

Sanctuary Sunday

April 29th 2012

Service Resources



New Road Baptist Church in Oxford host a Refugee Week gathering

Sanctuary Sunday is an opportunity for **churches and congregations to focus their Sunday service on the issue of sanctuary**, and to reflect on how we can all contribute to creating a culture of welcome and hospitality for asylum seekers and refugees in our communities.

Sanctuary Sunday is taking place on **Sunday 29th April 2012** and your congregation is warmly invited to take part.

This list of resources has been put together by Leeds Churches Together in Mission in conjunction with City of Sanctuary. It contains **resources and ideas from various organisations and individuals**, and is

intended to be a **helpful resource in planning church services** for Sanctuary Sunday (though these are only a few resources and ideas we have found, there are bound to be plenty more out there).

Sanctuary Sunday is **raising awareness of Refugee and Asylum seeker issues** and is an initiative of City of Sanctuary. It would be great to know if you are planning on holding a Sanctuary Sunday service on the 29th April, and/or if your church would like to sign up as a Church of Sanctuary. Please do get in touch with Leeds City of Sanctuary to **let us know if you are planning to hold a service** by emailing leeds@cityofsanctuary.org

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What is a City of Sanctuary?

City of Sanctuary is a movement to build a culture of hospitality for people seeking sanctuary in the UK. Our goal is to create a network of towns and cities throughout the country which are proud to be places of safety, and which include people seeking sanctuary fully in the life of their communities.

A City of Sanctuary is a place of safety and welcome for people whose lives are in danger in their own countries.

It is a place where:

- the skills and cultures of people seeking sanctuary are valued, where they are included in local communities and able to contribute to the life of the city.
- community groups, local government, media, business, schools and colleges have a shared commitment to offering sanctuary, so that it is seen as part of the city's identity by local people.
- people seeking sanctuary can easily build relationships with local people as neighbours, friends and colleagues. Through these relationships, local people come to understand the injustices refugees face, and become motivated to support and defend them.

Leeds City of Sanctuary is encouraging businesses, churches, schools, mosques, individuals, community groups, and many others to sign a sanctuary pledge. If your church would like to sign up as a Church of Sanctuary please visit www.cityofsanctuary.com/leeds to sign the pledge.

Definitions & information

The following are some useful definitions of terms often used of people seeking sanctuary...

- **Refugee** - a person who is recognised by the Government as having a fear of being persecuted in their country for reasons of Race/ Religion/ Nationality/ Membership of a particular group/ Political Opinion. They will be granted rights to work, to access welfare support and to receive support to integrate with their local community.
- **Asylum seeker** - someone who is waiting for the Government to decide if they can be allowed to stay in the UK as a refugee. They have no right to work or access benefits.



Work of a refugee artist involved with Coventry City of Sanctuary

For some up to date information on numbers and origins of asylum seekers in the UK the following website has collected various sources of information together (scroll down to the Asylum Seekers section).

- www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2010/jun/26/non-eu-immigration-uk-statistics

For more information, and some 'myth-busting' on asylum and refugee issues, the following websites are a good source of information...

- www.refugee-action.org.uk/information/challengingthemyths1
- www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/practice/basics
- <http://stillhumanstillhere.wordpress.com/>

Stories from Leeds & Elsewhere

The best way to develop a greater understanding of refugee and asylum seeker issues are to hear the stories of refugees and asylum seekers themselves. It might be that you have people within your own congregations who would be willing to share their stories either as a testimony or through being interviewed. If that is not an option there are a number of places you can go to find stories from refugees and asylum seekers in the UK and in Leeds...

Sidelined—9 stories of hope from the margins of Leeds

This DVD produced by Manto Creative Media and Leeds Churches Together in Mission features stories of people whose lives have been helped by small Christian projects, including those supporting refugees and people seeking asylum in Leeds. Use the contact the details below and we can send you a copy or it can be viewed online at www.leedschurchestogether.org.uk.

- Sue Hoey, info@leedschurchestogether.org.uk, 07946 085 575

Testimony Project

The Testimony Project seeks to tell the stories that need to be told of women refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. The website contains a number of video stories and written stories, and provides advice, support, and connections for refugee women and the organisations that support them. The project seeks to unite people, answer critical questions, post news, blogs and forum discussions, and provide a safe supportive space for women.

- www.testimonyproject.org

LASSN—Leeds Asylum Seeker Support Network

Leeds Asylum Seekers' Support Network aims to make a positive contribution to the lives of people seeking refuge from persecution by meeting their social needs through Befriending, English at Home, Short Stop and Information and Awareness projects and by supporting Leeds Refugee Forum. LASSN operate a volunteer speakers network of refugees and others who are willing to come and speak about the refugee and asylum experience. If you would like someone from this network to come and speak in your service please contact –

- Peter Richardson, peter@lassn.org.uk, 0113 3731759

RETAS – Refugee Education Training and Advice Service

RETAS aims to help refugees and asylum seekers integrate in West Yorkshire. The organisation works on the frontline, offering support to refugees and asylum seekers, as well as offering training and sessions to organisations, companies, schools and services, to give them a better understanding of refugee and asylum issues. RETAS also operates a speakers network, if you would like someone from this network to come and speak in your service please contact –

- Duncan Wells, dwells@retasleeds.org.uk, 0113 3805630

PAFRAS—Positive Action For Refugees and Asylum Seekers

PAFRAS works with asylum seekers, refugees and local communities in Leeds and the surrounding area, focusing on providing humanitarian support for asylum seekers who are homeless, without food or money and prevented from improving their situation by government policy. PAFRAS runs a twice-weekly drop-in on Tuesdays and Thursday 10am –12.30pm at St. Aidan's Church, Harehills, at which they provide, a hot meal and case-work support amongst other services. The PAFRAS website has a number of helpful resources and stories in its Rainbows section.

- info@pafras.org.uk, www.pafras.org.uk

Hymns & Songs

The following suggestions come from church members already involved in City of Sanctuary and from the websites listed at the end of this document.

- Christ be our light
- Heaven shall not wait
- God of freedom God of justice
- A new commandment
- Brother, sister, let me serve you
- I the Lord of sea and sky
- Once to every life and nation
- Help us to help each other, Lord
- When I needed a neighbour
- Siyahamba
- Will you come and follow me
- 'All are welcome' ('Let us build a house...')



Drummers at One Love One Leeds 2011

Poems

On Another's Sorrow

Can I see another's woe
And not be in sorrow too.
Can I see another's grief
And not seek for kind relief.

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrows share,
Can a father see his child,
Weep, nor be with sorrow filled.

Can a mother sit and hear,
An infant groan an infant fear-
No no never can it be.
Never never can it be.

And can he who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrows small,
Hear the small birds grief & care
Hear the woes that infants bear-

And not sit beside the nest
Pouring pity on their breast,
And not sit the cradle near
Weeping tear on infant's tear. . .

He doth give his joy to all.
He becomes an infant small.
He becomes a man of woe
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not, thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy maker is not by.
Think not, thou canst weep a tear,
And thy maker is not near.

O! he gives to us his joy,
That our grief he may destroy
Till our grief is fled & gone
He doth sit by us and moan.

William Blake 1757-1827

By the banks of River Asylum

As I sat pensive by the banks of river asylum,
Tears flowed and blocked my sight,
I wallowed in the thoughts of yesterday,
A fraction of yesterday that was happy,
Happy yesterday decorated by Sunshine,
Water oozed out like water from a broken cistern,
I blossomed in that career like a flower in spring,
Endless voices of children a huge part of that yesterday.

As I tarried by the banks of river asylum,
 The garment of beautiful yesterday fully changed
 Into a flowing gown of depression and psychosis,
 In my mind's eye is a distorted lens,
 Life seemed worthless and meaningless,
 END IT, the only song I hear,
 Medication and therapies my daily bread,
 In this limbo, a ray of light appears
 ...three years leave to remain,
 With an irreparable mark for life.

Anonymous (sourced from Leeds Asylum Seekers Support Network)

STRANGER'S WELCOME

There's a soft breeze now blowing
 Through village and city
 A candle flame flickering
 In a faith starved land
 Hungry hearts lost and broken
 Empty lives unfilled longings
 As the soul of our nation
 Waits for God's mighty hand

For you came as a stranger
 Without reputation
 You walked with the homeless
 And you lived with the poor
 You were chased from your country
 Left seeking asylum
 O show us your presence
 As we open the door *Chorus*

(Chorus) Watch, the door softly opens
 A stranger is coming
 In his hands there is nothing
 But the marks of his pain
 Let your heart stretch with welcome
 Your table extended
 In the meeting of strangers
 The Lord comes again.

Yes the ancients sang often
 Of welcoming strangers
 Believing that Jesus
 Was wrapped in their guise
 As we cry for revival
 Let Christ touch our senses
 To see each new stranger
 With his loving eyes. *Chorus*

(written by Brian and Tiffy Allen as a Song to be sung in the Celtic mode.—building on the Celtic tradition of welcoming strangers as they may be unknowingly welcoming the Christ.)

Suggested Bible Readings

- Genesis 21: 8-21 The three visitors
- Genesis 28:10-17 Jacob's dream at Bethel
- Exodus 23: 1-9 Laws of justice and mercy
- Exodus 22: 17 - 21 (Resident aliens in the Covenant Code)
- Leviticus 19: 33- 34 (Resident aliens as part of the Holiness Code)
- Deuteronomy 24: 17 - 22 (Resident aliens as part of the Justice Code)
- Ruth 1: 16-22 Ruth and Naomi leave Moab and travel to Bethlehem
- Psalm 137: Lament of the exiles who were taken to Babylon
- Lamentations 5: 1-15, 19-22
- Micah 4: 1-7 The mountain of the Lord
- Matthew 2: 13-15 The Holy Family become refugees
- Matthew 25: 31-46 The parable of the sheep and the goats – consideration for the 'least' among us
- Luke 1: 46-55 Magnificat
- Luke 10: 25-37 The parable of the Good Samaritan
- Luke 24:13- 35 (the Stranger on the Road to Emmaus)

Prayers & Liturgies

A Prayer for Refugees

Almighty and merciful God,
whose Son became a refugee
and had no place to call his own;

look with mercy on those who today
are fleeing from danger,
homeless and hungry.

Bless those who work to bring them relief;
inspire generosity and compassion in all our hearts;
and guide the nations of the world towards that day
when all will rejoice in your Kingdom of justice and of peace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

(taken from www.invitationtoprayer.org/prayers_refugees)

Meditation on the Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in Heaven,

you want us your children to build a new earth of sisterhood and brotherhood, not a hell of violence and death.

Holy be your name,

that in your name Lord, let there be no abuse, no oppression and no manipulation of the conscience and liberty of your children.

Your Kingdom come,

not the kingdom of fear, force or money, of seeking peace through war.

Your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven,

in this land of ours and in sister lands which echo with gunfire and cries of fear.

Give us this day our daily bread,

the bread of peace, Lord, so that we can sow our maize and beans, watch them grow and share them together as a family.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Do not let our relationships be based on self-interest. Let us change laments for songs of life, clenched fists for outstretched hands and the weeping of widows and orphans for smiles.

Lead us not into temptation,

the temptation to conform, to do nothing: the temptation not to collaborate with you in the search for justice and peace.

But deliver us from evil,

from behaving like Cain to our brothers and sisters, from believing ourselves rulers over life and death.

For yours is the Kingdom,

the Power and the Glory. You are our hope of salvation, in you we place our trust.

(Written by an El Salvador group of refugees. Taken from www.cafod.org.uk/worship/refugees)

Love your neighbour

Jesus, friend and brother,
 You know what it is like
 To be hungry and thirsty.
 You know the plight of the
 Stranger who is made unwelcome.
 You know the suffering of all
 Who have lost everything.
 We pray that by welcoming
 The asylum seeker we may show
 Love for our neighbour and
 Draw closer to you.
 Amen.

(Written by Tony Singleton/CAFOD. Taken from www.cafod.org.uk/worship/refugees)

Prayer of protection

Terror is at our heels.
 Anxiety, uncertainty, vulnerability
 Lie ahead.
 We have fled to freedom.
 And yet...
 Our hearts are aching.

Response: Cover us with your wings O Lord

Far from home.
 Longing for the familiar.
 A touch, a smile, a hug, a kind word.
 Yearning to return.
 And yet...
 We must go forwards.

Response: Cover us with your wings O Lord

Memories and dreams
 Grief and hope
 Death and new life
 What might have been
 What could be.
 And yet...
 Throughout
 Remains
 Your constant love.

Response: Cover us with your wings O Lord

(Written by Margaret McNulty/CAFOD. Taken from www.cafod.org.uk/worship/refugees)

For refugees and other displaced persons who have been forced from homes and security, we pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the people and the land from which refugees have fled, we pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.



Tent of welcome at Bristol CoS launch 2011

For the humane and constitutional treatment of refugees in our nation, we pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For perception to see Christ in the strangers we welcome, we pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

(Adapted from World Council of Churches Worship Resources, Focus on Refugee, 1981)

Lord Jesus, who fled the wrath of Herod.

Be with those who have to flee the injustice of others.

Lord Jesus, who had nowhere to lay your head.

Be with those who have no land to call their own.

For the refugees from Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For people uprooted in Sudan, Syria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For refugees and displaced persons who have fled from or are still living in Burma and Colombia.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For all refugees who have fled oppression in their own countries and are seeking new lives in new lands.

Lord, hear our prayer.



Thabo M and his band playing at Leeds CoS launch Nov 2010

Help us, Lord, who are the privileged inn-keepers of our day, to find room for those who have been driven from their homelands because of political, racial, or religious reasons. Amen.

(Adapted from World Council of Churches Worship Resources, Focus on Refugee, 1981)

Call to Worship

We are a community of faith that has been created by the love of God.

We are the people who have been set free by the world of forgiveness in Jesus Christ, and are therefore a people called to reach out to the sojourners in our midst and in other lands, people whose lives cry out for the warm embrace of fellowship.

We have come not to exalt our own goodness, but to praise the holiness of God.

We have come not to boast of what we have done, but to proclaim the redeeming work of Jesus Christ by extending the hand of community to refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers.

All: With all our being, we will praise God and tell of God's goodness in our acts of kindness and love toward the "least" among us in our times.

Call to Confession

Keeper of heaven and earth, guardian of our coming and going forth, of our times of tender reflection, and our moments of turmoil, our life is fragile. We violate each other in personal relationships, as nations, as inept keepers of life's beauty. Sharpen our sensitivities. Stir in us preference for listening over speaking, for tenderness over aggression, for solidarity and community over alienation. Deepen for us the meaning of the resurrection, that we not only speak words of transformation but embody those words in our lives. Healer, Redeemer, Sustainer, Source of Hope and Joy, we offer thanks and praise. Alleluia, Alleluia, **Amen**.

(Call to Worship and Call to Confession taken from United Methodists Committee on Relief)

Sunday School—Children's and Young people resources

For resources for children and young people please contact City of Sanctuary on the details below, and/or check the City of Sanctuary website for more resources.

Links to other information

The majority of service resources listed above have been sourced from the following websites. However, these sites contain more resources than included in this information...

Methodist Church – Special Sunday – Refugee Week

Resources here include a bible study on the three different words translated as 'Stranger' in the bible; A selection of suggested hymns and bible readings; a couple of poems; and a variety of prayers for refugees and asylum seekers.

<http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=openogod.content&cmid=870>

CAFOD – Worship resources – Refugees

Here there are a selection of downloadable PDFs, one which contains prayers for refugees, one which contains relevant bible passages, and one which contains an ecumenical liturgy for a service focusing on refugee issues during Advent (though this could be easily adapted to suit any time of year).

www.cafod.org.uk/worship/refugees

United Methodists Committee on Relief

This site contains service liturgy – including a call to worship, a call to confession, and other litanies; prayers; hymn and song suggestions; and sermon topic resources.

<http://gbgm-umc.org/umcor/refugees/rworship.stm>

Contact details

If you would like more information about City of Sanctuary contact –

- Leeds City of Sanctuary
c/o RETAS
The Roundhay Road Resource Centre
233-237 Roundhay Road
Leeds, LS8 4HS
- leeds@cityofsanctuary.org
- www.cityofsanctuary.org/leeds

These church service resources have been put together by Leeds Churches Together in Mission (LCTiM) to aid in the planning of Sanctuary Sunday services, an initiative of Leeds City of Sanctuary. For more information on LCTiM please visit www.leedschurchestogether.org.uk or email info@leedschurchestogether.org.uk