Religions for Peace
United Kingdom Women of Faith Network



Spiritual Vibrations: Sacred Earth

March 11th 2021 on Zoom, 45 participants

Our event kicked off with an introduction from Ravinder Kaur Nijjar, Chair of RfP UKWFN. Ravinder welcomed us to the Global Day of Action for our Sacred Earth and Climate Justice, outlining that we gathered as a part of a global multi faith day of action, with 120 organizations standing with us from all faiths and spiritual backgrounds. And our guests were equally as diverse, sharing prayers, verses and meditations from 8 different faiths. Ravinder outlined the 10 demands of the "sacred people, sacred earth" document, including a just equitable transition to renewable energy, and welcome to climate refugees.

Harsha and Lakshmi presented from the Hindu faith first, highlighting the teaching that all the universe is one family: outlining the meaning of Ahimsa, and reading together from the Bhagavad Gita that Lord Krishna says he is present in all beings. Next, we heard from Rebecca on the Quaker perspective on the earth. "We do not own the earth", but with increasing power must come an increasing reverence for life, was the message of the extract she read us from the Book of Discipline for Quakers.

Next, Olivia highlighted the Buddhist principle of the interconnectedness of all life, through quotes from Buddhist activists including Joanna Macy, the Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh (who taught we need a collective enlightenment to stop the destruction of the earth), and Daisaku Ikeda, from her own tradition of Soka Gakkai Japanese Buddhism. Ahimsa is a concept shared between our Hindu presenters, and Varsha, who presented from the Jain tradition. She outlined it thus:

"The world has enough for everyone's need, but not enough for everyone's greed"

She outlined the principle of individual responsibility, in a prayer from Jain scriptures - 2,600 years old and recited in Prakrit language.

Next, we heard from Amandeep from EcoSikhs, on the Sikh principle of Ik Onkar, or oneness of all things. She read various verses from the Guru Granth Sahib, which use metaphors of nature to

teach us how to live, and examples of sustainable living and practice of faith throughout Sikh history. Our next presenter was JoAnn, who read a heartfelt prayer, on her hopes for Christians to use their position of power for good and return to equality and justice at the heart of Christian teachings:

Oh God, grant us wisdom
To remember Jesus's radical compassion, emphasis on community, selflessness, sacrifice and emphasis on action
To show compassion to those experiencing the effects of ecocide,
To join with other peoples of all faiths and none in solidarity to the oppressed and the planet we all share,
To sacrifice the comfort that ignorance and silence afford us the excess that ecologically harmful production provides us
And to lift our voices in protest, to use our resources, strength and knowledge
In service of you, your planet, and our fellow beloved human beings.



From the Muslim community, we heard next from Linsay, who outlined the concept of guardianship in the Qur'an and Hadiths. She explained the principle of modesty in all things, and how Islam discourages greed and excess, even when there's an abundance. Islam encourages positive action: a principle shared by our last presenter, Karen, who explained the concept of Tikkun Olam in Judaism (repairing the earth). She outlined the position of her tradition, Progressive Judaism, to behave and act constructively and spiritually towards social justice and the environment.

The beautiful diversity of faiths and spiritual approaches towards climate justice was not just present in our presenters during this event, but also our attendees, who added to the mix the perspectives of their faiths: *"Planting groves in Scotland and beyond is a key action of Druids and other Pagans. It is at our core, Without bees and trees, there would be no humans. Sikhs and Druids have much in common when it comes to caring for the Earth."*
As women shared openly and referenced each others traditions, there was an empowering feeling of warmth and genuine interest and respect of the "other". In fact, we all celebrated our immense similarities, and our common aims and dreams for the future of our planet.

Check out our prayers for Sacred Earth on RfP UKWFN Youtube Channel:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJOrW-8RjWprL5B8oYPcXYMX94iB5Hrth