**Notes of a meeting of the Justice & Peace Group**

**held in the Meeting Room PNL Centre**

**on Wednesday 11 December 2024**

 **Present**: Jane Manfield (JM) Mike Leggett (ML), Mary Barrett (MB), John Barrett(MJB); Geraldine Sharpe (GS) in person Janet Franklin (JF); Mary Hickman (MH); Cecilia Cameron (CC) on Zoom.

**Apologies:**  John Manfield; Janine Baker; Liz Braines; Rachel Soland; Vivienne O’Byrne

The meeting was chaired by Jane Manfield

The meeting opened with a prayer for peace.

 **Notes of the last meeting**

JM amended the reference to Harriet Tackie.

**CAFOD**

Debt Justice Bill. Following JM’s letter to Rebecca Paul a detailed reply has been received. This will be placed on the website. **Action JF**

MB has written to the CAFOD Government Relations Adviser, Tom Delamere, who suggested that a face to face meeting with Rebecca Paul should be arranged and that he would be happy to advise the J & P group members on the strategy for the meeting. This will include asking her to support for the HIPC initiative (heavily indebted poor countries), which is supported by Pope Francis, the World Bank and IMF. JM has written to request an appointment with Rebecca Paul.

**Live Simply**

JM has placed the Live Simply Award report and review on the J & P page of the parish website. There are posters the 3 PNL churches and one notice in the parish newsletter. **JM** to request further notices. There will also be details in the J and P newsletter in January. Vocations for Justice featured the Live Simply Award (greening parishes) in their quarterly newsletter.

**Parish Lunch 12 January**

Around 100 people should be expected. Menu: chilli con carne or vegetarian chilli, rice, yoghurt, grated cheese, bread. Cake for desert, bakers to be confirmed

Cooks should expect to make up chilli sufficient for 20 people. The list of cooks will be confirmed by JM. **Action JM**

**Laudato Si**

The Season of Creation is now over.

GS mentioned the Climate and Nature Bill (private members bill} which will be introduced in the House of Commons for its second reading on 24 January. This law addresses climate change, global warming and the nature crisis. MPs should be encouraged to support this bill. This will be promoted in the Newsletter. **Action GS**

**Practical Action**

The final two fund raising events for this parish charity will be the concert on 1 March and a Plant Sale in April.

A running order will be determined; performance time for each participant to be 5 – 10 minutes for groups and adults, 3 – 5 minutes for individual children. Participants to be invited

* Chris and Nicky Murphy – **Action JM**
* Frank Percy – **Action JM**
* Luke **– Action GS**
* Grandson and other family members – **Action VB**
* Barrett family members and friends – **Action MB**

JM has contacted St Joseph’s and MB St Bede’s. It was agreed that an early ‘save the date’ notice should be put in the Newsletter. **Action JM**

**Parish Newsletter**

Publication date: Weekend 12 January (this can be promoted at the Parish Lunch). All copy to MJB by 3 January

A picture of the Vigil for Gaza will be included.

Maria Joseph is to be asked for a report on her Mary’s Meals Quiz Night. **Action JM**

**Updates**

SVP are holding a Christmas Tea on 9 January. The Sponsored Walk raised £1160-50.

UCM is hosting a parish lunch in February.

CND (see Mike’s report at the end of these minutes)

GDWG always welcome young men’s clothing. The visitors have noticed that since the General Election many more deportations are taking place. This causes much anxiety and distress in the removal centres.

**World Day of Peace.** January 1 2025 called by Pope Francis

**Write for Rights**

JM introduced this annual campaign from Amnesty International - see Addendum. There is a Toolkit available online with details of 9 individuals or groups in 9 different countries to support with letters or cards. Sample letters and letter sheets are also provided.

[www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act30/8281/2024/en/](http://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act30/8281/2024/en/)

**AOB**

Peace Sunday is 19 January. JM has ordered prayer cards.

There will be no Diocesan Justice and Peace Assembly next year.

GS reported that the J & P notice board at St Joseph’s has been moved and the group needs to decide how the work of the group should be presented.

**Next meeting 8 January ONLINE only**

CND
<https://cnduk.org/nonuclearwar/>   =>
<https://cnduk.org/action-petition/stop-the-risk-of-nuclear-war/>     Ukraine/UK

CND/StW:
<https://www.stopwar.org.uk/events/rally-for-palestine-london/>    Sat 14/12/24
As part of the national day of action for Palestine, there will be a rally at Parliament Square from 2:45pm. Following the rally, there will be a candlelight vigil outside Downing Street, in remembrance of those who have lost their lives in Gaza.

XRUK is supporting Zero Hour's campaign to get at least 102 MPs to attend and vote in favour of the Climate and Nature (CAN) Bill at its second reading in January 2025.
  The legislation would require the UK to achieve stricter climate and nature targets, and to establish a citizens’ assembly to guide the implementation of these targets.
<https://action.zerohour.uk/>     Pass the Climate and Nature Act   challenge-government-inaction
  The CAN Bill is back in Parliament—and its time for us to make history!
  In order for the CAN Bill to progress into law we need 100+ supporting MPs to attend its Second Reading.
e.g. write via  <https://action.zerohour.uk/reigate#write>

From Janine:
Generation Green New Deal   <https://www.gndrising.org/>    [supported by Scientists for Extinction Rebellion]
a movement of young people from all walks of life, fighting for climate justice and a transformational green new deal in the UK.
<https://www.gndrising.org/updates/our-plan-for-labours-first-year/> =>
<https://www.gndrising.org/updates/breaking-keirs-climate-promises/>
<https://www.gndrising.org/campaigns/2024-plan-launch-call/>     email info@gndrising.org
Sign up for the call - 6:30-7:30pm, Monday 19th Feb 2025

International:
<https://baselpeaceoffice.org/sites/default/files/imce/Religions4Peace/november_18_press_release.pdf>      18/11/2024
“Humanity must reach beyond nationalism to build fit-for-purpose global governance for managing the Earth’s atmosphere - our common climate system,” according to over 400 religious, faith and values based individuals and organizations who have endorsed an interfaith appeal Protecting Our Common Climate System: Earth Governance for a Sustainable Future, presented today to the 2024 UN Climate Change Conference (COP 29) in Baku, Azerbaijan

 **Addendum –Write for Rights**



**Amnesty International launches flagship Write for Rights campaign to help people facing human rights abuses around the world**

**Millions of letters and emails will be sent to support these individuals and urge authorities to end injustices**

**‘Sending a letter or email might seem like a small act, but when sent in their thousands they can change lives: those in power are forced to take notice’** **– Sacha Deshmukh**

Amnesty International is calling on people across the UK to take part in its flagship letter writing campaign, [Write for Rights](https://www.amnesty.org/en/get-involved/write-for-rights/), in support of individuals from around the world who have been persecuted, jailed, or face human rights abuses for standing up for their rights.

This year, *Write for Rights*will support nine individuals who are suffering abuses, including:

**Ana da Silva Miguel**, also known as **Neth Nahara**, was arrested in August last year after broadcasting a video on TikTok criticising President João Lourenço. The next day, Angola’s first stage court convicted her of an “outrage against the state, its symbols and bodies”. She was sentenced to six months in prison and fined one million kwanza (approximately $1,200). Last September, Angola’s second stage court extended Neth’s sentence to two years, following an appeal by the public prosecutor. During her imprisonment, authorities denied Neth her daily HIV medication for eight months, which severely impacted her health.

**Oqba Hashad**, an Egyptian business student, has been arbitrarily detained for nearly five years without trial solely because of his brother’s human rights activism. Despite a court order for his release, he remains detained in horrific conditions, including being denied a proper prosthetic leg. Prison authorities have interrogated Oqba on multiple occasions about his brother’s activism and contact with his family. Egypt, as a state party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, must ensure detainees with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodation and health services.

**Professor Şebnem Korur Fincancı,** head of the Turkish Medical Association, faces more than seven years in prison because of her human rights work. Professor Fincancı is a prominent human rights defender, anti-torture advocate and forensic medicine expert. In October 2022, she was arrested and put in pre-trial detention. A criminal investigation was launched against her after she called for an independent investigation into allegations that Turkish armed forces might have used chemical weapons in Kurdistan Region of Iraq in comments during a live TV interview. Professor Fincancı was later convicted of trumped-up charges of “making propaganda for a terrorist organisation”. She is currently awaiting the result of an appeal, but also faces additional charges linked to her human rights work.

Sacha Deshmukh, Chief Executive of Amnesty International UK, said:“The people we have focused on this year are all imprisoned because the governments of their countries value power over free speech. By joining this campaign, people in the UK – and indeed around the world – can help improve their chances of getting justice.

“Sending a letter or email might seem like a small act, but when sent in their thousands they can change lives: those in power are forced to take notice.

“Amnesty’s Write for Rights campaign helps to protect the lives of persecuted people every year. We hope to see people across the country getting involved to make as much noise as possible about the injustices these human rights defenders are facing.”

Amnesty International’s Write for Rights campaign goes back to the roots of the organisation, which was founded in 1961, with early campaigners writing letters of support to those affected by human rights abuses, as well as letters of concern to governments around the world.

**Successes from previous Write for Rights campaigns:**

Human rights defender Rita Karasartova was arrested in 2022 along with 26 others for opposing a new border agreement that gave control of a freshwater reservoir to Uzbekistan. She was initially detained for organising ‘mass disorder’ and later charged with attempting to ‘violently overthrow the Government’, which carries a potential 15-year sentence. Rita and at least 21 others were acquitted on 14 June this year: a significant victory for justice and human rights in Kyrgyzstan, even though the prosecutor has filed an appeal against the ruling.

She subsequently expressed her gratitude for the countless letters she received from Amnesty supporters during the campaign, emphasising that each one gave her immense hope and strength, reinforcing her belief in the power of solidarity.

In 2021, Amnesty campaigned for Egyptian human rights lawyer Mohamed Baker, who received a presidential pardon in July last year and was released from prison the following day. He is now safely reunited with his loved ones.

Cecillia Chimbiri and Joanah Mamombe were acquitted by the Zimbabwean High Court in July 2023 of communicating falsehoods and obstructing the course of justice. The two – together with Netsai Marova, who did not face trial as she is out of the country – were arrested and abducted in May 2020 following a protest on the Government’s failure to provide social protection during the Covid 19 pandemic. Amnesty campaigned for them during the 2022 Write for Rights campaign.

You might think that writing to someone you don’t know will make no difference, or that they won’t want to hear from you. But when you’re locked up or in fear for your life or you’re desperately seeking justice for a loved one, having someone tell you they believe in you matters a lot. They may feel anxious and alone, and your words will bring comfort and hope to them. WHY DOES SOLIDARITY MATTER? Through the solidarity she received in 2023, Ana Maria Santos Cruz felt the embrace of a global community of allies, keeping her hope alive after the death of her son, Pedro Henrique. An activist and advocate of racial justice and human rights, Pedro organized “Walks of Peace” in Tucano, Bahia, Brazil. The annual marches brought people together to speak out about police abuses primarily against Black communities. These moments of solidarity were met with hostility and intimidation from the police and on 27 December 2018, Pedro Henrique was murdered, aged 31.

/www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act30/8281/2024/en/