



Justice & Peace

Spring 2025

News from the National Justice & Peace Network

A PRAYER...

Pray not for Arab or Jew, for Palestinian or Israeli but pray rather for ourselves that we might not divide them in our prayers but keep them both together in our hearts.

- based on a prayer from a Palestinian Christian, reproduced by kind permission of Christian Aid.

For your diary..
OPENING THE DOORS TO FREEDOM FROM TRAFFICKING AND SLAVERY

Thursday 6th February 2025
7.30pm—9pm
(Via Zoom)

Save the Dates!

OPENING DOORS TO REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS
Monday 7th April 2025
7.30pm—9pm
(Via Zoom)

OPEN NETWORKING DAY
10th May 2025
Romero House, London
10.30am-3.30pm

Keep an eye out for details, or contact admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk to book your place.



NEXT ISSUE DATE— **APRIL** Articles required by **20th March 2025**

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NJPN Jubilee 2025

Moving from a 'Just Politics' to a 'Just Peace'

Pope Francis has declared 2025 to be a year of Jubilee – We are called to be pilgrims of HOPE. If we think of the story in Luke's Gospel when, at the beginning of his public ministry Jesus went to the synagogue in Nazareth and was given the book of the prophet Isaiah, he began to read:

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.

Isaiah 61:1-2



In Luke's Gospel 4:20 we read – 'and he sat down'

On how many occasions do we hear this phrase during Christ's public ministry. He sat down to pray, to teach, to listen, to feel the earth beneath his fingers, to give his listeners time to grasp the impact of what he was saying. Sitting down implies relationship, community, reciprocity, on a level. With whom did he sit down, not usually the great and good, rather the marginalised the unacceptable ones.

In biblical terms then jubilee offers a vision of economic and environmental justice and liberation, release from debt and slavery. A time for renewal of the land with people returning to their roots. A time

for celebration of the whole of creation.

For J&P activists the Jubilee year will be a time to reflect and refocus, offering a huge challenge but also opportunity to look carefully at what we are about, especially for NJPN, as a network, how we work in partnership with so many inspirational groups, agencies, organisations and individuals who are committed to working for justice and peace in a very volatile world.

A key element of the Jubilee 2025 will be the opening of Holy Doors, and for many people this will resonate very powerfully both liturgically and spiritually. The Jubilee

Year will formally conclude in Rome on the feast of the Epiphany, 6 January 2026, when the holy doors will be closed.

I would like to reflect for just a moment on the opening of doors – a powerful image – Doors can form very effective barriers in our Churches, keeping people with closed minds (the hardest thing to unlock) safely inside or ensuring that outsiders can't get in and disturb our complacency. As NJPN it seems to me that we need to be pushing those doors open and making sure they don't close again.

We must ask:

Who are the doorkeepers and the keyholders?

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How do we challenge the keyholders and the ideas the keyholders represent? Who is holding the key that excludes, is it a lack of welcome?

We need to challenge those perceptions that don't sit well with a vision of a more just and peaceful world, a 'kingdom' world. We can't just accept 'what is.' Do we grab hold of the key? We need to 'sing a new song' live out a different story, a story of welcome and hope for a common future.

Should we be outside, knocking on the doors. Do we find Christ in the people of God, whatever their situation?

We shut so many people out, so when we open our Holy Doors who will feel welcomed and accepted? How can we be a prophetic group, opening doors to those who are other than ourselves, who are estranged, excluded, disadvantaged?

'As pilgrims of hope NJPN resolves to open wide the doors for future generations ensuring as we go that no one is left behind

We invite you to Journey with us this jubilee year as we open the doors to a just peace for current and future generations

We invite you to join us as we commit to taking restorative action to bring about peace and justice for migrants, or people living in poverty and inequality and for a world in climate crisis. We owe it to future generations to make this

Jubilee permanent'

We proclaim Jubilee through our actions, words, communication, events, publications, by speaking truth to Power. 'Showing up', 'speaking out'

We proclaim jubilee when campaigning with allies for a 'Real Living Wage' – a major concern at our last conference.

We proclaim jubilee when campaigning for liberty and freedom for enslaved workers, refugees, victims of trafficking, for those affected by climate change - environmental refugees.

NJPN Focus for the year of Jubilee is 'Opening Doors' with a programme of open meetings. A poster will be available to download on the NJPN website with further details of all events through the year. Events already planned include:

Thursday 6th February: Opening Doors to those affected by slavery and Trafficking - Evening via Zoom -- Brian O'Toole

Monday 7th April: Opening Doors to Refugees and Asylum Seekers - Evening via Zoom.

Saturday 10th May: Opening Doors to a sustainable future for all people

Networking Day in London (Romero House) – NJPN Environment Group to facilitate the event

Conference 25 – 27 July – 'A Just Peace' – Challenging the inevitability of violence.

Thursday 30th October 2025: Evening via Zoom – Post Conference Catch Up

Anne Peacey, Chair of Trustees, NJPN

Sr. Maire Hayes: Rest in Peace

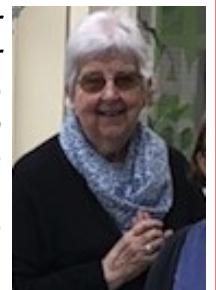
Sr Maire, was a dear friend and supporter of NJPN and had been a valued member of the Executive since 2012. In sharing their thoughts Exec. members have said that not only was Sr. Maire inspiring and insightful, her sense of fun and enthusiasm was infectious. Sr. Maire also possessed a deep sense of inner peace and this together with her unique life experience, was reflected in her contribution to all our discussions.

We all feel very blessed to have known her. May the Lord bless her and keep her.

Sr. Maire had also been a long serving member of GRASSROOTS Staff Team, and David Jonathan (Johny) from GRASSROOTS Programme writes in appreciation of Sr. Maire:

Sr. Maire was a great supporter of the Luton Council of Faiths, and she contributed significantly to inter-faith & cohesion work in Luton. She laid the foundation for Making Luton Fairtrade Campaign. She never hesitated to take

a stand for peace and justice in our world, not even when she lived under the authoritarian regime in Chile for over two decades. Soon after 9/11, she arrived in Luton. She became the Inter Faith Coordinator for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Northampton, and she carried out that role with great passion for nearly 20 years.



We will always remain indebted for her support, guidance, and leadership in many different ways. She stood shoulder to shoulder with Luton's different faith communities in testing times. Her spirit of defiance to those attempting to undermine the stability and integrity of diverse communities in our town has left a lasting impression on us all. She was admired by us all and by many more in Luton's diverse faith communities for her gentleness, humility, grace, astuteness, diligence, and the dignified way in

which she contributed to life in Luton. We are grateful for her life, her faith, and her selfless commitment to our town. May she rest in peace and may we all remain united in our longing for peace in the world, and continue

working together for the peace, unity, well-being, and prosperity of all in our town. Peace be with you all, as Sr Maire would often say and pray.

David Jonathan (Johny) from GRASSROOTS

NJPN joins largest-ever call for UK banks to end fossil fuel funding

NJPN and eight Catholic religious orders are among the 70 Christian organisations joining a call for the big five UK high-street banks to end their financing of new fossil fuels.

In the largest action yet calling for change from UK high street banks on their fossil fuel financing, Christian organisations raised concerns over the \$556 billion that Barclays, HSBC, Santander, NatWest and Lloyds have provided to the fossil fuel industry since the Paris Climate Agreement. They highlighted that the expansion of oil and gas is incompatible with limiting global heating to 1.5° C, according to the UN and International Energy Agency.

The statement was co-authored by Laudato Si' Movement, JustMoney Movement, Make My Money Matter, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI), Christian Climate Action (CCA) and Bank Better, with support from the World Council of Churches (WCC).

Catholic religious orders signing the statement include the Religious of the Assumption (English Territory), Sisters of St Joseph of Peace, Columbans in Britain, Columban Sisters, Daughters of the Holy Spirit, Sisters of the Holy

Family of Bordeaux, Congregation of Our Lady, Canonesses of St Augustine (UK) and the English Province of the Union of Presentation Sisters.

Sr Susan Francois CSJP, Assistant Congregation Leader of the Sisters of St Joseph of Peace, said: "We believe that we have a fiduciary responsibility to earth and present and future generations. We signed this statement because we agree with Pope Francis that we must transform the economy from one that kills into an economy of life."

For more information on how to divest from fossil fuel companies and switch to an ethical bank as a Catholic diocese, religious order or as an individual, visit the Laudato Si' Movement website:

laudatosimovement.org/where-is-your-treasure

James Buchanan, Laudato Si' Movement



Photo courtesy of Christian Climate Action.

NJPN and Friends at the Telford Arms Fair - November 2024

Members of NJPN and Pax Christi were among several groups (Quakers, CAAT, Extinction Rebellion, Palestine Solidarity groups) demonstrating outside the Arms Fair taking place in Telford in November 2024.

The Fair, full name Specialist Defence and Security Convention UK, focussed on military equipment for front-line infantry soldiers. Several of the exhibitors were companies involved in supplying equipment being used in Gaza:

- ELBIT SYSTEMS – manufacturer of bombs, mortars and drones, and Israel's largest privately held arms company

- L3 HARRIS – maker of surveillance, night vision and targeting equipment and supplier of bomb release mechanisms for Israel's F35 aircraft, which has been confirmed as being involved in the deaths of civilians in Gaza

- ULTRA ELECTRONICS - has been granted numerous arms export licences to Israel by the UK Government and has been involved in the development of the F35 warplane.

This was the second year that the exhibition was held in Telford, having previously been forced to move from Hereford and then Malvern because of opposition from demonstrators.

Ann Kelly, NJPN



SHABBAT IFTAR - MARCH 2024



Last week at my synagogue
 the doors were open
 I ran in and out of the kitchen and up and
 down the stairs
 I washed apples
 I folded prayer sheets
 I heard someone say
 ‘you’ve brought too much fruit’
 and ‘no no, we did that on purpose’
 and ‘is there anything I can help with?’
 and ‘we don’t have as much time as I thought!’
 and ‘who brought 100 loaves of challah?’
 and ‘are we sure that’s enough?’
 and ‘they barely fit in the kitchen!’
 and ‘people are arriving!’
 and a woman in a hijab
 covered in purple flowers and little
 flecks of yellow
 that could be bees darting between them
 is here
 and she takes my hand and says
 ‘Shalom aleichem’
 and I said
 ‘Salam alaykum’
 and I probably said it wrong
 but she smiled
 and went to get a name tag
 and more people began to arrive
 and some of them were Jews and
 some of them were Muslims and
 all of them were chatting
 and I could hear
 ‘Ramadan Mubarak’
 and ‘Shabbat shalom’
 and ‘Shalom aleichem’
 and ‘Salam alaykum’

but so many people were talking
 the languages merged and
 were siblings again
 and so were we.
 and we go upstairs
 slowly side by side
 to the sanctuary
 with Hebrew across the walls
 and the words
 ‘Wait quietly for God, O my soul
 for my hope comes from God’
 and we are not being quiet
 so God must have arrived
 along with our guests
 who pray with us while we pray with them
 and my hope comes from God
 but it comes from this too
 from my Jewish family holding open the doors
 for my Muslim family to break their fast
 without a wait
 and from the reminder to
 ‘sit beside someone you don’t know
 Yet’
 and hearing one conversation in a mix of
 broken Arabic
 and broken English
 and broken Hebrew
 and all I can hear
 is ‘shalom aleichem’
 and ‘salam alaykum’
 and I think in this moment
 Peace may be upon us all. - *by Cory Rich*

27 Jan - Holocaust Memorial Day - www.hmd.org.uk	31 Jan - Feast of St John Bosco
6 Feb—Online Meeting (NJPN) - 7.30pm—9pm <i>Opening the Doors to Freedom from Trafficking and Slavery</i> Register with admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk	8 Feb <i>International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking</i>
9 Feb - Racial Justice Sunday	9 Feb—Caritas Brentwood Networking Day 2pm—6pm www.caritasbrentwood.org.uk/network/
10 Feb 12.45pm — 2pm - Online via Zoom Southern Dioceses Environment Network Meeting www.westminsterjusticeandpeace.org/	11 Feb - Day for the Unemployed
5 March - International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness www.un.org/en/observances/disarmament-non-proliferation-awareness-day	10 Mar 12.45pm — 2pm - Online via Zoom Southern Dioceses Environment Network Meeting www.westminsterjusticeandpeace.org/
7 April—Online Meeting (NJPN) - 7.30pm—9pm <i>Opening Doors to Refugees and Asylum Seekers</i> Register with admin@justice-and-peace.org.uk	22 April - Earth Day www.earthday.org

The National Justice & Peace Network welcomes all who share a vision of a world in which people live in peace and harmony, where our common humanity is respected and all are able to contribute freely to the common good. NJPN seeks to encourage work for justice and peace by promoting communication and shared action between members, supporters and partners.

This newsletter is produced three times a year by the Network

The views expressed are not necessarily those of the National Justice and Peace Network.

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