

Refugee Week 18-24 June

Refugee Week is a UK-wide programme of arts, cultural and educational events that celebrate the contribution of refugees to the UK, and encourages a better understanding between communities.

Ice and Fire Theatre and the new Actors for Refugees network will stage Asylum Monologues in 12 cities on 21 June (London, Liverpool, Leicester, Manchester, Leeds, Halifax, Exeter, Sheffield, Norwich, Swansea, Nottingham and Glasgow), and in Guildford on 20 June. The production is an account of the UK asylum system told first-hand in the words of people who have experienced it.

For details of performance times and venues call 020 7377 5299 or see www.iceandfire.co.uk

The Joint Public Issues Team is working with others to highlight some of the challenges faced by asylum seekers in the UK, including those who have converted to Christianity and who could be persecuted if they returned to their home country. The Methodist Church has prepared some guidance information for ministers who are asked to act as expert witnesses at asylum appeals to verify if someone has genuinely converted. To read the guidance please contact us for a copy, or visit www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/pi_mins_asylum_briefing1905.doc

Enabling Christians in Serving Refugees is holding a National Conference in Sheffield 8-9 September. 'Refugee Integration – Reality Check' will explore the barriers that are hindering refugees from settling into UK society, related issues and the role of the Church. Cost - £125 (residential), and further information and booking forms are available from ECSR - 0208 7787788 www.ecsr.org.uk

Racial Justice Sunday – 9 September

If you have missed Refugee Week, you could start planning now for Racial Justice Sunday on 9 September. This year's theme is 'A World on the Move' and is based on Genesis 12:1 where God says to Abram "Go to a land I will show you". A special study guide has been produced with six signposts:

- The end of an evil? 200 years since the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act
- A place of safety? Issues concerning refugees, asylum and sanctuary
- A warm welcome? What kind of welcome have we given to migrants?
- A land of opportunity? People who migrate for economic reasons
- A level playing field? Involving people of minority cultures in church life
- A brave new beginning? Stories of Christians who have migrated

Racial Justice Sunday packs (£3.50 each) are available from CTBI Publications, 4 John Wesley Road, Peterborough PE4 6ZP Tel: 01733 325002 E-mail sales@mph.org.uk www.ccrj.org.uk

North Poles

'North Poles' is a 24-minute documentary focusing on Polish migrant workers. The coastal village of Seahouses in NE England is home to a sizeable Polish community and the DVD explores the economic forces behind their presence and what they have to offer the local community. 'North Poles' was commissioned by the mobile cinema project of North Sunderland URC. Copies available from Jimmy Turnbull, 5 Osborne Gardens, North Sunderland, Seahouses NE68 7UF Tel: 01665 720040 E-mail: turnbulljimt@aol.com (Price £10 for individuals, £50 for large networks or organisations using it with wider audiences). There is a review on the CTE website:

<http://cte.churchinsight.com/Publisher/Article.aspx?id=75344>

Storm of Hope – 7 July

Christian Ecology Link is celebrating its 25th anniversary by holding a day-long event on Saturday 7 July at All Hallows by the Tower Church, Byward Street, London EC3 from 1100-1700. Price – £17 (£12 for CEL members). Booking is essential – Tel: 01524 33858. www.christian-ecology.org.uk/stormhope

Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel – EAPPI

The mission of the programme is to accompany Palestinians and Israelis. There are vacancies for service opportunities in 2008. EAPPI provides protection by presence, supports Israeli and Palestinian peace activists, participates in non-violent actions and advocates for an end to the occupation.

ECUMENICAL ACCOMPANIERS Based: West Bank and Israel
13 vacancies for service in 2008
11 contracts for 3 months & 2 for 4.5 months, living allowance + benefits

Deadline for applications: 31 August 2007

Application packs available from: www.quaker.org.uk/eappi

Or contact: EAPPI Programme Coordinators, QPSW, 173 Euston Rd, London NW1 2BJ, UK.

Tel: 020 7663 1144 E-mail: eappi@quaker.org.uk

Criminal Justice

Do you have work experience in the field of criminal justice and an interest in encouraging churches to consider how they might focus on the issues in their communities?

The Churches' Criminal Justice Forum is seeking to appoint volunteer Regional Representatives who would arrange meetings, convey views to local government and liaise with CCJF across the country. Travel expenses will be met. www.ccjf.org.uk

Action for Prisoners' Families promotes the just treatment of prisoners' families by the prison system and society across the UK. It encourages the development of, and acts as a voice for, organisations providing support to these families. In conjunction with Nacro, the crime reduction charity, APF has recently produced a guide for families of prisoners. 'Outside Help' shows families how to:

- contact the organisations that are there to help
- keep in contact with prisoners, by letter, phone or visit
- deal with financial issues
- and prepare for the release process.

Churches working with prisoners and individuals involved in the criminal justice system can find out more information about APF, Nacro and 'Outside Help' by contacting

APF www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk 020 8812 3600

Nacro www.nacro.org.uk 020 7582 6500

Outside Help www.nacro.org.uk/data/resources/nacro-2007032200.pdf

Fringe Events at Methodist Conference

If you will be near Blackpool between 7-12 July, you would be welcome to the annual Methodist Conference, which is being held at the Norbreck Castle Hotel. Public Issues related events that may be of interest to you include:

Monday 9 July

- Joint Advisory Committee on the Ethics of Investment breakfast - Social Justice and Responsible Investment - 8am in the Adams Suite
- Debate on Climate Change - main Conference hall
- Beckly Lecture: Valuing Mental Health by Malcolm Rae OBE FRCN - 7.45pm in the Adams Suite

Further details can be found at www.methodistconference.org.uk

Contact

If you would like to receive the Joint Public Issues Team Newsletter, or would like to publicise an event or project, please contact Wendy Cooper, e-mail - wendy.cooper@urc.org.uk Telephone - 020 7916 8632

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