

CELEBRATING NATIONAL INTER-FAITH WEEK

THE CHARACTER OF LOVE

5-7PM, SATURDAY 17TH NOVEMBER 2018

GLOBAL COOPERATION HOUSE, LONDON,

Global Co-operation House has been honouring National Interfaith Week for over 10 years, welcomed and introduced by **Georgina Long**, Brahma Kumaris Inter Faith Coordinator UK. This special programme offered a seamless, meditative and creative exploration on the Character of Love, from personal and faith perspectives. It focused on three aspects: Love of the World: Devotional Love and Pure Love. There was a wonderful flow of contributions and it took everyone into a beautifully reflective space. Musician **Ann Malone** played throughout the afternoon, filling the spaces between contributions with sounds of beauty and silence using bells and other instruments, creating a weave of contemplative sound.



MC Sharon O'Regan began with the challenge to everyone to stay curious, playful and journey...she opened with a poem to open the heart: Everyman by John Wood...*'open drawers that mainly stay closed'*...

An audio visual of the rousing version of Stand by Me, by Ben E King, performed by The Kingdom Gospel Choir at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, extolling the supportive nature of human love: *No, I won't be afraid... just as long as you stand by me.*

Ann Malone created the shift into devotional love with a haunting song calling: *I bow to you...We are coming home...oh my beloved...*

Mary Hale, from the Buddhist tradition emphasized that *'what lonely people need is love...to feel cared for...the Buddha reminded everyone of the interconnectedness of everything'* and that we may not like someone but we can still love them and show loving kindness. She read a piece from the Buddha which included *'may all beings be at peace...whatever living beings may be, strong or weak; ...the seen and unseen...those near and those far...those born and those yet to be born...may all beings be at ease...'*

Jon Dal Din from Westminster Interfaith offered extracts from St Paul's letter to the Corinthians on the gift of love, which is popular amongst Christians: *If I have the gift of prophecy, understanding all mysteries and knowing everything and faith in all its fullness to move mountains... but without love...I am nothing at all...Love is always patient...love is always kind...it delights in the truth...ready to excuse, to trust and to hope and to endure whatever comes...it does not come to an end...*

Reverend Rob Harrison complemented this with playing the saxophone to the tune of Nature Boy by Nat King Cole...*'the greatest thing you will ever learn, is just to love and be loved in return...*

Zara Touzani, introduced the wisdom of Rumi on behalf of the **Muslim community**: *'I am bewildered by the magnificence of your duty...Your fragrant breath like the morning breeze has come into the garden of my mind...every fibre of my being is in love with you...the arrow of love has arrived at the heart...I am a house of mercy and my heart a place of prayer...*

To demonstrate the healing power of the love of One and coming together in this spirit, an audio-visual was shown of **Koolulam, Israel's mass singing social initiative**. Set up at the ancient citadel of Jerusalem's Tower of David, it was a midnight singdown of Bob Marley's iconic 'One love', in English, Arabic and Hebrew, sung earlier this year on 14th June 2018, the last day of Ramadan. A group of 1,000 people gathered representing the Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities, and sung in three harmonies. The uplifting and healing energy was tangible, with this hopeful song for humanity...*'let's get together and feel One love, One heart... and feel alright...'* and so poignant in the heart of this ancient city of faith and conflict. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZzK29_V8jQ

Rabbi Jackie Tabick shared how within **Judaism** there is the commandment to love *God with all your heart, your soul and your might* and that what God wants us to do is to show love of Him, is to show love of humanity. She also cautioned that *'One can always find warm hearts who in the glow of emotion would like to make the world happy...but there are the sober moments...to do good solely because another is a human being...'*



MC Sharon O'Regan then opened the last part of the evening expressing 'Pure Love' and reminded everyone that this begins with self-love and self-compassion.



Gil Fernandes played on the violin the sweet, reflective tune of Carolan's Dream and **Thiru Seelan** demonstrated the character of love through powerful dance moves.



BK Dirk Romeijn shared a reading: 'I clean my heart in such a way that whatever is in God's heart may enter mine...God's heart belongs to me...He has opened it to me...I am the conqueror of His heart...in the Fathers heart is everything I have ever wanted and everything that I need...Let me listen to the things playing in Gods heart...'

BK Rekha Vallishayee's extract calls for everyone to understand the perspective and vision for us that The Divine holds for humanity: *If you could see what I see...oh my sweet creation your beauty makes me weep...if you could see what I see, you would never lose your smile...If you could see what I see, you would lose your breath for sure...you are the perfect replications...you are the ones who I adore...*

BK Nicole Travnicek closed the evening's contributions and journey into the nature of love with a short reflection to consciously choose to live love in life, regardless of the situations around us. *I know of my eternal connection with God...and of His love for me...it gives me the strength to go through any challenges that I may face in my life...from today I choose love...*

Blessings and toli, made with love, were distributed to all.

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