



# InterFaith MK

October 2021 Newsletter

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Dear Friends and Members of InterfaithMK,

Following on in our series of "My Journey of Faith", we are delighted to present a testimony and Q and A session from our own Ken Harris, which should be quite fascinating. Within a year we plan to collate the films and recordings of all of our guest speakers into a video or printed collection of great historical and cultural importance.

People of faith are increasingly becoming aware of the relationship between concern for God and concern for the environment, on the one earth we all inhabit together. Please join Prof Graham Harvey showing the journey of the Totem from Mexico to the UK for COP26 to raise awareness of the need for urgent environmental consciousness, stewardship and action.

**Weds 6th Oct at 11am to 1pm at CMK Train Station Square** (Please see page 2 and 3)

Many thanks for the participants and audience of our Multi-Faith Service last week. We will publish a full photographic publication when we have collected all the photos that were taken and edited the film.

Yours sincerely, David Rennie, Administrator, IFMK (P.S. Do you have any more photos for me?)

IFMK is inviting you to the October 2021 Zoom Meeting.

## Testimony of My Journey of Faith

Presented by **Mr Ken Harris**, focussing on **Peace and Justice**

**Time: Thursday October 7th, 2021 07:15 for a 7:30 start. End 9:15**

Click to Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87606731695?pwd=L1Z1Q2RlM1RuZHYwRlcySjNNTkZlkZz09>

**Meeting ID: 876 0673 1695 • Passcode: 871057**

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87606731695?pwd=L1Z1Q2RlM1RuZHYwRlcySjNNTkZlkZz09>

**Joyce Chapman** of the **Milton Keynes Peace and Justice Network** is also planning to join us and will be able to tell us about the activities of this group in Milton Keynes.

*'My journey of faith began at the end of the second world war, and one of my earliest memories is of bombed out buildings. Maybe as a consequence, the subjects of peace and justice have been important ones for me. I will share some of the ways that this has helped shape my life, and where I now find myself on that journey. Having shared this, I would like to open up to questions and some discussion on how different faith communities are working for these values.'*

Ken Harris has been a member of Interfaith MK for over 15 years, and served as Co-convenor for the last five years until last month's AGM. He had studied Theology at Cambridge before training as a teacher, but later became a social worker, mainly working in Milton Keynes in child care and later with people who had an acquired brain injury. But these two different roles were separated by a period of 13 years during which he worked with Milton Keynes Peace and Justice Centre and the Global Centre. For 45 years, he has been a local preacher in the Methodist Church, currently serving in the Vale of Aylesbury Circuit.

## Totonac Totem's Visit To Milton Keynes

**Border Crossings** (the organisers of the totem's odyssey from Mexico to the UK for COP26) and **Professor Graham Harvey** are inviting us to a Rally and Exhibition of the **Mexican Totem** from **11 am to 1pm** on **Wednesday 6th October** 2021 at **Station Square**, in front of Milton Keynes Railway Station



Q) Professor Graham Harvey, who are you?

A) I'm Professor of Religious Studies at the Open University (*proud to be part of the MK community as well as the UK's biggest university!*). I'm working with Border Crossings who have commissioned an internationally important Indigenous / Totonac artist from Mexico, **Jun Tiburcio**, to make a totem called "**Latamat**" (also **La Vida** or "**Life**") and are bringing it to the UK to go to the COP26 Climate Change talks in Glasgow in November.

Q) When you are coming and for how long:

A) The totem will be in Milton Keynes Station Square from 5-11 October on one of its 6 stops between London and Glasgow. I will be in MK on the 6th October to welcome the totem - hopefully with members of IFMK.

Q) Where you are coming to in MK:

A) MK Station Square: the totem will stand on the Midsummer Boulevard line in the Square. It'll be accompanied by information boards with a QR code linking to the artist's guide to what the totem involves and, importantly, what it says to us about celebrating life and dealing with Climate Change.

Q) Any guidance as what activities our friends and members should be doing when you do come?

A) It'd be great if people from IFMK - and friends (religious or otherwise) - would come along and express commitment to celebrating Earth's life and demonstrating that we want the COP26 talks to commit to urgent actions on behalf of life. I'll gladly say more about the totem - but it and a recording of the artist's words are eloquent about Indigenous perspectives and experiences. If you'd like to make this a ceremonial occasion that's fine too! With all good wishes, Graham

<https://originsfestival.bordercrossings.org.uk/programme/totem-latamat>

29th September – 4 October 2021 Chiswick House  
<https://chiswickhouseandgardens.org.uk/whats-on/totem-latamat/>

5th -10th October 2021  
Milton Keynes Station Square

11th – 13th October 2021  
Fountain Square, Enfield  
Town

14th– 17th October 2021  
Rollright Stones, Oxfordshire

18th – 20th October 2021  
Warwick Arts Centre

21st – 23rd October 2021  
Manchester University

24th – 27th October 2021  
Hexham Abbey

27th October – 13th Novem-  
ber 2021 Hidden Garden,  
Glasgow

14th November 2021  
Return to Earth Ceremony  
The Crichton, Dumfries







## Indigenous artwork, Totem Latamat travels 9,000km from Mexico to UK for COP26

Carved by Totonac artist Jun Tiburcio, Totem Latamat will travel 9,000km from Mexico, stopping at iconic locations across the UK, before arriving at the Indigenous Elders' COP26 camp around the Sacred Fire in Glasgow's Hidden Gardens. As part of Border Crossings' ORIGINS Festival, Totem Latamat is a message from the Totonac people to our communities and world leaders conveying how deeply interwoven our existence is with nature and the need for immediate action to disrupt the damage done by climate change.

Though colonisation has historically and deliberately obscured Indigenous voices, COP26 will highlight the crucial role of Indigenous people and local communities in mitigating and adapting to the climate emergency. Cut from a single cedar tree and standing at 4.5m tall, Totem Latamat demands that neither it nor its message be ignored. It will travel to important cultural hubs across the UK including London, Coventry, Milton Keynes and Manchester drawing powerful links between Indigenous experience and local heritage. Following COP26 it will be ceremonially returned to the Earth, emphasizing the cyclical and transient nature of life and art.

Jun Tiburcio comments, For the Totonac people, birds are our messengers. In the totem, they tell us that we must take care of all life... At the top of the totem are hummingbirds, representing the aspiration for a new consciousness: they are messengers of peace between humans and nature. The face on the reverse represents the state of emergency in the world. We are so close to reaching the peak of this crisis and the raised arms of the Totonac culture represent the balance that we must find in the mind and the heart. We need to act quickly to care for the world through prayers, thoughts, connections, and laws.

Intercultural theatre company Border Crossings' ORIGINS Festival is a multidisciplinary celebration of Indigenous arts and culture from around the world. The 2021-22 Festival offers an unprecedented and evolving year-long programme, transforming digital and physical spaces into vibrant sites of creative enquiry, intervention and performance by leading Indigenous artists and thinkers. The festival offers an opportunity to engage with the work of Indigenous artists and activists and ORIGINS' themes of climate, covid and colonialism.

Jun is an artist painter, embroiderer, earth sculptor, writer, and poet in the Indigenous language of Totonac. He has exhibited his work across the globe including in Mexico, Canada, France, Washington, Australia & New Zealand. He is the ambassador of the Totonac language and is the founder and artistic consultant of the Cumbre Tajin Papantla Cultural Festival, in the state of Veracruz.





## Peace & Humanity Procession at Zainabiya Islamic Centre

The **27th Annual Peace & Humanity Procession** was held at **Zainabiya Islamic Centre** by the **Voice of Al - Husain** volunteers on Sunday 5th Sept 2021 to promote Peace and Humanity.

Given the challenges we all still face as a result of Covid-19, this year's program was scaled down to a maximum of 100 people and the interfaith program deferred until next year. We hope that our interfaith brothers and sisters will be able to join us for the procession and interfaith program next year.

The event was an excellent opportunity to promote 'Peace and Humanity' through the personality and message of Imam Husain the grandson of the Holy Prophet (Peace be Upon Him) – numerous flags and placards were displayed during the procession and there were readings to commemorate the events of Karbala.

To further explain the legacy of Imam Husain, BBC 3 Counties Radio also devoted some time to explain the relevance and purpose of the peaceful procession. Sheikh Nur Mohamed the Imam of the Centre gave a detailed explanation on the sacrifice of Husain on social justice and peace.

Once again, we would like to thank Thames Valley police and all the volunteers and participants for their support and assistance during the procession.

Arif Master,

Interfaith Co-ordinator

Zainabiya Islamic Centre

