inter Faith Week Buddy' experience where two people, each of a different faith or non-religious belief keep in touch across September and October and share during Inter Faith Week some of what they have gained from this
- If there are people still needing to self-isolate or be 'shielded' during Inter Faith Week, consider a safe way that you might encourage an inter faith team to volunteer and deliver a special 'Inter Faith Week' lunch with samples of foods from some of the different faith communities in the area
- Create an on-line 'faith fair' for your workplace or Student Union with information about different faiths and beliefs and opportunities to engage in online chats
- Develop a new website or update your website – or the faith or inter faith section of it – and launch that in Inter Faith Week
- Create an exhibition about different faiths with display panels about each faith group in your area that could be exhibited in an open air space such as at your local rail/ bus station

There are more ideas at www.interfaithweek.org and further detail about the 'Inter Faith Week buddies' scheme can be obtained from the IFN office.

Interfaith news - round up



This September 2020, Faith Associates through its Beacon Mosque Project will hold its 3rd annual British Beacon Mosque Awards. The Beacon Mosque Awards are the 1st Mosque Awards Ceremony in the world, and have been attended by over 350 Mosque leaders in 2018 and 2019. This year the Beacon Mosque Awards will be held online, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

From the nominations that come in, independent judges shortlist the best based on evidence and research in each category and then selected a winner based on evidence submitted by the Mosques. **NOMINATE YOUR MOSQUE:** <https://www.beaconmosque.com/awards/> Closing date for all categories is 30th September

Report on Cohesive Societies: Faith and Belief



In July a report entitled '*Cohesive Societies: Faith and Belief*' was published. It explores the role of faith and nonreligious belief in cohesive societies. It charts social cohesion policy in the UK as it relates to faith and belief, and examines the practical impact of the faith and belief sector on communities through a series of case studies. This report was externally commissioned by the Faith and Belief Forum (FBF) and the British Academy, and authored by Dr Madeleine Pennington, Head of Research at Theos. The report makes a contribution to the Academy's Cohesive Societies programme which asks how societies sustain cohesiveness in the face of rapid political, social, economic and technological change.

It "explores the different ways in which faith and belief interacts with societal cohesion" and has a particular emphasis on how faith organisations interact with communities."

<https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publications/cohesive-societies-faith-and-belief/>

In response to the report, FBF is planning a series of roundtables. Further information from: Jessica Hazrati jessica@faithbeliefforum.org.

EVENTS

From early September: 'Beyond Dialogue'

Integrity UK in partnership with Faiths Forum for London has developed a programme that seeks to bridge divides, reduce hate and strengthen relations between communities aimed at Londoners. Two training sessions will be delivered to community leaders on the trends, tactics and key players within far-right extremism. **Further information is available at <http://faithsforum.com/beyond-dialogue-programme/>**

11 September 11am-12:15pm. Noetic

Events: Consciousness After Death

What is the evidence, what survives, and how do our beliefs about it affect us?

Three expert panelists explore the current evidence on survival of consciousness research, how it is beginning to gain acceptance in clinical settings, and why people often don't share that they've had a near death experience. Further information:

<https://noetic.org/event/consciousness-after-death/>

September 14-18: IONS in the World

The Science of Consciousness | TSC 2020

Join our scientists and leadership at speaking engagements and appearances! Featuring IONS Scientists Helané Wahbeh, Garret Yount, Arnaud Delorme, Dean Radin, and PhD Candidate Cedric Cannard. For more information: **<https://noetic.org/event/the-science-of-consciousness-2020/>**

16 September 6:30pm-8:30pm

Remembering our stories of roots and fruits - St Ethelburga's (online)

St Ethelburga's is holding a workshop for people of colour with Serayna Keya Solanki, "an online gathering for black people and people of colour who are in need of space to remember, share and root themselves in generational resilience". For more information contact Justine Huxley at justine.huxley@stethelburgas.org or visit **<https://stethelburgas.org/event/remembering-our-stories-of-roots-and-fruits-a-workshop-for-people-of-colour-2>**

18 September 11am-12:30pm. Noetic

Leadership: An Inspirational Quest

An intimate conversation with Alan Briskin and IONS CEO Claire Lachance as we ask: How can noetics shed light on a new way to lead in times of transformation and challenge? For more information:

<https://noetic.org/event/noetic-leadership-quest/>

Membership application and subscription to Interreligious Insight



Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Faith (optional):

Please tick as appropriate:

- ☐ I wish to join the World Congress of Faiths and subscribe to the Journal Interreligious Insight (postal version) and enclose payment for £45.
- ☐ I wish to join the World Congress of Faiths with online access to the Journal Interreligious Insight and enclose payment for £25 (or £10 if a student in full time education).
- ☐ I only wish to subscribe to the Journal Interreligious Insight (postal version) and enclose payment of £40.

Please complete the standing order mandate on the following page and return your form to: World Congress of Faiths, 21 Maple Street, London W1T 4BE

**For further information about membership or our journal please contact:
Tony Reese, Administrator T: 01935 864055 E: tony.reese@worldfaiths.org**

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