

UPF UK: Pathways to Peace: Interfaith Collaboration for a Better World

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Universal Peace Federation - UK *A Global Network of Peacebuilders*



Pathways to Peace: Interfaith Collaboration for a Better World

World Interfaith Harmony Week 2025

Universal Peace Federation UK's 'Inter-religious Association for Peace and Development'

Programme Video [Link](#)

Photo [Link](#)

We were delighted to support World Interfaith Harmony Week with a special interfaith event at

the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) UK headquarters on January 28th, 2025. Entitled "*Pathways to Peace: Interfaith Collaboration for a Better World*," the evening was filled with profound insights and meaningful grassroots interfaith activities, fostering greater understanding and harmony among faith communities.

World Interfaith Harmony Week was first proposed at the UN General Assembly on September 23, 2010, and was unanimously adopted less than a month later. Since then, the first week of February has been observed annually as World Interfaith Harmony Week, encouraging global initiatives for peace and cooperation among different religious traditions.

Event Details:

Tuesday, January 28th, 2025

Location: 43 Lancaster Gate, London, W2 3NA

This gathering was part of UPF UK's regular *Last Tuesday of the Month* series. The event featured engaging discussions on interfaith collaboration, spirituality, and the challenges of achieving lasting world peace. The Universal Peace Federation (UPF) shared its mission, activities, and partnerships, underscoring the crucial role of interfaith dialogue in promoting peace and justice. Key topics included the role of spirituality in peacebuilding, the challenges of global harmony, and the personal responsibility of individuals in fostering peace and happiness. Speakers from various religious backgrounds shared their perspectives, highlighting both the necessity of interfaith cooperation and the importance of spiritually guided, peace-promoting leadership.

Speakers & Key Highlights

Paul Gutteridge – Founder of *Track 2 Talks*, Honorary Fellow, Edward Cadbury Centre, University of Birmingham

Paul Gutteridge, an expert in reconciliation, emphasized the pivotal role of trust in peacebuilding. He encouraged faith leaders to transition from conversion-focused approaches to collaboration, noting that business relationships and diplomacy develop only at the speed of trust. He challenged attendees to confront their own barriers to trust and engage in difficult yet necessary conversations. Paul highlighted the need to create safe environments for dialogue, urging individuals to momentarily set aside rigid beliefs in pursuit of global peace.

Sheikh Dr. Hojjat Ramzy – Director, Oxford Islamic Information Centre

Sheikh Dr. Hojjat Ramzy spoke on the significance of interfaith dialogue in fostering peace and justice among diverse religious and cultural communities. He referenced the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) *World Charter of Medina*, which established respect and safety for all, as a historical example of faith-driven peacebuilding. He underscored the necessity of religious freedom and global cooperation to resolve conflicts, particularly highlighting the Jerusalem issue. He concluded by affirming that religion should lead the world in achieving peace and justice, offering a prayer for divine guidance in this mission.

Revd Panditayin Meeta Joshi – Hindu Chaplain, Leading Interfaith Advocate

Revd Panditayin Meeta Joshi, a distinguished Hindu spiritual leader, spoke about the importance of building bridges across faith and cultural divides. She shared her experiences as a Hindu university chaplain and her efforts to educate children on the richness of their diverse communities. Her longstanding involvement in interfaith initiatives in Guildford reflects her deep commitment to fostering harmony among different religious traditions.

Nemi Bhaktivedanta – Vedic Society for Bhakti-yoga, Independent Spiritual Consultant and Trainer

Nemi, an expert in the Vedic Vaishnava tradition, focused on the universal longing of the soul for divine connection. Drawing from his book on spiritual love, he emphasized the need to move beyond external religious rituals and cultivate an inner spiritual journey. He stressed the role of faith representatives in promoting world peace and unity, advocating for a deeper understanding of shared spiritual values.

Venerable Hermatara – Buddhist Monk

Venerable Hermatara Talan echoed these sentiments, highlighting nonviolence, compassion, and love as fundamental principles for achieving peace and harmony. He called for sincere efforts to spread peace, unity, and brotherhood across all faith communities. During the event, he recognized himself in a UPF interfaith photo taken approximately 15 years ago, alongside Sheikh Dr. Hojjat Ramzy. This realization underscored the long-standing commitment of UPF to interfaith cooperation.

David Rennie – Chair, Milton Keynes Interfaith, Representative of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification

David Rennie shared his experiences in promoting interfaith harmony in Milton Keynes. Reflecting on his time in India as a missionary, he spoke about his service to the Indian people and the lessons he learned in fostering interfaith relationships.

Conclusion

Together, the speakers and attendees explored the vital role of interfaith collaboration in fostering peace and understanding. The event reinforced the importance of dialogue, trust, and spiritual guidance in creating a more harmonious world. As part of UPF UK's ongoing interfaith efforts, this gathering reaffirmed our commitment to promoting unity among diverse faith communities and working towards a future of lasting peace.

We extend our gratitude to all speakers and participants who contributed to this inspiring evening, and we look forward to continuing these important discussions in future events.

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UPF is an NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN

Biographies:

Paul Gutteridge: Founder of Track 2 Talks, Honorary Fellow, Edward Cadbury Centre

20 years of experience leading teams and working with people in religious, political and business contexts. His main focus in the religious, ideological and political environment is on creating forums where people who hold different views can come together to build trust.

Sheikh Dr. Hojjat Ramzy, Director, Oxford Islamic Information Centre, is a renowned Islamic scholar and an influential advocate for interfaith dialogue and peace. With extensive experience in community leadership, he has dedicated his career to fostering understanding and cooperation between diverse religious communities. Dr. Ramzy has played a pivotal role in promoting social cohesion and has been actively involved in various national and international interfaith initiatives. His insightful contributions to discussions on faith, peace, and unity have made him a respected figure in the interfaith community.

Revd. Panditayin Meeta Joshi is a distinguished Hindu spiritual leader and an advocate for interfaith harmony. As one of the few female Hindu priests, she has broken barriers and paved the way for greater inclusion in religious leadership. Revd. Joshi is deeply committed to promoting dialogue and understanding between different faith traditions. Her work emphasizes the shared values of peace, compassion, and unity, and she is actively involved in various interfaith initiatives, both in the UK and internationally. Her dedication to fostering spiritual growth and community cohesion has made her a respected voice in the interfaith community.

Nemi Bhaktivedanta: Vedic Society for Bhakti-yoga, Independent Spiritual Consultant and Trainer. A traveling monk in the Vedic tradition. Bhakti-yoga, Krishna consciousness. Trying to balance new ideas, concepts, patterns in relationships, music, prayer, desire for heart-service to Their Lordships. "Our loving propensity expands just as a vibration of light or air expands, but we do not know where it ends. If we learn how to love Krishna, then it is very easy to immediately and simultaneously love every living being."