



Sanctuary Sunday

Service Resources

July 14th 2013



City of Sanctuary poster displayed during Leeds interfaith week 2013

Sanctuary Sunday is an opportunity for **church congregations to focus their Sunday service on the issue of sanctuary**, and to reflect on how we can all contribute to creating a culture of welcome and hospitality for asylum seekers and refugees in our communities.

Sanctuary Sunday is taking place on Sunday 14th July 2013 and your congregation is warmly invited to take part.

This list of resources has been put together by Leeds Churches Together in Mission in conjunction with City of Sanctuary. It contains **resources and ideas from various organisations and individuals**, and is intended to be a **helpful resource in planning church services** for Sanctuary Sunday (though these are only a few resources and ideas, there are plenty more out there). The City of Sanctuary website is a useful starting place: www.cityofsanctuary.org

Sanctuary Sunday is **raising awareness of Refugee and Asylum seeker issues** and is an initiative of City of Sanctuary. It would be great to know if you will mark Sanctuary Sunday during your service on the 14th July this year, and/or if your church would like to sign up as a Church of Sanctuary. Please do get in touch with Leeds City of Sanctuary to **let us know if you are planning to hold a service** by emailing leeds@cityofsanctuary.org

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What is a City of Sanctuary?

City of Sanctuary is a movement to build a culture of hospitality for people seeking sanctuary in the UK. Our goal is to create a network of towns and cities throughout the country which are proud to be places of safety, and which include people seeking sanctuary fully in the life of their communities.

A City of Sanctuary is a place of safety and welcome for people whose lives are in danger in their own countries. It is a place where:

- the skills and cultures of people seeking sanctuary are valued, where they are included in local communities and able to contribute to the life of the city.
- community groups, local government, media, business, schools and colleges have a shared commitment to offering sanctuary, so that it is seen as part of the city's identity by local people.
- people seeking sanctuary can easily build relationships with local people as neighbours, friends and colleagues. Through these relationships, local people come to understand the injustices refugees face, and become motivated to support and defend them.



Display for Leeds City of Sanctuary

Leeds City of Sanctuary is encouraging businesses, churches, schools, mosques, individuals, community groups, and many others to sign a sanctuary pledge. If your church would like to sign up as a Church of Sanctuary please visit www.cityofsanctuary.com/leeds to sign the pledge.

Definitions & information

The following are some useful definitions of terms often used of people seeking sanctuary...

Asylum seeker - someone who is waiting for the Government to decide if they can be allowed to stay in the UK as a refugee. They have no right to work or access benefits.

Refugee - a person who is recognised by the Government as having a fear of being persecuted in their country for reasons of Race/ Religion/ Nationality/ Membership of a particular group/ Political Opinion. They will be granted rights to work, to access welfare support and to receive support to integrate with their local community.



Economic migrant - Someone who has moved to another country to work. Refugees are not economic migrants.

It is not easy to get refugee status, and many people are still awaiting decisions several years on. Some really good information can be found on the following websites:

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/policy_research/the_truth_about_asylum

www.redcross.org.uk/What-we-do/Refugee-services/

Stories from Leeds & Elsewhere

The best way to develop a greater understanding of refugee and asylum seeker issues is to hear the stories of refugees and asylum seekers themselves. Ways that you could include personal stories within a service include:

- Perhaps there are individuals within your congregation who would be willing to share their stories, either as a testimony or through being interviewed.
- Invite someone from a Leeds-based initiative working with refugees and people seeking asylum to your service, to share their experience and give you some insight into the stories of people with whom they work.
- Use testimonies from the website of local, regional and national organisations working with refugees and asylum seekers to share real life examples, either by speaking them yourself, or by showing a video.
- Use the new City of Sanctuary film at www.cityofsanctuary.org, (or the film on the Bristol pages of the website), to provide stories of welcome and safety for those seeking sanctuary from war and persecution.

Freedom from Torture

This national charity works with survivors of torture and organised violence to help them rebuild their lives. Sharing this expertise with partner organisations in the UK and internationally, it operates as a centre of learning and knowledge in the care, treatment and protection of torture survivors. There are case studies on their website which could be used to give examples of why people have sought sanctuary in the UK. www.freedomfromtorture.org

The Refugee Council

This is one of the leading charities in the UK working directly with refugees, and supporting them to rebuild their lives. It also speaks up for refugees using direct work as an evidence base, and ensuring refugees have a stronger and more influential voice in decisions that will affect them. It works with a range of partners and in collaboration to ensure we can best support our clients. Their website has a 'truth about asylum' section, which has some helpful facts and figures about people seeking asylum in the UK. www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Testimony Project

The Testimony Project seeks to tell the stories that need to be told of women refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. The website contains a number of video stories and written stories, and provides advice, support, and connections for refugee women and the organisations that support them. The project seeks to unite people, answer critical questions, post news, blogs and forum discussions, and provide a safe supportive space for women. www.testimonyproject.org

Leeds organisations working with refugees and asylum seekers

AJAR

AJAR is a network of people in Leeds, often from faith communities, seeking to help people currently in detention who have a valid case for applying for bail. AJAR's network includes voluntary befrienders, bailers and (medical/legal) advisors. It has no paid workers: all work is carried out by volunteers, aiming to provide a team of three volunteers to support each asylum seeker whom we are working with whilst they are waiting for a decision on whether they will obtain leave to remain in the UK. <https://sites.google.com/site/asylumjusticeandrelease/>

LASSN—Leeds Asylum Seeker Support Network

Leeds Asylum Seekers' Support Network aims to make a positive contribution to the lives of people seeking refuge from persecution by meeting their social needs through Befriending, English at Home, Short Stop and Information and Awareness projects and by supporting Leeds Refugee Forum. LASSN operate a volunteer speakers network of refugees and others who are willing to come and speak about the refugee and asylum experience. If you would like someone from this

network to come and speak in your service please contact: Peter Richardson, peter@lassn.org.uk, 0113 3731759, <http://lassn.org.uk>

Leeds Refugee Forum (LRF)

This is a refugee led organisation directly supporting refugees and asylum seekers as they begin their new lives in Leeds. Refugees are socially and economically disadvantaged in many ways, but LRF identifies, inspires, develops, encourages and supports members of the refugee community. Refugees bring with them a huge wealth of experience, knowledge, expertise and resourcefulness. LRF aims to help refugees harness these skills to benefit other refugees, asylum seekers, refugee communities and the wider community. <http://leedsrefugeeforum.org.uk/>

Manuel Bravo Project

This Leeds-based charity helps asylum seekers who are unable to find adequate legal representation. It was set up by church congregations working together to respond to issues faced by asylum seekers in the city. The Project is volunteer-based with barristers, solicitors, law students and other individuals volunteering their time to help appeal against negative decisions granted to people seeking asylum in the UK.

0113 350 8608, www.manuelbravo.org.uk, office@manuelbravo.org.uk



Women performing at Women’s Culture Day in Leeds

PAFRAS—Positive Action For Refugees and Asylum Seekers

PAFRAS works with asylum seekers, refugees and local communities in Leeds and the surrounding area, focusing on providing humanitarian support for asylum seekers who are homeless, without food or money and prevented from improving their situation by government policy. PAFRAS runs a twice-weekly drop-in on Tuesdays and Thursday 10am –12.30pm at St. Aidan’s Church, Harehills, at which they provide a hot meal and on Thursdays casework support amongst other services. The PAFRAS website has a number of helpful resources. info@pafras.org.uk, www.pafras.org.uk

RETAS – Refugee Education Training and Advice Service

RETAS aims to help refugees and asylum seekers integrate in West Yorkshire. The organisation works on the frontline, offering support to refugees and asylum seekers, as well as offering training and sessions to organisations, companies, schools and services, to give them a better understanding of refugee and asylum issues. RETAS also operates a speakers network, if you would like someone from this network to come and speak in your service please contact –

info@retasleeds.org.uk, 0113 3805630, www.retasleeds.org.uk



Dancers performing at Women’s Culture Day in Leeds

Welcome to Leeds

This project supports asylum seekers in those crucial first few weeks of arrival in the UK, by connecting them with a volunteer who will meet with the new person, show them around the city and take them to key specialist services within 3 or 4 visits. Volunteers are a friendly and welcoming face, show someone new to Leeds around the city centre and take a person to places where they can get support; socially, practically and spiritually. Induction and training is provided for anyone who wants to get involved. Contact Candy at candyferreirapowell@gmail.com or 07919130659.

Worship resources for Sanctuary Sunday

These worship resources are based around the Gospel reading for the 15th Sunday in Ordinary time in the Revised Common Lectionary which in 2013 is July 14th, Luke Chapter 10: 25-37, the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Call to Worship

Blessed is God, who created us and loves us beyond measure.
Blessed is God, who calls us to stop measuring out our love.
Blessed is God, who speaks and tells us stories about ourselves.
Blessed is God, who reveals to us who we are and who we could be.
Blessed is God, whose compassion is poured out on every single person.
Blessed is God, who gives us compassion to share with every single person,
even people we do not know or care about.

Prayers of the Day

Eternal God,
Rescuer of the weak:
given every reason to judge us,
you seek justice for us.
You stand with the poor
in the ditches
where we have discarded them.
You plant your Word of truth
in the One who gives us
unexpected answers.

Jesus Christ,
Word of Truth:
you will not pass us by,
but stoop to lift us up
and carry us out of our pain.
You love the faithful enough
to tell us stories
which will shatter our complacency
and send us forth
to carry mercy to others.

Holy Spirit,
Giver of mercy:
you carry hope in your mouth
and breathe it into our souls.
You take us by the hand,
leading us out of the ditches
we have dug for ourselves,
into the brightly lit streets of the kingdom.
You pray for us in every moment,
especially when we are unable
to pray for ourselves.
God in Community, Holy in One,
hear us as we pray as Jesus taught us, saying,
Our Father . . .



Call to Reconciliation

Let us confess our sins and those of an often sinful world.

Are we in love with God? Do we show it in our words, our thoughts, our actions? Do we love our neighbour? Would they know this by our presence, our grace, our friendship? Let us confess the limits we place on our love, so we might be filled with God's limitless mercy.

Prayer of Confession

They may not be beaten down or lying by the road,
but there are people we pass by,
Some are family and friends
we take so much for granted
we cannot see how we have stripped
them of our love and compassion.

Others are neighbours:
who have been left half-dead by crushing work;
who have fallen into the hands of despair;
who have been abandoned by all those
who walked on by them.

Many are strangers, people we don't know,
but quickly judge:
they are weak,
or poor,
or the enemy
or because they remind us of who
we once were, or could become.

Rescue us from the power of our sins,
Righteous One of all generations.
Pour out your justice on us,
rather than your judgement,
that we would be moved with pity,
and spurred to action;
that we would hear of the hope that is ours,
and share it with our sisters and brothers;
that we would shower mercy on all we meet,
even as we have received forgiveness for our sins
through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Silent Prayers may be offered

Assurance of Pardon

Children of the Most High: you are forgiven and brought into the kingdom. Be filled with spiritual wisdom, lead lives worthy of your inheritance, bear fruit in all you say and do and think.

God has rescued us and redeemed us from our sins, setting aside judgment to shower us with mercy. We will go and do likewise. Thanks be to God. Amen.

<http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.co.uk/2010/07/15th-sunday-in-ordinary-timeproep-10-c.html>

OR



Great music and food during a Refugee Week event in Leeds

Prayer of Confession

Lord Jesus Christ, we pray that the lives we lead may be worthy of you and fully pleasing to you, as we seek to bear fruit in line with our calling as your followers. We recognise the need for our fruitfulness to be visible in and through the way we reach out to our neighbour.

Forgive us if we seek to justify any lack of action on our part by asking the question "Who is my neighbour?" while knowing in our hearts that the correct question must always be: "Who is not my neighbour?"

(silent confession)

Forgive us when we make our responsibility as your followers a far lower priority than attention to our own needs and desires: when our comfortable lifestyles interfere with our social action.

(silent confession)

Forgive us when we gladly profess that our love for God, is with all our heart, all our soul, all our strength and all our mind; while stumbling over the call to love our neighbour as we love ourselves.

(silent confession)

Forgive us when we ignore the cries of the poor, and are indifferent to those who have needs. Help us to identify with those who are oppressed and to recognise and help bear the burdens of those who suffer in any way *(perhaps specific examples could be included here)*.

Jesus, Saviour and Lord, open our hearts to love as you loved and to care as you cared.

Strengthen us to include in our lives, our prayers and our fellowship, those who feel excluded because of such things as being a refugee or asylum seeker or because of their race, their sexuality, their age, their disability.....

Help us to accept people as you accept them, as people made in the image of God, and precious to God.

Help us to reach out to people as you reached out to them, as people to whom justice is to be exercised;

as people with hurts to be healed.

As neighbours - of yours - and of ours. This we pray in your name. Amen



<http://www.silk.net/RelEd/Year%20C/15c.htm>

Assurance of Forgiveness

Through the graciousness of God we have been rescued from the power of darkness and transferred into the kingdom of God's beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

(Colossians 1:13,14 NRSV)

Friends, believe the gospel: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

http://www.liturgiesonline.com.au/liturgies/main/index.php?ch_table=link7&PID=34&SID=&year=C



Bishop John Packer at a City of Sanctuary event at City of Leeds High School

Sermon thoughts

The parable of 'the good Samaritan' is so well known in western Christianity as to be almost too well known; the audacity and sharpness of Jesus' words are nearly lost to us because we think we know the meaning already. Who is your neighbour? But more than that: as you lie in the gutter at the side of the road and are unable to resist this graciousness to you, from where does your help come? And it turns out to be a Samaritan, from the people and the place your society told you to fear. For some new sermon ideas, try out these links:

<http://www.crossmarks.com/brian/luke10x25.htm>

<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/c-or15-keeping.php>

<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/c-or15smsu.php>

Intercessions and Prayers

For the people and land from which refugees have fled, may there be peace and reconciliation between people and nations.

That strangers, refugees, and those who seek asylum may find a welcome among us.

We pray for all who make our laws and administer justice: May the God of justice be their guide.

We pray for those who minister to the vulnerable and broken people especially the homeless and displaced: that they may show God's welcoming love.



City of Sanctuary celebrations on Women's Culture Day in Leeds

We often feel powerless in the face of crushing poverty, injustice and violence in our world; we ask for the courage to reach out to victims of injustice and poverty.

Lord, you bestow on us the gift of your spirit in our lives to sustain our wavering hope.

Accept the prayers we make from the fullness of our hearts, and grant the requests we make with confidence in you.

Through Christ our Lord.

Brentwood Diocese Refugee Week

OR

Meditation on the Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in Heaven,

you want us your children to build a new earth of sisterhood and brotherhood, not a hell of violence and death.

Holy be your name,

that in your name Lord, let there be no abuse, no oppression and no manipulation of the conscience and liberty of your children.

Your Kingdom come,

not the kingdom of fear, force or money, of seeking peace through war.

Your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven,
 in this land of ours and in sister lands which echo with gunfire and cries of fear.
Give us this day our daily bread,
 the bread of peace, Lord, so that we can sow our maize and beans, watch them grow and share them together as a family.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Do not let our relationships be based on self-interest. Let us change laments for songs of life, clenched fists for outstretched hands and the weeping of widows and orphans for smiles.

Lead us not into temptation,
 the temptation to conform, to do nothing: the temptation not to collaborate with you in the search for justice and peace.

But deliver us from evil,

from behaving like Cain to our brothers and sisters, from believing ourselves rulers over life and death.

For yours is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory.

You are our hope of salvation, in you we place our trust.

(Written by an El Salvador group of refugees. Taken from www.cafod.org.uk/worship/refugees)

OR

Lord Jesus, who fled the wrath of Herod.

Be with those who have to flee the injustice of others.

Lord Jesus, who had nowhere to lay your head.

Be with those who have no land to call their own.

For the refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and Iran.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For people uprooted in Sudan, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For people who have fled from or are still living with fear in Libya, Eritrea and Colombia.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For all refugees who have fled oppression in their own countries and are seeking new lives in new lands.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Help us, Lord, who are the privileged inn-keepers of our day, to find room for those who have been driven from their homelands because of political, racial, or religious reasons. Amen.

(Adapted from World Council of Churches Worship Resources, Focus on Refugee, 1981)

OR

O Lord, hear our prayers for all who seek sanctuary, and for those who strive to provide it.

In our Gospel reading we heard of the Samaritan man moved with compassion and willing to reach out to help.

We pray for all who have had to escape violence and persecution in their own countries and seek refuge in places that are foreign to them.



Singers performing during events held at West Yorkshire Playhouse in Leeds, around the theme of 'Refugee Boy' by Benjamin Zephaniah

Some find their way to Britain and the welcome they receive is not always as friendly or supportive as they had expected. Sometimes they are met by hostility, disbelief and cruelty. We pray for the officers of the UK Border Agency, that they may have integrity, sympathy and humanity in their questioning and deciding of cases.

We pray for Sanctuary Cities and Towns across the country and especially for Leeds City of Sanctuary. May those who offer hospitality, those who teach English and give support in other ways, do so with love and friendship, so that lives which have been shattered may be healed and restored, that people who have been traumatised, may regain trust and hope.

Lord, hear our prayers for all who are vulnerable in our society and especially for all who seek safety and sanctuary. Show us the part that we can play in this vital ministry.

Lord, hear our prayer. Amen

From City of Sanctuary, Ipswich

Blessing

God bless our eyes so that we will recognise injustices.

God bless our ears so that we will hear the cry of the stranger.

God bless our mouths so that we will speak words of welcome to newcomers.

God bless our shoulders so we will be able to bear the weight of struggling for justice.

God bless our hands so that we can work together with all people to establish peace.

<http://ulen.wordpress.com/2009/02/27/a-lent-prayer-for-asylum-seekers-and-refugees/>

Contact details

For more information about City of Sanctuary visit www.cityofsanctuary.org, email leeds@cityofsanctuary.org or write to:

Leeds City of Sanctuary c/o RETAS
The Roundhay Road Resource Centre
233-237 Roundhay Road
Leeds
LS8 4HS



Guests enjoying an event at West Yorkshire Playhouse, which is making strides to become the first ever Theatre of Sanctuary